

THESIS

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE LOVELAND SCULPTURE INVITATIONAL

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE LOVELAND SCULPTURE INVITATIONAL

The Loveland Sculpture Invitational was birthed out of the growing sculpture movement in Loveland, Colorado. In 1991, a group of passionate sculptors created the Loveland Sculpture Invitational as a forum for undiscovered artists to display and sell their work to the public and to introduce aspiring sculptors to sculptural stage. While in its organizational peak, LSI boasted of being the largest outdoor sculpture show in America in recent years, LSI has been in steady decline – a decline in lack of participating artists, a decline in the attending public, and a decline in board member cohesion.

To discover the cause of the decline and provide insight as to what can be done to return to success, this thesis draws from Arts Management literature, Public Relations theory, and Social Marketing theory as theoretical foundation for the thesis research. Research methods of this thesis include in depth personal interviews with each member of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational Board of Directors and online surveys of key organizational stakeholder groups. This thesis conducted a thematic analysis of interview transcripts and survey data.

As a result of finding a lack of organizational identity, this thesis presents an organizational strategic plan with aim to guide the Loveland Sculpture Invitational Board of Directors to a path of defining the organizational purpose and a plan to achieve measured organizational success.

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder” – Plato

“Love of beauty is taste, [but] the creation of beauty is art.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Art surrounds us in our daily lives, and has arguably existed since the beginning of human civilization. Certainly much passion is poured into the creation of art. However, understanding the arts industry and market is a relatively new endeavor. Early art markets were largely private individuals commissioning and sponsoring individual artists. In the 20th century, however, the arts were firmly established as a thriving market, complete with the opportunities and challenges of any economic market (Rentschler, 2002).

In the early middle part of the 20th century, the arts saw a dramatic growth of collectors, businesses, museums, and dealers which increased the demand for many types of art. A boom in the market during the 1980s and 1990s created a more demand-driven marketplace, and decreases in U.S. government funding of the arts placed a greater pressure on market forces in art creation and sales. Artists and the art industry needed to learn how to create products, art, to meet consumer demand in order to sell their artistic expression (Rentschler, 2002).

Changes in U.S. arts funding in 1994 created an entrepreneurial era for the arts that is still in place today (Rentschler, 2002). As a result of experiencing more market driven factors, this era is characterized by a need to balance cultural output as a means of artistic expression with the increasing need to provide a demanded service to ensure the market viability of art (Rentschler, 2002). Furthermore, in a competitive market, arts organizations must “. . . adopt the language of

the marketplace, to think more about their audiences and to seek an increase in audience numbers” (Rentschler, 2002, p. 36).

These demands are seen at all levels of the arts, including locally. The Loveland Sculpture Group (LSG) is a small arts organization located in Loveland, Colorado, that holds an annual sculpture sale for the public – the Loveland Sculpture Invitational sculpture show and sale. This event invites artists around the country to display and sell their art during Loveland Arts weekend in August. The LSG is a nonprofit organization, and as such incorporates community betterment in its mission statement and operations models (see Appendix A). The LSG, according to their website, uses proceeds from the Loveland Sculpture Invitational “to purchase sculpture for the City of Loveland to use for public display” (see Appendix A) as a way to give back to the community. Additionally, The LSG uses proceeds from the Loveland Sculpture Invitational to fund its Emerging Artist Program. This program aims to provide more artistic opportunities to students in the Thompson School District. However, the LSG, like arts organizations around the country, is facing the effects of a recessed economy, decreases in consumer spending on luxury items, and the economic hardships experienced by sculptor artists. As a result, the organization faces significant challenges in maintaining involvement from artists and buyers.

This thesis project developed a research-driven guide to develop a strategic plan to help the LSG address the challenges it faces in a struggling arts market. To do so, this project collected and analyzed survey and interview data from key stakeholders, including LSG board members, participating artists, and event volunteers. The resulting strategic plan will provide key considerations and action steps intended to reinvigorate the LSG and maintain its prominent place in the local and national sculpture market.

This document first outlines the history and structure of the LSG to provide a background of this organization in Chapter Two. Then in Chapter Three, it provides a discussion of the current research on and practices around arts management and public relations, with a focus on theoretical models that can inform an effective public relations and marketing strategy. Then, Chapter Four outlines the research objectives using the framework of a social marketing plan, Chapter Five describes the research methods to be used, and Chapter Six presents the results of data collection and provides a discussion and analysis of them. Project conclusions are in Chapter Seven, and the strategic plan recommended for is in Appendix H.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The LSG's Loveland Sculpture Invitational (LSI) was created in 1991 out of the growing sculpture scene in Loveland, Colorado. The LSG was founded by a group of four passionate sculptors, three of which are still participating sculptors at the LSI. A current board member of the LSG, who is also a founder, expressed to me the original reason for starting LSI, and subsequently forming the LSG, was to provide a forum for those sculptors who could not get into the juried Sculpture in the Park to also showcase and sell their art. Since its inception the LSI has contributed to the success of hundreds of sculptors and the sculpture industry in Loveland. The LSI also benefits sculptor supply vendors across the economic spectrum and is an economic boost to the Loveland community through donations and community support and bringing tourism to Loveland in August. Over the organization's 23-year history, the LSG's community investments include donations of over \$235,000 to the Loveland area schools to promote and support art education, donations of over \$243,000 to local art education programs, and since 2010 donations of over \$30,000 made to the Thompson School District R2-J art departments

The LSG's primary means of raising funds is through hosting the Loveland Sculpture Invitational. Participating sculptors are subject to approval by the LSG Board of Directors and must meet three criteria:

1. All works sculptors feature at the LSI must be their own
2. The sculpture may be three dimensional of any medium, welding or molding, sculpted or cast
3. Art displayed is sculpture exclusive; artwork may not be craftwork or jewelry

Within the above outline parameters, sculpture ranges from miniatures to monuments using bronze, stone, metal, glass, and mixed mediums to create a wide variety of sculpture.

The LSI takes place the second weekend of August as part of Loveland, Colorado's greater art show weekend. Loveland becomes a worldwide destination for artists and art lovers alike because of three simultaneous art shows: the Loveland Sculpture Invitational, The Sculpture in the Park, and Art in the Park. Together the three shows attract thousands of visitors from around the world.

The Thompson Valley Art League's Art in the Park will celebrate its 50th year in 2014. Art in the Park is an annual arts and crafts show and sale featuring nearly 200 artists. Artists showcase a variety of art at Art in the Park, including pottery, clothing, metalwork, jewelry, painting, and any other media. The Thompson Valley Art League also owns The Lincoln Gallery of Loveland. The mission of The Thompson Valley Art League is to provide a venue for artists to display their work and provide the Loveland community with original, local art, and art opportunities.

The Sculpture in the Park is a juried exhibition, sculpture exclusive, show and sale of three-dimensional artwork. Hosted by the Loveland High Plains Arts Council, Sculpture in the Park is held annually at Loveland's Benson Sculpture Garden. Since its inception in 1984 the Loveland High Plains Arts Council's purpose has been the promotion of sculpture arts for the cultural and economic betterment of the greater Loveland community. Annual proceeds from Sculpture in the Park, generated from a 33% commission taken on all sales made by participating sculptures, are used to purchase sculpture for the Benson Sculpture Garden and are used to fund on going park improvements and landscaping. According to a May 21, 2013 press release (see

Appendix B) from Toolbox Creative, in 2013 Sculpture in the Park invited and hosted 160 sculpture artists at the Loveland’s Benson Sculpture Garden to show and sell their sculpture art.

All three shows are independently operated and all three shows provide some amount of competition for each other. All three shows are also interdependent on each other to draw a large amount of people, to one place, on one weekend to view and buy art.

It is within this context that the LSG, with its focus on sculpture and funding arts in local schools, has operated. In 2012, The LSG hired Mantooth Marketing Company to plan, promote, and execute the Loveland Sculpture Invitational. Mantooth was hired in order to address concerns about flagging participation and sales.

Once boasting nearly 300 participating artists, in the past two years The LSI has decreased to less than 200 participating artists. The LSG’s LSI has experienced a steady decline in the number of participating artists from 2007 to present. Sculptor artist participation since 2007 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Sculptor Participation in the LSG’s LSI 2007 - 2013

Year	Number of Sculptors
2008	273
2009	264
2010	No record kept
2011	240
2012	201
2013	200
2014	145

In 2011, the LSI lost a significant number of artists and has since struggled to retain participating sculptors. In 2011 and 2012 the Loveland Sculpture Invitational has lost money; the cost of production was more than the money raised.

A core question that needs to be answered in order to revitalize the LSG is, **What is the LSG's mission?** Is the mission of the LSG to provide a cost-effective forum for artists to display their art? In which case, producing the LSI with a booth-fee model would meet that mission and the LSG can fundraise and solicit sponsorships to make up the difference between the production cost and the revenue raised from artist booth fees.

However, the LSG is also the creator of the, seemingly undefined, Emerging Artist Program. The LSG's current mission statement says nothing about the Emerging Artist Program. However, from preliminary conversations and informal interviews with board members for this project, some board members mentioned they believe that raising money for the Emerging Artist Program is of central importance to the LSG. If the primary reason for hosting the LSI is to raise money for the Emerging Artist Program, then that explicit purpose can drive an effective strategic plan. This plan would be different than one focusing primarily on creating a cost-effective forum for artists to display their work, however. As such, this alternative goal creates some conflict with the main event hosted by the LSG – the Loveland Sculpture Invitational.

There is reason to believe that a new strategic plan for the LSG's invitational event would be successful. Although the LSG does face challenges as a result of economic changes in recent years, other organizations have weathered these shifts with greater success. For example, one competitor, the Sculpture in the Park show, holds its event on the same weekend just across the street from the LSI, and it is thriving. According to an informal, preliminary interview I conducted with Toolbox Marketing, the marketing firm the Loveland High Plains Art Council contracts to execute the marketing and media strategy for the Sculpture in the Park, 2013 was Sculpture in the Park's highest sales year in their 30 year history. In total, artists sold nearly \$3 million of sculpture and the Loveland High Plains Art Council collected 33.3% commission on

those sales. If the Sculpture in the Park Show can be successful, there is no reason to believe LSG's show cannot also be successful as it has in the past.

The Loveland High Plains Art Council has a specific operating mission, to annually contribute the proceeds generated from the Sculpture in the Park show and sale, to purchase sculpture art for the Loveland Benson Sculpture Garden and to fund park improvements and landscaping (see Appendix C). In a March 20, 2013 press release, Sculpture in the Park's Show Business Chairperson, Polly Juneau, expressed that investing in the community remains the Loveland High Plains Art Council's main focus, "because Sculpture in the Park operates with a philanthropic mindset, we've been able to have a valuable and lasting effect on Loveland and the surrounding areas" (see Appendix C).

In summary, the LSG's challenges are significant, but with a new approach to holding the annual event that forms the heart of their activities, the LSI, it can once again be successful. Detailed research on the organization's goals, the needs and expectations of participating artists, and insight from staff for the event can inform a public-driven strategic plan to tap into the passion and dedication for the arts that has long characterized the community of Loveland and the surrounding regions.

To create an effective plan for this revitalization, this project will draw on current analyses of public relations and arts management, discussed next.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Relations Theories

Any organization, whether purposefully or not, practices some type of public relations (Heath, 2001). However, effective understanding and use of public relations is of long-term benefit to organizations to accomplish their goals. The current project draws on models of public relations to propose research and analysis to develop a strategic plan for enhancing the Loveland Sculpture Group's annual LSI.

This chapter gives a brief overview of the concept of public relations, discusses Grunig's four models of public relations, and then addresses the use of public relations by small organizations and the use of public relations by non-profit organizations. Overall, these theoretical concepts provide the framework for the research and analysis that form the foundation of the strategic plan to be proposed with this project.

Public relations as a practice ultimately serves to help an organization communicate to its publics how the organization practices its core mission and values. Public Relations aims to provide strategic insight, as noted by Franden and Johansen (2010), "as a profession or organizational practice, public relations has the ambition to develop into a strategic management discipline" (p. 293). The ambition of strategic vision and the strategic management of that vision has manifested itself in the definition of public relations as defined by James Grunig and Todd Hunt, as "the management of communication between and organization and its publics" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 6). Because, as David Bernstein (1994) notes, organizations communicate with the public whether knowingly or not, it is in the best interest of an organization to deliberately and strategically communicate exactly what the organization stands for and aims to accomplish.

To that idea, “. . . public relations practitioners must move away from just being ‘communication technicians’ to become ‘communication managers,’ or even better, ‘communication executives,’ contributing to or participating in the strategic decision-making processes of the organizations along the lines of the organization’s missions, visions, and objectives” (Frandsen & Johansen, 2010, p. 293). In the case of the LSI there may be an opportunity to employ a more strategic mission and strategic planning practices, to hone their message, and to create a cohesive public relations message to in turn create a winning image. Public relations is the important communication component of achieving the goals and vision of the LSG.

Grunig’s Four Models of Public Relations

In 1984, James Grunig, a grandfather of sorts in the field of public relations published with Todd Hunt what they termed the *Four Models of Public Relations*. This was the first time specific models of public relations were clearly defined. These models are now widely studied, and they are the most influential models in the public relations and broader communications fields (Brown, 2010; Fawkes, 2012). These models give scholars and practitioners the ability to categorize how public relations is currently being used by a certain organization, determine if the use of public relations meet the goals of the organization, and how to better communicate a specific message most effectively. Grunig and Hunt’s Four Models of Public Relations are:

- 1. Press Agency or Publicity Model:** This one-way communication model uses persuasion and message manipulation to influence its target audience to alter their behavior to align with what the organization desires. This type of activity is likely what most people associate with the field of public relations (Fawkes, 2012). Some consider the provider to receiver communication path to be unethical (Brown, 2010; Waddington,

2013) because this model is often used for propaganda. Grunig and Hunt (1984, p. 25) found that practitioners employing this model are most concerned with getting the attention of the media for the purpose of promoting their clients.

- 2. Public Information Model:** This purpose of this model is to spread essential, accurate information (Fawkes, 2012). Though it is a one-way communication model, provider to receiver, it is considered less ethically questionable than the press agency model because the public information model is intended to distribute organizational information as a way to inform, not to propagate and change behavior. Grunig and Hunt (1984) consider practitioners of this model to be similar to that of an internal organizational journalist releasing timely, relevant information to those who need it. An example of this approach is an organizational press release; information is distributed to inform its publics (Brown, 2010; Fawkes, 2012; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Waddington, 2013).
- 3. One-Way Asymmetrical Model:** This model is used as a form of scientific persuasion. Planning and research are central to the use of his model since persuasion relies heavily on understanding the behaviors and attitudes of the targeted receivers (Brown, 2010; Fawkes, 2012). Asymmetry fosters “. . . communication back and forth between the source and the receiver, with the intention of using research techniques to evaluate attitudes in order to persuade publics and win victories. . .” (Brown, 2010, p. 277) for those sending the message (Brown, 2010; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Waddington, 2013). However, this model is considered imbalanced because it aims to change the behavior of the receiver not the sender’s practices (Fawkes, 2012).
- 4. Two-way Symmetrical Model:** This model is the crescendo of Grunig & Hunt’s communication models and is often described as the ideal form of public relations

(Fawkes, 2012). Grunig's (1984) most significant contribution to the field of public relations is what he describes as the most "evolved" of the theoretical models because ". . . it proposed a normative concept of public relations practice that recognized what the practice could and should be: not the persuasive, pro-management model named by Bernays (1952), but rather a whole new state of affairs described by the balance of fairness for both an organization and its publics" (Brown, 2010, p. 278). This model posits that message conveyors use communication to negotiate with its intended publics, seek to resolve conflict, promote a mutual understanding of the relationship between the two, and foster respect among the organization, its stakeholder, and other publics (Brown, 2010; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Waddington, 2013).

These four models help evaluate how the LSG is *currently* communicating with both their internal and external publics and can serve as a guide for how they can most effectively communicate in the *future*. The current project proposes employing the fourth model, the Two-Way symmetrical Model, in which a two-way dialog informs PR practices and positions the LSG as symmetrical with its publics in strategic planning and communication. However, some additional considerations in developing effective PR communication are needed in order to tailor strategies to a small organization such as the LSG, discussed next.

Public Relations in a Small Organization

Public relations is practiced differently by small organizations than it is by larger organizations. Public relations strategies often fail within small organizations when they try to use large organizational practices on a small scale. However, public relation practices thrive when smaller companies use it correctly to suit the size of their organization (Otterbourg, 1996). This section discusses how public relations differs between large and small organizations and

identifies the themes of these differences in order to propose communicative models that fit the LSG Invitational well.

There is no dearth of public relations literature or public relations communication models, yet the majority of public relations research is focused on the examination of public relations of large organizations (David, Kline, & Dai, 2005; Heath & Douglas, 1995; Hung, 2005). The application of public relations models may not always address the needs of small organizations because most public relations models have been conceptualized with large organizations in mind (Huang-Horowitz, 2012). Though researchers and public relations scholars alike agree public relations strategies, messages, and uses are relevant for small companies and organizations (Cole, 1989; Evatt, Ruiz, & Triplett, 2005; Gray, Davies, & Blanchard, 2004; Goldberg, Cohen, & Fiegenbaum, 2003; Moham-Neill, 1995; Otterbourg, 1966; Stree & Cameron, 2007), prevalent public relations models may sometimes be inadequate in totality for smaller organizations. There are several reasons for this: (1) Smaller organizations often have different management structures, cultures, and organizational goals in comparison to larger organizations (Carolsson, 1999; Otterbourg, 1966). (2) Smaller organizations are often constrained by size and resources and smaller organizations have to be more flexible in terms of strategic action (Goldberg et al., 2003; Kalantaridis, 2004; Pratten, 1991; Smith 2007). (3) Smaller organizations play a different role in society overall as compared to large organizations (Acs, 1999). (4) Small organizations are often more specialized in their services and mission (Pratten, 1991). (5) Smaller organizations likely experience more pressure about chances of survival within the market and often have fewer resources than larger organizations (Chen & Hambrick, 1995; Goldberg et al., 2003).

Because of the differences between large and small organizations, small organizations can benefit from capitalizing on these differences to advance what they stand for and be able to communicate their mission to the public just as effectively. The ways small organizations differ from large organizations, and likely other reasons the two differ, can be categorized into three major themes (Huang-Horowitz, 2012):

1. **Legitimacy** – Where large organizations, after establishing themselves in a market, often do not have to deal with the issue of legitimacy, small organizations often need to lend extra care to prove their reliability, trustworthiness, and competitive nature (Chen & Hambrick, 1995). Legitimacy is a key to survival for any small organization as it attracts participants (Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002) helps build and maintain a positive reputation (Fichman & Levinthal, 1991) and builds support from entities relevant and necessary for organizational success (Human & Provan, 2000).
2. **Strategic flexibility** – As opposed to large organizations, the flexibility of an organizations strategic approach is considered a competitive advantage (Chen & Hambrick, 1995; Diez-Vial, 2009; Kalantardis, 2004). Flexibility in a small organization can be either product flexibility, process, flexibility, or strategic flexibility (Huang-Horowitz, 2012). The most important of these three for a small organization is strategic flexibility – the ability of the organization to flex and adapt depending on the organizational needs during any given season (Huang-Horowitz, 2012). Capitalizing on strategic flexibility is an opportunity for a small organization such as the LSG.
3. **Relationship-building** – Because small organizations are more likely to create symbiotic, cooperative relationships with other organizations, as opposed to large organizations, relationship building, the heart-beat of public relations, is an integral part

of small organizational growth and long-term survival (Acs, 1999; Chaston, 2000; Ledingham, 2006).

Because small organizations have fewer financial resources to formally employ public relations strategies, it is more important for them to build strong relationships with their publics, to identify and communicate internally what the organization stands for and seeks to accomplish, to create specific goals, and to communicate those goals clearly to its publics in order to maintain organizational legitimacy. As a small organization, the LSG can focus its public relations practices around these goals.

Public Relations in a Nonprofit Organization

Effective public relations is especially important for nonprofit organizations. In an ever-changing communications world, core elements remain stalwart in the arena of nonprofit public relations (Brill & Marrocco, 2012, p. 389). First is the importance of effective management of the organization's reputation and image. Second is the need of the organization to position themselves as effective service providers.

Although it is important for any organization to identify their key messages and deliver them accordingly, in the case of nonprofit organizations, the message itself is often the difference between organizational longevity and failure. Central to this goal is clarity of the message (Brill & Marrocco, 2012). For example, the LSG may want to consider branding themselves as the main conduit between the community and art education.

Message creators need to craft messages that communicate a specific need and then specifically communicate the solution to that need in a way that is both pithy and digestible for the lay public (Brill & Marrocco, 2012). Deliberate and simple messages are necessary to break through all the competing noise from the for-profit world, the sports world, the fashion world,

finances, politics, etc. A recent study identified an opportunity for nonprofits in their communication efforts; Brennan (2009) found that the public prefers reading feature stories about nonprofit charities and their work to stories about sports, fashion, and celebrities and only just behind stories of business. This is an opportunity for nonprofit public relations practitioners to craft messages regarding their organizations with business angles or about their charitable, community involvement in an attempt to garner media coverage (Brill & Marrocco, 2012).

Furthermore, it is important that communication and fundraising efforts are synchronized and conveys the same message about the organization and its goals and efforts. Effective message delivery and digestion of that message by the message receiver is incumbent upon the mission and values of the organization being understood by all internally and communicated as such externally (Brill & Marrocco, 2012).

The LSG can benefit from fully defining and understanding the organizational mission in order to communicate it effectively to the external public. The LSG needs to clearly define what they aim to accomplish and communicate it with precision across all media and to all LSI stakeholders. Some public relations researchers believe nonprofit organizations are as successful, if not more so, at implementing public relations messaging compared to for-profit businesses (Bruce, 1996). The LSG must be effective at implementing public relations strategies in order to be able to give back to the Loveland, Colorado community as well as become a leader in the Loveland sculpture industry.

Social Marketing

Non-profit organizations, especially those dedicated to social causes, can benefit from an understanding of social marketing practices. This section will define social marketing, discuss

how it can be applied to the LSG, and outline the basic steps to implement a social marketing plan.

Social marketing, a distinct type of marketing in the greater marketing discipline, was recognized as a field of study and research in the early 1970s (Lee & Kotler, 2011). In the field of social marketing scholars and practitioners primarily focus on the science and practice of influencing behaviors in order to prevent injuries, improve one's health, preserve environmental resources, encourage people to contribute to their communities, and help people enhance their financial well-being (Lee & Kotler, 2011). Scholars and social marketing veterans can provide a variety of definitions of social marketing though there are common themes amongst the plethora of definitions. Social marketing themes include (1) influencing people's behaviors, (2) using a planning process that applies traditional, for-profit marketing techniques and principles, (3) honing in on priority target audiences, and (4) communicating and deliver a tangible positive benefit for society (Lee & Kotler, p. 7).

If the main goal of the LSG is to raise money for K-12 arts education in the Loveland community, then a social marketing goal for the LSG could be to engage the Loveland community and the greater arts community in changing behaviors to be more accustomed to contributing to and impacting communities. This is a goal of social marketing. As such, the LSG's goals can create an entire brand identity around their community-oriented and socially minded goals in order to encourage their surrounding community to partner with them in community betterment.

Though the literature acknowledges the fact that social marketing uses traditional, for-profit marketing theories, social marketing steps do have their own unique element. Lee and Kotler (2011) outline 10 steps to plan and execute a successful social marketing plan.

Lee and Kotler (2011) provide a user-friendly, intuitive outline for how to create an effective and detailed social marketing plan. This is a ten-step plan that requires planners to identify the purpose and goals of the organization or event, research the context, audience, and competition, create a position statement, identify methods for evaluation, and outline a concrete implementation plan. A social marketing plan requires clear research and analysis of the organization itself, the surrounding community, the audience and other stakeholders, and the competition. The current project conducted this research and from analysis and results, proposes a strategic plan so that the LSG can be successful in their quest to refocus, redefine their goals, and reconnect with their publics.

Arts Management

The development of an effective strategic plan requires an understanding of the history of arts management, the art world's cultural and social context, and its market. Since the 1990s the field of arts management has been a marriage of strategic business vision and the promotion of social benefits the arts have to offer to communities. Understanding a survey of the arts management field can provide context of how to adapt the social goals of the arts into a social marketing plan. This section will discuss how art is defined, how society consumes art, the problem of market saturation in the arts industry, how arts leaders have evolved, and how arts leaders leverage relationship-building in managing arts organizations.

How Society Consumes Art

Evard and Colbert (2000) suggest that the place of art within society fulfills three social needs: (1) Religion: art as a substitution for religion. For example, museums can be viewed as the cathedrals of modern times and art shows viewed as a religious journey of the age. (2) Education: art as a form of enlightenment. Art is thus seen as part of learning about the world,

and necessary to the life of a good citizen. As a result, Evard & Colbert (2000) argue the arts should complement formal education and a wide exposure to art is good for society as a whole.

(3) Entertainment: art as gratifying and a means of entertainment. This perspective approaches art as part of leisure and enjoyment, and is seen as less vital to individuals than the other two perspectives. As entertainment, art consumption is based on individual tastes and choices. In contrast to art as religion and art as education, art as entertainment is more firmly situated within consumer markets and market forces (Evard & Colbert, 2000).

Understanding these perspectives of the societal role of art can be especially useful when segmenting the art consumer market to better reach specific audiences or to launch a social outreach campaign to entice people to participate in and purchase art for the betterment of their community. Identifying those who see art as a form of education could prove to be an effective target market since one of the LSG's goals is to promote arts education.

Market Saturation in the Arts

As a result of experiencing more market driven factors, the arts industry has been classified as being in its entrepreneurial era (1994-present). The entrepreneurial era is defined by a drastic shift toward a globalized and corporate centric marketplace because of decreased government funding (Rentschler, 2002). The entrepreneurial era ushered in the need to balance cultural output as a means of artistic expression with the increasing need to provide a demanded service to ensure the market viability of art (Rentschler, 2002). Furthermore, in a competitive market, arts organizations must “. . . adopt the language of the marketplace, to think more about their audiences and to seek an increase in audience numbers” (Rentschler, 2002, p. 36). Prior to 1994, the arts industry was reliant on government subsidization of the arts industry in an attempt to preserve national identity and symbolism (Rentschler, 2002).

In the entrepreneurial era, the arts industry faces a whole new set of challenges with being more market focused. Colbert (2009) argues that the arts are a small market with limited interest by the general population and decreasing government support, and that consumers are being steamrolled by the machine of mass cultural production. Arts organizations need to adapt to overcome these sentiments. As the entrepreneurial model of the arts advance, contemporary marketing challenges are applicable to arts production and distribution. The increase of marketing challenges related to art production is caused in part by a factor that often goes overlooked – market saturation. Although marketing efforts can stimulate consumption, it cannot create demand where there is no fertile ground or sell a product to people who do not want it. Once the market has reached its limit, it can be stretched no further (Colbert, 2009; Kotler, Armstrong, & Cunningham, 2005). Therefore artists have to be more strategic in the way they create art to better ensure they can sell their pieces.

In the United States, the arts industry experienced 30 years of growth in demand, from 1960-1990. Contributing to this growth were factors such as population growth, increases in leisure time, and general education level. However, this boom has been leveling out, and the arts industry is stalling in its expansion. Today, excluding a small niche of connoisseurs, Colbert argues that arts as entertainment have overtaken broader notions and functions of art in society. As a result, producers of high art and popular art alike must now directly compete with each other and against all other alternatives vying for consumer's leisure attention (Colbert, 2009).

In fact, even after the last 50 years of industrialized nations padding art budgets with government funds, through artificially increasing funding to the arts, such funding does not in turn increase demand (Colbert, 2009). Sustainability by arts organizations cannot be achieved through government injection of funds; sustainability can only be achieved through the market

driven practices on the part of individual arts organizations (Radbourne, 2002). Since LSG has been a Mantooth client, government funds have not been included as part of the annual budget because they encourage LSG not to rely on funds that may wane from year to year.

Arts Organization Leaders

With the many changes in the world of the arts and in arts organizations comes the opportunity for arts leaders to learn to navigate new waters. There are a series of changes within the arts industry that beckon the need for adaptation of the managerial roles within arts organizations. Changes in the arts industry include increased focus on the consumer, more diversity of funding sources, more competitive markets, and more diverse audiences. Changes in demand are forcing arts organizations to be more people focused rather than merely focused on their product output alone.

These changes result in a need within arts organizations to move past the way things are always done and into a world of economics. Although arts organizations like the LSG are nonprofit organizations they cannot be nonmarket driven organizations (Rentschler, 2002). Arts organizations now need to balance economic and market-driven factors of the organization without compromising their mission to promote the community involvement of art or the aesthetics of art (Rentschler, 2002). In the case of the arts, organizational leaders do not necessarily bring about need for changes themselves, though successful leaders must respond to and overcome the environmental changes (Rentschler, 2002).

Historically arts organizations define themselves by their function rather than their purpose. Function refers to the activities preformed and the products produced. Purpose is the vision, mission, leadership, and audience services of the arts organization (Rentschler, 2002). Rather than being heavily defined by function, or product-based factors, emphasis has now

shifted to a more audience centric approach (Rentschler, 2002). Arts organizations must find the delicate balance fostering artistic creativity and being responsive to its stakeholders (Rentschler, 2002). Therefore, a new type of art leader must be able to manage arts organizations as a business and be able to use new technology to effectively communicate on a larger scale to attract a widespread audience (Rentschler, 2002).

Rentschler (2002) argues that effective arts leaders of the future need to be entrepreneurial arts leaders. Arts entrepreneurs are risk-takers, recognize the need for change to adapt to markets, see value in developing a business strategy, believe in a strategic vision, recognize the need for a diverse base of donors, and do not believe luck controls the destiny of art but rather strategy controls the destiny of the arts. The entrepreneurial arts leader proves to be the delicate balance of managing art and market factors. Fortunately, for the LSG, they now have an entrepreneurial arts leader as the board president. The newly elected board president recognizes the need to revamp, restructure, and reevaluate the way the LSI has historically been ran. For example, the new board president signed a contract with the Loveland Embassy Suites to move the location of the LSI in 2015; for the past 22 years, the LSI has been hosted on the grounds of the Loveland High School. The board president made this move in hopes to launch LSI into a new sophisticated feel for the event.

Relationship Building and Marketing of the Arts

The entrepreneurial arts leader understands the importance of relationship building with both artists and art consumers and additionally, fostering a relationship between the two parties. Entrepreneurship and leadership in marketing the arts must collide to articulate the relationship art has with its surrounding community (Colbert, 2003). For the purpose of this paper, the continued focus of this discussion will be on the high art sector, specifically sculpture art.

The purpose of marketing is to link the organization with its desired market (Colbert, 2003). Although the trend is that surviving artists are becoming more business savvy and creating art to meet consumer demand, there is still an element of the mindset that “. . . artistic product does not exist to fulfill a market need” (Colbert, 2003, p. 31). Colbert argues a task of arts marketing is seeking out consumers who want a particular style of art and match them with artists who can fulfill their consumer preference. At the high art end of the continuum there is a unique opportunity for arts managers to coach artists to create art, yes from their artistic intellect, but also to direct them to take a customer centered approach while creating art. Additionally, entrepreneurial arts managers can help match artists with consumers most inclined to their style of work.

Arts managers can encourage consumers to be actively receptive to particular styles of art, rather than merely passively recognizing or passively absorbing art, through deliberate relationship building between consumers and the arts organization. It is ever more important for arts organizations to build deliberate relationships with a larger market, while still remaining targeted, to earn a competitive position in the marketplace (Radbourne, 2002).

Market trends are leading arts organizations to change the way they conduct business, and to actually operate in business terms building new audiences, and building strong, lasting, mutually beneficial relationship with stakeholders. (Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard, 2002). The arts, by its very nature, are “. . . inextricably part of relationship marketing. The conviction and values of an arts organization form the core of arts marketing activity. The difference from other modern marketing practice is the kind of engagement the arts seek with their customers or patrons. The patron is central to the arts experience” (Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard, 2002, p. 124). Relationship marketing in the arts is the dual focus of identifying

and keeping customers and developing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations (Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard, 2002).

Arts organizations need to be able to define what mutual fulfilment of promises can benefit their arts organization. In turn, they need to identify, establish, and maintain relationships with stakeholders who can provide benefit to the organization and who can benefit from the mission of the organizations (Rentschler, Radbourne, Carr, & Rickard, 2002). In order to identify mutually beneficial relationships arts organizations need to know their exact purpose for existence and the long-term goals of the organization.

Arts organizations need to capitalize on building relationships with neighboring fields to help expand their consumer reach and scope. The growth of cultural tourism creates opportunities for relationship building between arts organizations and related fields to capitalize on a shared market (Evard & Colbert, 2000). Relationships with neighboring fields must be forged and maintained to create and foster a symbiotic relationship between the two fields. The LSG should forge relationships with other fields, industries, and members of the community create community buy-in to their cause and partner with them to promote arts education within the community.

Strategic Planning

Ultimately, this project sought to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the LSG's annual Invitational event, the LSI. To do so, it draws on models of and practice in strategic planning discussed in the literature. This section defines strategic planning, discusses ways in which strategic planning is important to an organization, outlines the necessary steps to formulate a strategic plan, and highlights the necessary components of strategic planning.

Strategic planning has been defined as “a system that sets goals and achieves them within a specific time” (Dyson & Foster, 1979, p. 163). This planning focuses on the process by which decisions are made and evaluated in advance of actions, with the belief that unless action is taken, the desired outcomes will likely not occur (Ackoff, 1970). An effective strategic plan includes the deliberate and disciplined effort to process decisions and actions to predict the nature and outcome of an organization’s activities within the bounds of the law (Olsen & Eadie, 1982).

Strategic thought and action are essential for the longevity, viability, and governance of any non-profit organization (Bryson, 1988). As discussed in the introduction to this proposal, the arts industry has become increasingly subject to market demands because of decrease in government funding. Non-profit organizations have an opportunity to enhance the art industry in areas that once relied on government funding. However, without strategic planning, organizations are ill-equipped to successfully meet challenges facing them (Bryson, 1988). Strategic planning can help non-profit organizations effectively respond to their changing environments and new situations. In times of change, decisions need to be made in order to adapt, for non-profits, these decisions likely derive from the organization’s mission (or maybe lack of a clearly defined mission), finances, management, or organizational design (Bryson, 1988).

The strategic planning literature suggests for an non-profit organization to initiate a strategic planning process there must be (1) a process sponsor, such as a board chairperson, that is in an agreed position of power to sanction the process; (2) a planning champion or cheerleader to push the process along; (3) a team committed to the strategic planning process; (4) an understanding of and flexibility to disruptions and delays; (5) flexibility regarding the strategic

plan; (6) the ability to gather information and people together for important discussions and decisions; and (7) the willingness to have an evaluation criteria (Kanter, 1976; Kotler, 1976; Ring & Perry, 1985).

Once an organization has the necessary components to create a strategic plan, the plan itself must be deliberate, thoughtful, and forward-looking. A strategic plan must have: (1) clarity in that it must be relatively simple, expressing basic principles, giving an easy-to-follow sense of direction and priorities; (2) coherence in that it must make sense in order to have the persuasive power to carry it out; (3) communicative power in that it must convey language that infuses action into the organization; (4) consistency in that the organizational actions must be in sync with the plan and mission; (5) flexibility in that an organization cannot get stuck in a rut of this is how we've always done it, so this is how we will continue to do it.

Organizations must be aware of possible need for change in tactic and approach; this does not mean abandoning the core mission or values, but rather executing the mission in a different way (Wilson, 1992). A strategic plan is what keeps an organization moving forward regardless of times of growth or times of turbulence. It is the driving force behind why an organization exists and what the organization seeks to accomplish.

A vital component of developing an effective strategic plan is rigorous, comprehensive research on the organization itself, the publics or audiences the organization serves, the market and competition of the organization, and the stakeholders involved in running the organization. The LSG can benefit from harnessing the power of a strategic plan to really hone in on what it stands for, seeks to accomplish, and what they think the organization should look like moving into the future. One quality of an effective strategic plan is flexibility to change when the current model no longer meets the demands of the market. A strategic plan for the LSG must take into

account its goals, the relationships it has with its publics, and the constraints within which it operates. An effective strategic plan has the potential to significantly enhance the LSI and allow its continued growth into the future.

Loveland Sculpture Group Goals

The goal of this thesis project was to create strategic recommendations that would capitalize on the community involvement of the LSG's Loveland Sculpture Invitational and improve participation of and benefits to the artists and community members. This chapter discussed the theories and practical applications that can give LSG the resources to better communicate with the key stakeholders in the LSI. The public relations theories discussed highlight the opportunity for the LSG to better communicate specific organizational messages most effectively.

Organizations communicate with their publics whether purposefully or unknowingly, public relations theorists and practitioners alike agree it is in the best interest of any organization to have a well understood internal message in order to project a cohesive and effective message to external publics.

Along with a strategic message, organizations need a strategic plan to create a clear path forward and to help ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization. Organizations that have socially minded goals to encourage behavior change in order to provide a social benefit to society would do well to understand the systematic steps of a social marketing plan to help ensure the success of their influence on behavior change and the betterment of communities. Additionally, the arts industry and the LSG alike have had to adapt over the last two decades to more business minded, market driven factors that affect the creation, production, and sale of art. This project analyzed interview and survey research with key stakeholders to develop a strategic

plan that incorporates the above theories and practices to enhance the goals and success of the LSI.

It will take an entrepreneurial arts leader to help the organization chart a specific course, to get all members of the organization to buy in to a strategic vision, and keenly communicate the LSG's specific goals to the community they seek to influence and better and an entrepreneurial arts leader needs the road map of a strategic plan.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of this thesis project was to study the perceptions by stakeholders of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational in order to assess their strategic direction. It aims to capitalize on the community involvement of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational in order to improve participation of and benefits to the artists and community members. To do so, it conducted extensive research with key stakeholders and developed a comprehensive strategic plan for the LSI. The overall approach of the research and plan was based in social marketing by the LSG. This is an effective approach because a primary goal of social marketing is to influence behavior of others for community betterment. In the case of the LSG, the organization seeks to influence behavior to entice people to invest in arts education within their community. The following development objectives were used to develop of a comprehensive, usable strategic plan for the organization to re-craft LSI and improve its appeal and effectiveness as a core element of the LSG's contributions to the arts community.

The main objective of this thesis project was to take a research deep dive into the current state of LSI, thematically analyze research results, and synthesis themes into actionable steps to move forward in the form of a strategic plan.

The strategic plan development objectives listed here are the steps used to craft an effective plan for the LSI:

5. **Detail the focus and purpose of the organization's goals and plan:** Note the social problem to be addressed with a summary of facts that prompted the focus of the social marketing plan. Then, create a purpose statement that includes the benefits of the social cause of which the organization is in pursuit.

5. **Survey the situation:** Once there is an established purpose and focus, conduct a high-level audit of factors, both internal and external, that will have an impact on decision-making in the planning process. In the for-profit marketing world, this is called a SWOT analysis, or an examination of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.
5. **Select a target audience:** Paint a descriptive picture of the target audience for the identified goals. Include the social networks, community assets, level of community involvement, demographics, social status, etc. Some social marketing plans can have a secondary target audience that may include strategic partners and opinion leaders of the target audience.
5. **Define and set behavior goals:** Create a simple description of what the organization wants to influence the target audience to do.
5. **Identify target audience barriers, benefits, competition, and other influences:** Evaluate what it is that the target audience currently thinks of the idea or behavior the organization wants them to perform. Draw on understandings of the target audience's current behavior preferences and why they do not currently engage in the desired behavior.
5. **Create a specific position statement:** Communicate in lay terms what the organization wants their target audience to think about the social cause they are promoting.
5. **Create a strategic marketing mix:** Describe the product, price, primary place of distribution, and promotional strategies to reach the target audience.
5. **Create a plan to evaluate progress:** Determine how the organization will judge the success of the social marketing goals by: (1) measures of output – how successful are the actual activities of the organization; (2) measures of outcome – have the target audience's beliefs, knowledge level, or behaviors changed; (3) impact measures – what is the current level of contribution toward the social marketing effort's goals.

5. **Create a budget and identify funding sources:** Establish the cost of conducting the above steps, and alter them as needed to fit within the scope of the budget.
5. **Create the implementation plan:** Specify who in the organization is responsible for specific tasks, duties, and outcomes within the plan. The implementation plan should reflect all the planned marketing activities, specific time frames for completion and the corresponding budgets.

In order to achieve these objectives, I conducted interviews with all members of the LSG board of directors, surveyed past participating artists, and surveyed past LSI volunteers. Table 2 shows the relationships between the objectives and methods used to achieve them.

Table 2: Relationships between Objectives and Methods

Objective	Method	Outcome data
1) Detail the focus and purpose of the organization's goals and plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-structured interviews with board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voice recordings of interviews ▪ Researcher notes ▪ Follow up email content
2) Survey the situation		
3) Select a target audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artist survey ▪ Volunteer survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quantitative measures of interests, opinions, and experiences with the LSG Invitational ▪ Qualitative, open-ended data on views on the LSG Invitational
4) Define and set behavior goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-structured interviews with board members ▪ Artist survey ▪ Volunteer survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voice recordings of interviews ▪ Researcher notes ▪ Follow up email content ▪ Analysis of interviews ▪ Analysis of surveys
5) Identify target audience barriers, benefits, competition, and other influences		
6) Create a specific position statement		
7) Create a strategic marketing mix		
8) Create a plan to evaluate progress		
9) Create a budget and identify funding sources		
10) Create the strategic plan		

5. RESEARCH DESIGN

To fulfill the research objectives listed in Chapter 4, I used mixed methods to examine the perspectives, attitudes, needs, preferences, and views of key participants in the LSI. I conducted semi-structured interviews with each of the seven members of the LSG board of directors to generate qualitative data for analysis. I also conducted an online survey among 1) past participating artists and 2) past event volunteers.

Theoretical Framework of the Method

This thesis project used two methods for data collection and analysis: semi-structured interviews and short online surveys. These approaches were selected for several reasons. Interviews were chosen for this project because interviews create an opportunity to provide rich data, participants' language is important for gaining insight into their perceptions of LSI, and the data generated will provide ideas, language, and insights directly from the key stakeholders of the LSG. In addition to the interviews, I also surveyed two groups of key stakeholders in the LSI. Alongside the interviews, the surveys provided a broader, more systematic data on specific questions about the effectiveness, goals, strengths and weaknesses, and overall views of the LSI from a larger population.

An interview is a planned verbal exchange that usually involves preparation and planning on the part of the interviewer, the interviewee, or both (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Gillham, 2000). Given the managed and planned aspects of this verbal interaction, the effectiveness of an interview is incumbent upon the preparation and communication skills of the interviewer (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). Interview effectiveness includes the ability of the interviewer to structure clear questions (Cohen, et. al., 2007), the ability to attentively listen to the interviewee

(Clough & Nutbrown, 2007), the know-how of the interviewer to pause, know when to probe, know when to prompt (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), and the knowledge of when to let the interviewee speak freely.

The choice to use interviews as a research method implies there is value in personal language and one-on-one interpersonal interaction as a data outcome in the given research project (Newton, 2010). Interpersonal interaction is valuable in research where gaining insight and understanding is a main goal of the research project (Gillham, 2000; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

This thesis project conducted surveys in order to contextualize interview findings within larger populations. Surveys are useful in research projects where data collection of a particular phenomenon cannot be directly observed, including thoughts on a particular service, feelings about an event, to habits of a population (Babbie, 1973; Busha & Jarter, 1980). Using survey research, the researcher can survey a population that is a set of persons having at least one common characteristic (Busha & Harter, 1980).

In this research project the common characteristic of the surveyed population is sculptors having participated in the LSI and LSI volunteers. Surveys are increasingly common in research because surveys are efficient in that they can measure many variables regarding a population without substantial costs of time or money. There are two types of basic surveys, cross-sectional surveys where data is gathered on a population at a single point in time, and longitudinal surveys, where data is gathered on a population over a period of time and the researcher analyzes the changes at attempts to describe and explain the changes (Babbie 1973).

This project used cross-sectional survey. Survey questions were finalized after interviews with the LSG board in order to test ideas and themes that emerge from the board members interviews.

Participants

This project collected data from three groups of people involved with the LSG event: the board of directors, participating artists, and LSI volunteers.

The LSG board of directors are the people most intimately involved with the LSI and have the most emotional investment in the event. Some of the current board members include founders of the LSG. I selected the LSG board members for data collection because each member brings a passion for sculpture, the importance of the arts in community, and for seeing the LSI succeed. Though there may be discourse among board members as to how the LSI should progress into the future, they board is unified in their desire for long-term success of the LSI. One-on-one interviews gave each board member an opportunity to freely express their desires, vision, concerns, thoughts, feelings, passions toward, and suggestions for the longevity of the LSI. Collecting the aforementioned data individually allowed me the opportunity to identify themes that emerged collectively from individual interviews. The LSI participating artists, both past and present, were a rich source of feedback about the event itself.

The LSI event volunteers are the boots on the ground and the ears during each annual event. With an extensive database of LSI volunteers, past and present, I sent a brief online survey of this group of 500 people. The survey had 60 respondents for a 13.2% response rate. Although this was only a small proportion of the full sample sent the survey, it likely reflects the most impassioned volunteers with the most to say about the LSI. As such, these responses can be seen as a good reflection of the most involved members. They do not have generalizability, but this survey was seeking insight rather than generalizable predictive power, and therefore the lack of generalizability likely does not have a negative impact on the analyses done here. The LSI

volunteers provided unique insight into the logistics of the LSI and valuable perceptions about the artists, the event itself, and the meaning and purpose as a driving force behind the LSI.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

This section details the specific instruments and procedures I used to conduct the interviews and administer the surveys.

Interviews

The LSG board of directors is made up of seven board members, all with diverse backgrounds of business and art experience. In order to better understand each individual board member's vision, I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with each board member asking questions about the purpose of the LSI, their vision for the future of the LSI, and its strengths and weaknesses (see Appendix E). I analyzed the interviews using qualitative thematic analysis.

In order to obtain the data mentioned above, I first contacted each board member, via email. My position at Mantooth Marketing Company, allowed me to attend a LSG board meeting on March 10, 2014, where I was able to tell each board member to anticipate an email from me regarding setting up an individual meeting with them. I explained to each board member that as part of my master's thesis, I will create a strategic plan for the LSG and their insight is an integral part of the creation of that plan. I had immediate access to board member's contact information because of my previous position with Mantooth.

First I contacted each board member via email to arrange in-person, one-on-one interviews. I was able to meet with six of the seven board members in person. I had to conduct a phone interview with one board member, as he lives in New York City and time and distance did not permit an in person interview. In-person interviews provide a more complete context of

communication to the interviewer, allowing the interviewer to also get a sense of nonverbal communication cues.

With permission from each board member, I recorded each interview using SuperNote recording for iPhone. I chose SuperNote because it syncs with Dropbox to better ensure the recordings were not lost.

To ensure the interviews covered similar topics across the participants, I used a question guide that asks questions to better understand each individual board member's vision for the future of the LSI, what elements of the LSI do they think work well, what elements of the LSI would they like to see change and why, why are they passionate about the LSI, what they thinks the main goals of the LSI are, if they think the LSG is a community oriented organization, how they envision any community orientation of the LSI manifesting itself, and whether they think it is important to invest in K-12 arts education in Loveland.

Additionally, following the completion of the board member interviews, I instituted a qualitative method participant check. Participant checking is an important quality control step in the interview process where interviewees have the opportunity to review the researcher's summary of their interview and review their statements for accuracy (Harper, 2012). Participant checks helps the researcher improve the accuracy and credibility of what is recorded during an interview and creates additional buy-in into the research project from the interviewee (Barbour, 2001; Bryne, 2001; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Doyle, 2007). Participant checks also allow for the interviewee to offer additional thoughts and comments about the interview subject matter or corrections about the interview summary. Do conduct the participant check, I sent follow up emails to each board member that included the key themes identified in analysis to allow

interviewees to provide additional thoughts and feedback on those themes. I received no corrections or additions to the themes from the participants.

Surveys

The online surveys were distributed via Emma email marketing software. Mantooth Marketing Company has an Emma subscription and previously communicated with both artists and volunteers using Emma. The survey instruments were administered by sending a link to participants that directs them to the survey, which will take approximately 15 minutes. The online survey was fifteen to thirty questions in length. The online survey questions were finalized after the interviews with the LSG board. The goal of the online survey was to get direct feedback from LSI sculptors and volunteers regarding future goals LSG board members may have for the LSI as well as to assess preferences, likes, and dislikes of the survey populations. It also allowed me to test some of the themes that emerged in the interviews with other populations to determine if and how they agreed or disagreed with those themes.

The LSI artist survey was sent June 11, 2014 with three follow-up reminder emails sent on June 18, June 25, and July 2 (see Appendix G). The LSI volunteer survey was sent August 15, 2014 as a follow-up to the 2014 LSI. I also sent three email reminders to volunteers about the survey on August 22, August 29, and September 5 (see Appendix G).

Data Analysis

In order to make recommendations for the LSG and to create a strategic plan, I used a thematic analysis of the interviews and examine means, distributions, and correlations in the survey results.

Prior to the interviews, I anticipated board members communicating differing visions and perceived purposes of the LSG. That indeed was the case. I examined the interviews for themes

in the goals, purpose, strengths and weaknesses, and general views on the LSI. From these themes, a conceptual list of key ideas was used to contribute to the development of the strategic plan that is the overall goal of this thesis project.

From the interview data, the researcher must be able to synthesize some valid conclusions. From the interview conversations with board members, a thematic analysis will help identify emerging ideas, and narrow the focus of the interview data to emerging themes and patterns (Aronson, 1994). In the thematic analysis process, first, data is collected, in this project data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Second, is to group the related emerging themes from the data into categories. Themes are identifiable patterns that can include topics of conversation, vocabulary uses, recurring activities, and industry related meanings (Aronson, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1989). Next, using a thematic analysis, emerging themes can be combined into related sub-themes. Identifying themes among all the interview data brings together ideas, experiences, or fragments of thoughts that may be meaningless when viewed alone, apart from the greater context of the other interviews (Aronson, 1994; Leininger 1985; Conostas, 1992). Once themes are identified, the researcher can tell a story and make recommendations based off of the data collected (Aronson, 1994). Findings and recommendations from the data collected for this project do not have a wide scope of generalizability because of the fact that interview conversations and subsequent emerging themes from those interviews are specific to one organization the LSG and their specific event, the LSI.

The surveys were analyzed using simple correlations and examination of means, distributions, and other summary statistics. Because this project was not interested in predictive models, no inferential statistics such as ANOVAs or regressions were used.

6. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH

This chapter provides an overview of the results of the interviews and surveys conducted for this project. It identifies themes in the interviews using discourse and thematic analysis, and trends in the survey responses using means and percentages. Results of the surveys are integrated here with analyses of the interviews to demonstrate ways in which volunteers and sculptors did and did not express similar sentiments as the board members. This analyses was then used to develop the strategic plan that will be presented to the LSG.

LSI Board Member Interviews

The individual, semi-structured interviews with LSG board members and the surveys of LSI volunteers and LSI artists confirmed the LSI lacks a true sense of organizational identity and direction. From the start of my relationship with the LSG and the start of this thesis project, the overriding concern from board members was that the organization has no clear guiding identity, plan, or mission other than to exist because it once was the largest outdoor sculpture show in the country. The mission statement and *About Us* page on the LSI website (see Appendix A) communicates a mission that is different from what the individual board members communicated, and also differs from what the LSI volunteers perceive to be the purpose of the LSI event.

From this research, three themes emerged: 1) there is no clear guiding mission or purpose for LSI. There is not a specific and deliberate mission that serves as a guiding charter in turn, LSI has a lack of coherent organizational identity, 2) there is a discrepancy among the board members as to the definition of emerging artists, and 3) because there is no clear identity, the

organization does not have clearly defined goals, a plan to achieve said goals, or clear target market.

Q1. How did you get involved with the Loveland Sculpture Group?

The LSG Board of Directors is made up of useful mix of perspectives and expertise. Two board members are original, founding board members; two board members joined the board in 2014, per the recruitment and invite of the current board president; the current board president first got involved with LSI in 2002 as a sculpture supplier; and the sixth board member joined the board in 2011, he owns the Loveland Dairy Queen and says “it is hard to really figure out what it [LSI] is. It’s not a business, but it still needs to make money and it’s not.”

Although a variety of perspectives is important to the health of an organization, LSI experiences a battle of the old guard versus new, fresh ideas. Since there is no governing mission or clear purpose, this struggle between old and new further emboldens the lack of organizational identity.

Q2. Describe what you think the goals are of the LSI. Are there any changes to those goals you would like to see? What do you think the goals of LSI should be?

This interview question produced interesting answers and further highlighted the fact that there is a lack of clarity as to what LSI is as an organization. Responses greatly varied, and although the board members spoke with passion, they often expressed feelings of frustration at focusing on and achieving specific LSG goals.

Diane said the goal of the LSG is “to survive and make it profitable again. I think if we’re going to go in a different direction . . . we should go big . . . LSI is more geared toward vendors and suppliers and less public oriented. It needs to be a family-friendly, [a] more hands-on experience where people can explore the medium of sculpture, explore the different types of

materials, and have it be more of an interactive experience. I think we can really inspire people with a hands-on experience in the vendor area. Interaction, or workshops would draw me back as a member of the public. Rather than just going to look at sculptures.”

DiAnne focused on her concern over the organization’s lack of professionalism, and said, “LSI has to be more professional . . . anything that doesn’t grow dies and it just seems to be dying. Changes need to focus on it being more international in scope and it bringing in a wider variety of sculptors, not just the bronze, figurative folks.” Four artists in the artist survey echoed the sentiments of LSI being too bronze-focused saying, “Too many bronze sculpture. It makes your headache,” “Too much traditional bronze,” and “More diversity of types of sculpture, less bronze.” Also, DiAnne explained that, “. . . the shows lives off of the money it makes off of booth fees but . . . there are tons and tons of untapped revenue streams” since sculpture is so much broader than just bronze cast sculpture. She thinks there can be revenue streams from food sculpture, candy sculpture, etc.

Craig’s response directly highlights LSI’s primary challenge. He said, “I’m struggling to identify what it [the goal of LSI] really is. It’s not a business. It’s a nonprofit not making any money. I feel like I keep missing the idea of what makes this run.” From Craig’s business perspective, he says, “We can’t just be a show for entertainment purposes, we need serious buyers with the current business model. If artists aren’t selling, they won’t come back. So sometimes I wonder if the whole venue just needs to change, should we just change the way we do things.” This response highlights the feelings of many of the board members.

Marc, the board president had less to say about specific goals and focused instead on the lack of clear goals of the organization. He explained, “I want to help it [the LSI] find its direction . . . I’ve always noticed that it’s sort of disorganization prevents it from going in any one

direction. I think the goals of the original design of The Show are education and the show and sale of art. I'd like to figure out how we increase business and how we increase education. I don't have a vision for The Show per se . . . I got involved because it's an important institution in the sculpture industry. The reach of the benefit needs to be greater than Loveland or Colorado, it needs to have national reach and benefit." Marc didn't seem to indicate that he had a specific goal for LSI other than to make money. However, he didn't have a goal as to how he wants to use the money. This is the board president; he wants LSI to make money, but doesn't know how LSI should use the money it makes; this is a problem. This sentiment is the result of a lack of organizational identity.

Joe, one of the original board members provided some historical perspective, he noted how the organization has changed: "Originally I got involved with LSI to be involved with buying art for the city of Loveland. In the hay day of LSI, we had extra money so we started giving money to schools in addition to buying art for the city of Loveland. I'd like to purchase art for the city." LSI does communicate in their mission statement (the term mission statement is used very loosely here as no board members communicated a singular mission statement) found on their website, that LSI is to ". . . use any profits made from The Show to fund sculpture projects for the City of Loveland . . ." (see Appendix A). However, only 1% of the LSI volunteers perceive the purpose of LSI is to raise money to purchase sculpture of the City of Loveland and Joe is the only board member who thinks the purpose or mission of LSI is to raise money to purchase sculpture for Loveland. Also, LSI hasn't donated art to the City of Loveland in at least five years.

Jerry, the other original board member similarly drew on the organization's history, he noted its commitment to the public; he thinks it is in the best interest of the public for artists to

have a forum to display their work. He said, “I think the goals should always remain true to the original intent, to always offer the opportunity to artists to display their work to the public. The reason for this is, young artists, right out of college can’t afford to be full time sculptors.” The alleged original intent isn’t even communicated in the LSI mission statement, as found on the LSI website, see Appendix A, and only 6% of the artist survey respondents are 40 years or younger, and currently there are not even young artists right out of college participating in the LSI event.

In summary, the two newest board members seem to be pessimistic about the current state of LSI but have a sense of optimism about making changes for the future. Everyone except Jerry seems to be a little hazy on what exactly the goal of the LSI is. Jerry is steadfast that the goal is for undiscovered artists to have a venue to display their work. Marc wants to see LSI be geared more toward education but couldn’t really explain who needed to be educated or how LSI would do the educating. The board members must come to an agreement as to what they seek to accomplish with this organization. There must be one cohesive direction for the organization because right now there are six board members with six different ideas of what they’re trying to accomplish.

Q3. What are aspects that you think LSI does really well?

Board member responses to this question expressed a sense of trying to cling to a few things they want LSI to do well, but that are not necessarily going well currently. The lack of unity on the real purpose of the organization is reflected in similarly varied responses to their views on what the LSG does well. Their responses ranged from encouraging the public to engage in more art, to providing a prestigious venue for art sales, to serving the community with art exhibitions.

Diane said, “I like to experience and play with art, I’d like to see that hands-on experience at LSI. The vendors or exhibiting artist could be a draw if they can get involved in explaining the medium in a more hands on fashion.” Diane also thinks LSI needs to differentiate itself from Sculpture in the Park; 11% of volunteer survey respondents, as communicated in open ended responses in the volunteer survey, think LSI needs to differentiate itself from SIP. Diane thinks there ought to be a physical location differentiation and stated, “By separating them physically, there is an opportunity to announce the difference and the different reasons to come see us [LSI]” as opposed to SIP.

DiAnne thinks LSI is “good at keeping the old folk happy.” She echoed that LSI hasn’t changed or evolved with the changing and evolving sculpture industry. She shared that from engaging her extensive sculpture industry network on social media, the feedback she received is that LSI has “a nice home townie, old time feel to it,” and LSI is a show with a lot of camaraderie. However, prior to being asked to be on the board, DiAnne has not felt the need to participate in LSI because it is not evolving with the sculpture industry – and she’s a sculptor.

Craig shared that when he first got involved he was impressed that serious buyers see this as a prestigious or serious event. He was concerned that LSI is starting to lose that notoriety among serious art buyers. Additionally, he was concerned about the dynamic of the younger generation not embracing bronze sculpture with the same level of enthusiasm as older artists.

Jerry was “most proud of the presentation of the show itself, the sculptors who do participate do a nice job of professionally presenting their work; the visual is very good, the quality of the tents, even the event layout are good.” However, artists’ comments in the artist survey expressed different sentiments, including:

- It is set up like a huge flea market. Hard to focus on one thing. Extremely unprofessional displays on tables without backdrop.

- Booth "walls" inside the tents block the view and kill the meager light available for viewing adjacent booths. They are giving a Moroccan Bazaar feeling to the show cheapening the experience and lowering what the patrons are willing to pay.
- The tents look like an unprofessional flea market.
- It's a free for all... overwhelming for patrons as well as exhibitors.

The artists have a different perspective as to the professionalism of the LSI suggesting that board member views and artists' views are quite different.

Joe's comments reflected the artists' comments somewhat. He expressed concern that LSI has lost its luster. He explained, "the low price for artists is good and the fact that it is not juried so new artists can try their art out in the market" is something LSI does well. However, of the 151 artist survey respondents, 6% expressed of artists specifically said in their comments the show needs a more selective jury process because there is a decrease in the quality of the work displayed. Some of the artists' sentiments include:

- Way too many artists. It is set up like a huge flea market. Hard to focus on one thing. Extremely unprofessional displays on tables without backdrops. I felt fortunate that anyone even noticed my art in all the chaos.
- Need a reputation of high quality work, rather than a mix of stuff.
- Become more discerning about the quality of work that is selected or shown, also group according to category.
- Better jury panel
- The quality of art has deteriorated the past 3 years. As the economy has gotten worse and fewer artist have made trips to shows or have dropped out of the business all-together this show has continued to fill it's tents by letting in art that would not have been allowed in 5 years ago. It drops the price point and quality.
- I have visited the Invitational Show several times. I have consistently been disappointed in the quality of the work. There is too much of the same genre, in particular wildlife. There should be some kind of qualification for the artists, and some attention paid to the variety of work, and perhaps fewer participants.

As a venue for high quality art, the LSI is not meeting artists' expectations. Artists, comments highlight their desire for demand for a higher quality of art to be displayed at LSI.

Marc focused on raising money. He explained that the LSI is good at, "... the purchasing and donation of art, the donation of money to schools, and providing a venue for sculptors to sell their work. The problem is, it doesn't make any money doing what it's supposed to be doing and it needs to." However, it is unclear if this goal is even what the LSG is trying to accomplish. Only 1% of the volunteers think the purpose is to purchase art for the city, and as noted above, the LSI hasn't donated art to the City of Loveland in over 5 years. Even though Marc and Jerry said the purchase of art for the City of Loveland is important, actions of the organization do not communicate that.

Q4. What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing the LSI?

Board members said that challenges to LSI include: funding, trying to survive, a lack of understanding by the community as to what LSI actually is, and a lack of understanding by the general public as to what constitutes sculpture. These sentiments mirror the lack of organizational identity, the lack of clear goals expressed by board members, and reinforces the organization's need for a clear strategic plan. In order to be a successful organization, the organization's publics, both internal and external, must know what LSI actually is.

The two newest board members both expressed challenges in educating the public about LSI and about the sculpture industry and the fact that sculpture has evolved beyond just bronze figure. However, from the remaining board member responses, there was a sense of not having a clear understanding of what LSI really is and seeks to accomplish in order to present a clear message to the public.

Diane said the biggest challenge is, “Educating the public that it’s a different show and provides a different experience” than the Sculpture in the Park. Yet, it is impossible to educate the public about what LSI is as an organization, when the organization’s own board members cannot define the organization.

DiAnne expressed she is very passionate about getting the board to coalesce around the idea that sculpture is no longer just bronze cast and she wants the board to understand LSI is behind the evolution of the sculpture industry. She said, “sculpture is now ice carving, it is candy carving, sand sculpting, it is in the virtual world. I think we need to embrace the entire world of sculpture and that’s a challenge to the way things have always been done [at LSI]. We need to embrace the way sculpture is changing because that is the future . . . In the short term, we need to change the existing members of the board perception of sculpture and the exhibiting artists need to embrace that the new kids on the block are not a threat to the old way of sculpting in bronze . . . I think for a really long time, sculpture has been those bronze pieces that are for your back yard, for your church, for the civic building. And I think that’s the mindset that the show has. But it hasn’t been that way in the industry for like the last 10 years or more and every day its getting faster and faster.”

Craig thinks because of the history of the show, everyone is afraid to make a big change and that is proving to be the challenge for LSI. On the other hand, Jerry thinks the biggest challenge is getting new visitors and buyers. Joe thinks the biggest challenge is to survive.

As in his other comments, Marc focused on the organization’s finances, and said the biggest challenge is funding, “We’re constantly on a shoestring budget trying to do something monumental . . . LSI just doesn’t seem to get the support that other non-profits seem to get.”

The challenges communicated by Jerry, Joe, and Marc highlight the reason LSI struggles for funding, where other non-profits may not, is that other successful non-profits have a clear purpose they can effectively articulate to the public, as to what they stand for and are trying to accomplish, in order to persuade people to give money to support their cause. LSI does not have a persuasive message to ask people to support a specific cause. These responses make it clear that the LSG needs to decide on one or two specific, clearly identified goals, and communicate them to its stakeholders and to the public in order to convince them giving money to LSI is a worthy investment.

Q5. What do you think are the unique aspects of LSI that set it apart?

When asked what unique aspects they associate with the LSI, board members demonstrated a range of ideas. Diane said she thinks having vendors and sculpture supplies at LSI makes LSI unique but cautioned that, “LSI needs a better draw than just being the overflow artists from SIP.” DiAnne said the most unique aspect of LSI is that it’s sculpture exclusive and that it is in a gorgeous location at the base of the mountains.

In response to the open-ended question on the artist survey, *Please tell us the main reason you participate in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational*, 5% of respondents specifically said they enjoying coming to Loveland, Colorado. Though, DiAnne went on to say, “Because there is nothing new about the show, it has reached its maximum capacity and now it’s going down . . . So for patrons, if you don’t really care about sculpture, or don’t have \$3k to spend on purchasing sculpture, then if you’ve gone you’ve gone, there isn’t a big draw for people to go back. There isn’t an entertainment factor for the public. There aren’t new things for the average person to go to the show because they just see the same stuff.” This is an important point because

LSI has been doing things the same way for 23 years and it has not changed and evolved with the sculpture industry.

Craig said, “I’m under the impression that it’s a forum for undiscovered artists, that’s probably the only thing that separates us from SIP.” Again, there is a discrepancy among the board members as to what constitutes an undiscovered artist. Jerry said he wants to remain true to the original intent of LSI being for young artists. According to the survey data, only 6% of survey respondents are 40 years or younger. If that is what Jerry believes is the original intent, then LSI is not meeting that goal either.

Joe said he thinks the most unique aspect is that LSI is not a juried show. Again, 6% of artist respondents used strong rhetoric to express the lack of quality art as a result of the non-juried show. Jerry and Marc thought the most unique aspect of LSI is that it is sculpture exclusive. Marc also expressed “the sheer volume of sculptors that have participated and showcased art over the years” makes LSI unique. He also admitted, that the problem is, despite these unique attributes, that the LSI hasn’t grown and progressed with the internet and other technologies used for marketing sculpture art.

Q6. Why are you most passionate about helping LSI?

Overall, the board members are passionate about sculpture. Interview responses indicated a sense of nostalgia from the board members that have been involved with LSI more long term. There was a genuine sense of optimism about the past, mixed with dedication to make LSI succeed, and fear that it can’t. Their responses reflected a distinct desire to enhance sculpture in the community and nationally, and reflected some big dreams for the future of the organization.

Diane said she would love to know more about how create sculpture and she is excited to talk to people who create sculpture and get ideas on how to pursue it. She said she thinks SIP is really an event where you to admire the work, but LSI needs to be completely different. She said, “I’d like to see people interact with sculpture.”

DiAnne, the most involved sculptor of the board, poignantly stated, “I want to create a show that I would want to go to. I want to have it be an international event that as a sculptor I want to attend and want to invite people to attend. I’ve gone to the show, but I wouldn’t be an exhibitor there, I just don’t do that type of work and probably 85% of sculptors in the world don’t do that type of work [bronze cast]. There is a real opportunity to educate the public, curators, and gallery owners on the evolution and expansion of the sculpture industry.”

Craig, said he wants to see LSI succeed and he wants to be part of that successful evolution. He also said, “I would call the students “Emerging Artists” that’s what my focus has always been about seeing our show succeed because I don’t see that from the show across the street. The other show is missing that element of trying to educate the younger generation about art.”

Jerry is passionate about LSI because of the reasons he said they started LSI in the first place, being a show for artists who couldn’t get into SIP. Similarly, Joe said, “I’m passionate about the purchasing of art for the city. I liked being part of that process. It is also nice to get together with other artists.” Yet, only 1% of volunteer survey respondents perceive the main purpose or mission of LSI is to raise money to purchase sculpture pieces for the City of Loveland to display in the community. This disconnect is a reflection of the LSG’s struggle to market their show and programs effectively because the board can’t agree on the main purpose of the organization.

Marc said, “[LSI] has always been a fixture for me. I want to see it survive and thrive. We’ve talked about letting it go, but that doesn’t make me feel good. Because of the financing model, a good or bad year can make or break the show for the next year. LSI is a place for artists to show and sell, that is an invaluable feature especially since all other galleries work on a percentage now.”

Q7. What do you envision to be LSI’s ideal level of community involvement?

Commitment to the community is important to all board members, although their perceptions about what this means specifically, differs among board members. They also linked this question with their overall goals. Diane said she feels the current level of money donation to Loveland schools make sense if LSI continues to be in downtown Loveland, but she would like to consider a new avenue for the donation of funds if LSI moves to the Embassy Suites. She said, “It would be a nice thing to buy sculpture and donate to schools, but I’d really like to see LSI be its own entity, apart from SIP and the city [of Loveland].” Diane made the important point that, “. . . if we want the public to donate to our organization, we need to tell them exactly what is being done with their money.”

DiAnne is passionate about changing how the proceeds of LSI are used. She said, “Right now giving away \$10k of the \$13k proceeds is stupid. You can’t grow that way; you can’t put on a show with \$3K and expect people to come. At some point the proceeds can go somewhere, but you have to grow the show first. *We need to support emerging sculptors, not emerging artists, because we’re a sculptor show*” [emphasis added].

For Craig, the involvement of artists is a core part of his response to this question. He was concerned about the quantity of participating artists, and said, “I was impressed when this

was considered the biggest show; we're losing that. If you're into sculpture this needs to be on your to-do list. I'd like it to have a more national scope."

Jerry has a different perspective. He noted, "LSI has led the pack as far as donating to arts in the Loveland schools." Though he thinks this is purely a PR gesture and has no bearing on why artists participate or the public attends. He explained, "for example, LSI is not a charity event like *Sculpture to beat cancer*" [emphasis added]. Similarly, Joe was not as eager to give money away to any entity while LSI is struggling to make money.

Marc said he thinks LSI should serve the sculpture community and not just Loveland; "I don't agree with Loveland Sculpture Invitational being the name because I want to support sculptors everywhere in the US, not just Loveland. Now in Loveland, The Show is not seen as that great because the community has reached its max capacity from it; the city isn't doing much in way of outreach. The community is not doing much to support The Show, Loveland takes it for granted, so why are we doing it for Loveland?"

For the most part, donating money to elementary schools did not fit with what board members saw as the organization's contribution to the community and yet they continue to do it. They largely explained that LSI should be more about the love of sculpture, the betterment of the sculpture community, and to help emerging sculptors not elementary schools.

Q8. Who do you want to see participate in The Show?

In terms of who participants, board members overall wanted to see more artists and other sculpture related players, such as curators, participate. For example, Diane explained that she felt it would be great to have more exhibition type artists who are willing to showcase the process of how to make sculpture, with the goal of educating the public about "how to make art." DiAnne expanded on this and suggested the LSG should recruit galleries, curators, exhibitors, and all

types of sculptors. Both Diane and DiAnne felt for LSI to survive, the show needs to become broader in scope. The other board members similarly wanted to see more sculptors, more of the community, and more undiscovered artists involved. Overall, they aimed to give the LSI a greater scope of appeal among those interested in sculpture, tapping into what they see as an existing audience.

Q9. One component of the LSI is the Emerging Artist Program that has a participation tent at The Show and then donates money to the Thompson School District art programs. What do you think the purpose of the Emerging Artist Program is? What would you like to see done with the funds from the Emerging Artist Program?

Diane explained she thinks competitions draw more people out to participate and help find real talent. She felt the EAP should be more of a scholarship competition where emerging sculptors can submit work to be judged by professional sculptors. DiAnne, expressed she wants to support emerging sculptors not elementary school students. In contrast, Craig said, “I like what we do to bring attention to the teachers. I like that we give money to schools to help young students learn about art, or else they’ll just be exposed to video games.” Similarly, Jerry explained, “The purpose of the Emerging Artist Program is to provide students and parents exposure to the arts. It is just a PR outreach and LSI is a long way off from helping actual emerging artists.” Joe said that, “The purpose is to get more people aware of the arts. However, this should be secondary to the artists because if artists don’t come, then the show doesn’t happen.”

Marc said, “It is currently just a revenue source for the school system; there needs to be more structured instruction as part of receiving money. We don’t generate enough revenue to give it to anyway everyone. Once we have more revenue, I really have no preference as to what

we do with it.” This is a problem when the president of an organization doesn’t have a vision for the cause the organization is to support.

The two newest board members see this as an opportunity to find sculptor talent through a competition element to compete for scholarship to LSI. Craig, Jerry, and Joe have a much less specific idea of what the EAP is or should be, is it exposure for kids to the arts in general, recognition for the teachers, or revenue for the Loveland schools? This really needs to be defined and needs to determine if this is even a part of LSI moving forward.

Q10. Describe what you envision for the future of LSI.

When considering the future of the LSI, the board members had a range of ideas. Overall, they wanted to expand the reach of the organization as well as focus its goals more clearly. Diane expressed three ideas she has for moving forward: 1) Location: she wants to see a locational difference between LSI and SIP, open ended responses in the volunteer survey also indicate volunteers think there needs to be a differentiation between the shows or they should just combine or coordinate, 2) A more specific focus: she wants to see more emphasis on education, and more hands-on participation, 3) People getting involved and participating in the process instead of just viewing and buying sculpture art. She said change is necessary, and “my sense is that the older board members don’t want to change too much because they don’t want to lose the flavor. Well the flavor is already gone. We need to go big or go home. We need to change or we’re going under.”

DiAnne, expressed she thinks the involvement of the board itself, as well as other stakeholders, needed to increase for greater success. She explained, “I’d like to see Mantooth [marketing company] take a step back and implore the board members to do more and be more

active participants in the event. I envision board members having more skin in the game instead of just having a pretty title.”

Other board members focused on differentiating LSI from other shows and increasing their appeal to artists. More generally, Marc wants LSI to continue to be a venue where sculptors can afford to showcase their art and he’d like LSI to make money and said, “I envision it where people come to seminars, drink a bit, and buy art; to be a world renowned show – which it used to be.”

It feels like there is a sense of nostalgic optimism about the past and real sense of uncertainty, even pessimism, about the future. Can it make money? How will it make money? Is it time to call it quits? There are divergent opinions among board members on the future direction of the organization, and what LSI should actually try to accomplish.

Question 2 really highlights the theme of the lack of clear organizational identity where Craig said he’s “. . . really struggling to identify what it [the goal] really is. It’s not a business. It’s a nonprofit not making any money. I feel like I keep missing the idea of what makes this run.” Similarly, Marc said, “. . . I’ve always noticed that it’s sort of disorganization prevents it from going in any one direction.” This response is juxtaposed to Jerry’s, who said, “I think the goals should always remain true to the original intent, to always offer the opportunity to artists to display their work to the public. The reason for this is young artists, right out of college can’t afford to be full time sculptors.” These divergent sentiments tell the story of the disorganization amongst the board and the lack of clear guiding identity because the board cannot cohesively identify the direction or purpose of LSI.

Artists Survey

The artists survey results also reflect the lack of the LSI's and LSG's clear organizational identity. First, 41% of artist respondents do not identify LSI as helpful to their career, as shown in Figure 1, or they are indifferent about the degree to which it is helpful to their career. If the main tenant of LSI is to be a forum for undiscovered sculptors to launch their career, then it should be expected that nearly all participating artists would find LSI helpful to their career.

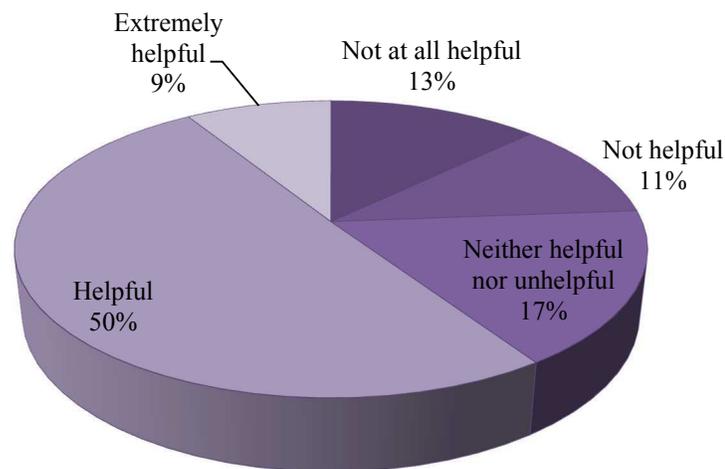


Figure 1. How helpful LSI is to artists' career

Although not a tenant of LSI's already weak mission statement, the organization currently uses LSI to raise money for arts education in Loveland public school system. 75% of artist survey respondents are aware LSI donates money to arts education in local public schools, although 25% of respondents were not aware of that fact. Most respondents are neutral about LSI donating funds to the Loveland school district to promote arts education and only 21% of artist survey respondents say the fact that LSI donates money to local arts education has any bearing on whether or not they participate in LSI (see Figure 2).

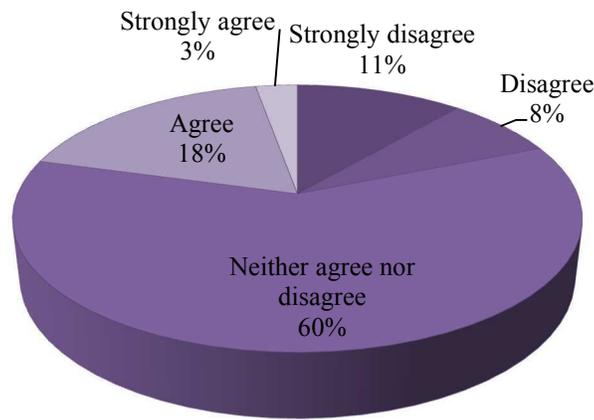


Figure 2. Donating money to local arts education affects artists decision to participate

To further demonstrate this is not a significant issue for artists survey respondents, nearly half of survey respondents neither agree nor disagree that they would stop participating if LSI gave money to working sculpture artists instead of local public schools as shown in Figure 3. Only a small amount would stop participating if LSI stopped donating money to local arts education.

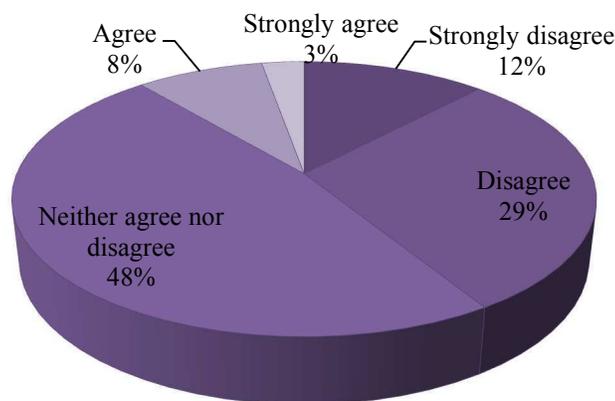


Figure 3. Donation of money to local arts education

Furthermore, nearly half of all artists survey respondents do not have an opinion either way as to whether or not LSI donating to local arts education is even important to them (see

Figure 4) and not much of a compelling argument can be made given that only 9% of survey respondents say they frequently donate to arts education related causes (see Figure 5).

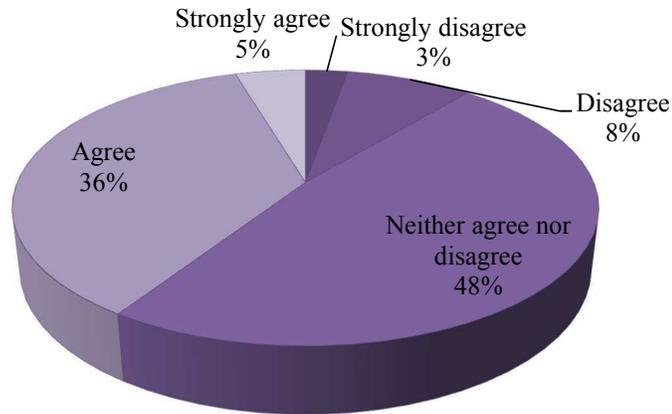


Figure 4. Artist opinion on the importance of LSI donating to local arts education

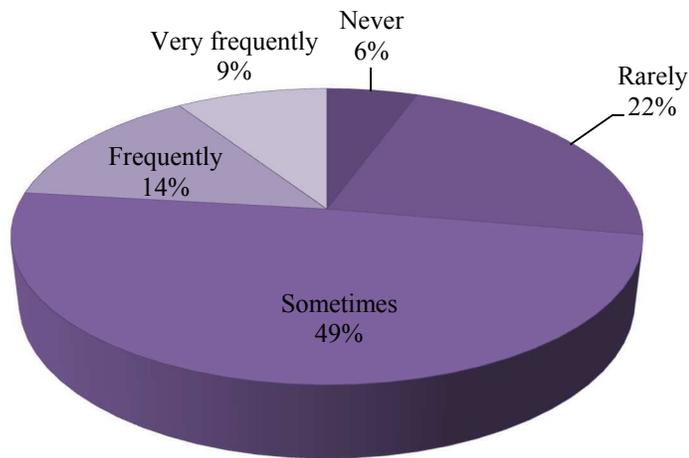


Figure 5. Artists who personally donate to arts education

Survey results seem to communicate that artists are mostly ambivalent about LSI donating money to arts education in Loveland public schools. Furthermore, over half survey respondents neither agree nor disagree that LSI should use its proceeds for scholarships for emerging sculptors instead of donating proceeds to local arts education (see Figure 6).

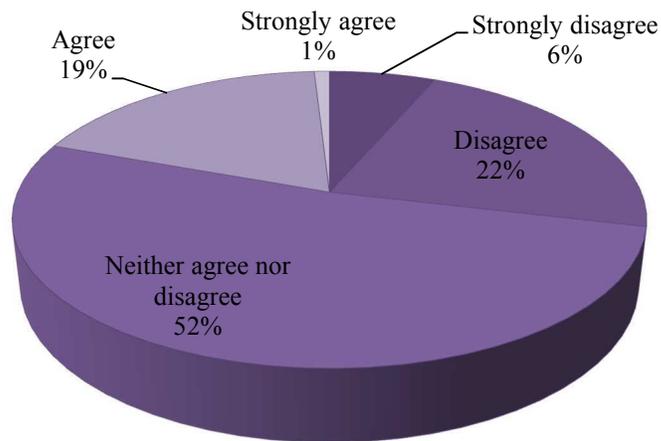


Figure 6. Artists who say funds should be used for scholarship of emerging sculptors

Largely, artists survey respondents do not think LSI should focus on educating the public with lectures or conference-style events and only 19% of artists believe this public education should happen with lectures and conference-style events. However, some artists survey respondents think LSI should be more hands-on and interactive with live demonstrations for the public while nearly one fourth of artists have an opinion either way (see Figure 7).

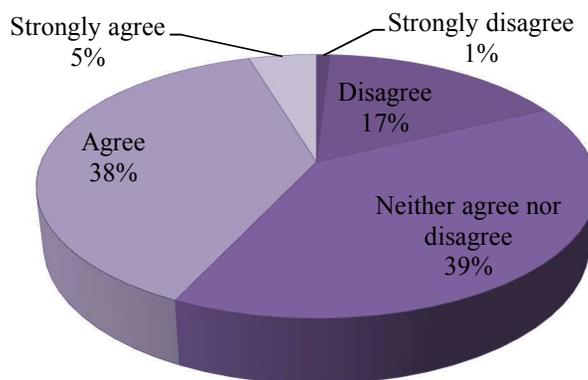


Figure 7. Artists who believe LSI should be more hands-on & interactive

While artists do not think the public needs to be educated with panels and lectures, the idea of having continuing education for the artists themselves is somewhat appealing to some survey

respondents. Though as seen in Figure 8, it is nearly a three-way split amount those interested, those who are uninterested, and those with no opinion.

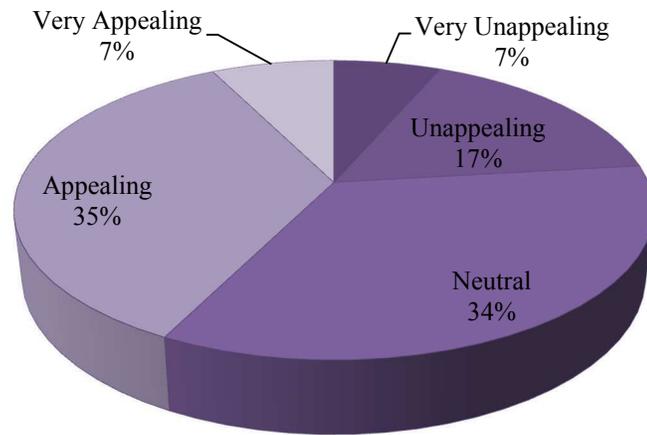


Figure 8. Artists who want to see continuing education opportunities at LSI
Artists survey respondents suggest that some are open to the idea of LSI being a commission-only show with no booth fee, but are still nearly evenly split between those who report it is appealing and those who are not open to a commission-only model.

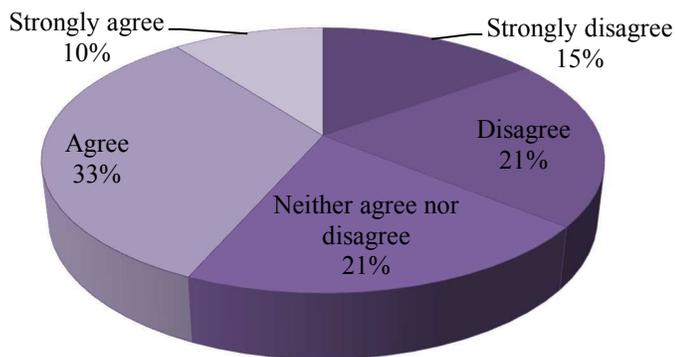


Figure 9. Artists who would participate in a commission-only show
The artist survey respondents are not overly enthusiastic about the idea of having a sculpture competition as part of LSI; respondents are nearly evenly split over the idea of having a sculpture competition at LSI (see Figure 10). However, over 50% of artists survey respondents say they would enter some of their work if there were a competition component to LSI.

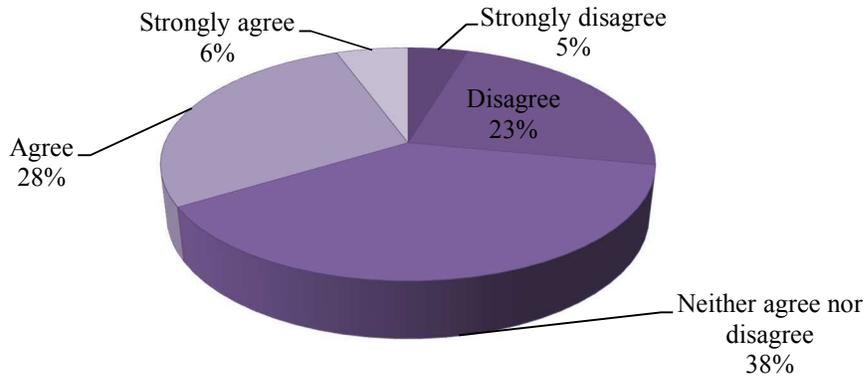


Figure 10. A sculpture competition would improve LSI

There is some opportunity to add the notoriety of a sculpture competition to LSI. Artists want to be able to say they are award winning. Having a sculpture competition would create an opportunity for participating sculpture to compete for an award-winning title to add to their resume.

Artists survey respondents are seemingly more open to the idea of having LSI at an indoor venue in Loveland, leaving the door open to the board member’s discussion of having LSI at the Loveland Embassy Suites.

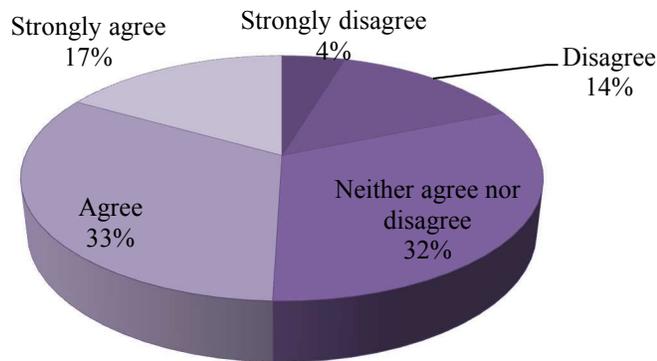


Figure 11. Artists who want LSI hosted at an indoor venue

Artists survey respondents are more decisive about the fact that LSI should seek a more national scope and reach in its promotion. Over 80% of survey respondents want LSI to have a more national scope with national notoriety. Artists want to participate in shows that have a

wide scope of notoriety. LSI once had that type of notoriety within the sculpture community. Lack of long-term vision and direction has caused that notoriety to fade.

The most noteworthy survey response is the response to the question, “The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists.” Although board members Jerry and Joe, are adamant about LSI remaining true to the original intent of being a forum for undiscovered artists to showcase their work to the public, the artists survey respondents seem to tell a different story (see Figure 12).

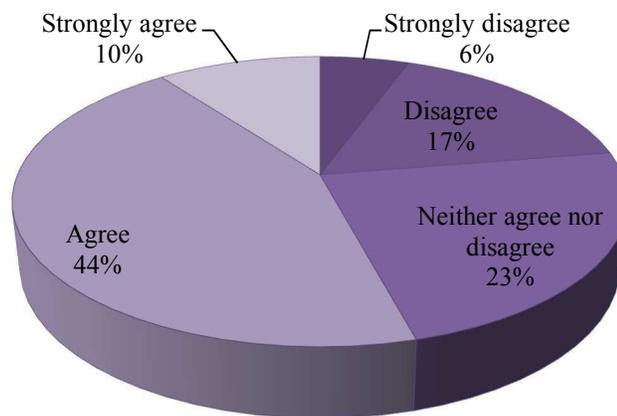


Figure 12. Artists who believe LSI is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists

Albeit, nearly 55% of respondents agree or strongly disagree that LSI is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists, however, if this is the main tenant of the organization, there ought to be a much stronger consensus that LSI is indeed the ideal forum for undiscovered artists. The response to this question speaks to the fact that the organization’s lack of identity makes it impossible to create an event with a well-communicated goal and a defined target market to recruit undiscovered sculptors to participate. As previously stated, in the open comments offered by artists survey respondents, some artists are asking for a more stringent and better jury panel. They want LSI to have a reputation of displaying high quality work. If there is poor quality work or work that is more similar to crafts than to quality sculpture work, the lower quality art drags

down the reputation of the show and the reputations of artists' work associated with LSI. Artists want their work to be associated with other high quality works of art.

Volunteer Survey Results

Responses to the volunteer survey further tell the story of LSI's lack of clearly defined and communicated organizational identity. When asked, "what do you think is the biggest appeal for the public to attend the Loveland Sculpture Invitational?" the responses highlight disconnect between what some board members say is the main focus of LSI and what others think of LSI. As shown in Figure 13, most feel the type of art being showcased is the biggest appeal.

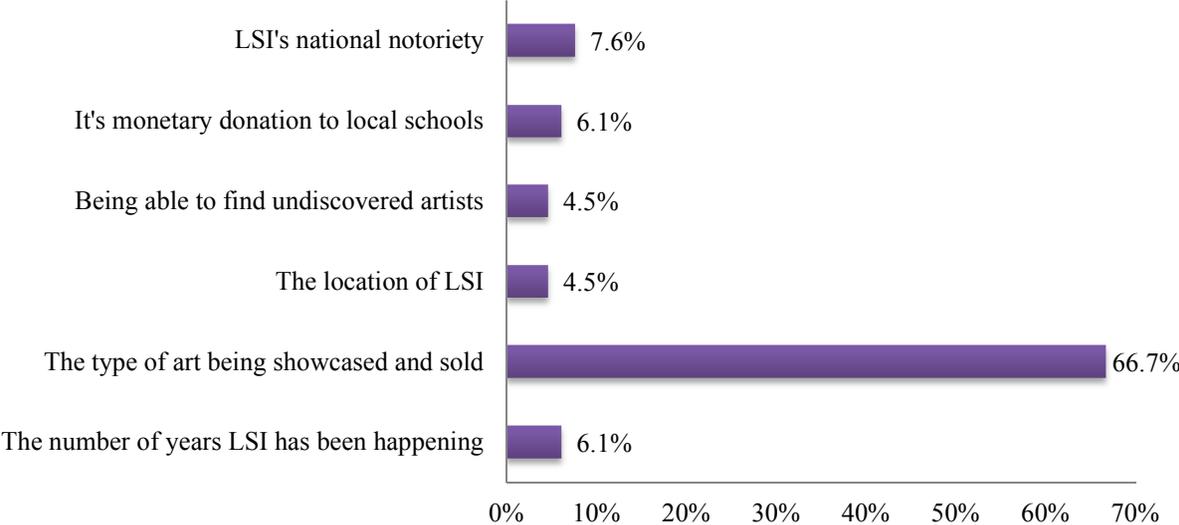


Figure 13. LSI's public appeal

Only 6% of volunteer survey respondents answered, thought donation to local schools is the biggest public appeal of LSI; this seems to indicate that the charitable donation component is not a draw for the public to attend either. Furthermore, only 4.5% believe LSI's appeal is being a place to find undiscovered artists and this is what board members claim is the original intent of LSI.

In answering the question, “What do you perceive is the main mission or purpose of LSI,” the volunteer survey results are as varied as the lack of organizational identity itself (see Figure 14).

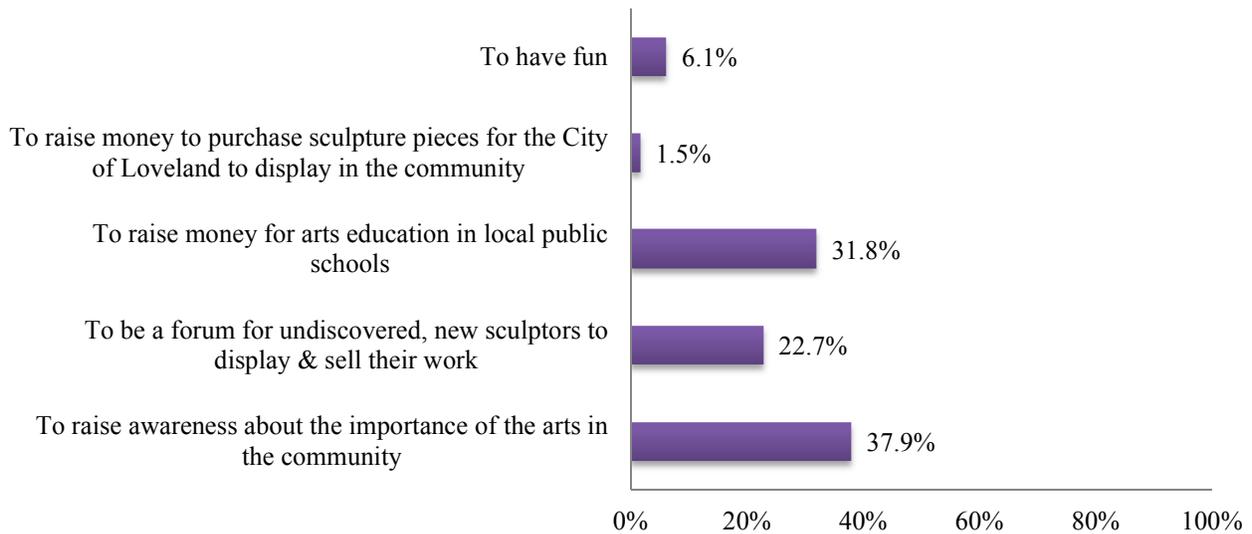


Figure 14. What volunteers perceive to be the mission of LSI

Nearly 40% volunteer survey respondents answered, “To raise awareness about the importance of the arts in the community,” Some board members say being a forum for undiscovered artists is supposed to be the main purpose of LSI; yet, only 23% of volunteer survey respondents perceive this to be the case. More respondents selected the false survey option “to have fun” than those who believe the main purpose of LSI is to raise money to purchase sculpture pieces for the City of Loveland to display in the community. Although Joe indicated in his interview this is the main reason he got involved with LSI, only 2% believe purchasing sculpture for the City of Loveland this to be the main purpose of LSI.

When asked if the purpose or mission of LSI is clearly defined, nearly half of the survey respondents do not know if the purpose or mission is clearly defined – yet another indication of the lack of organizational identity. However, see Figure 14 where nearly 40% of volunteer

survey respondents communicate they think the main purpose of LSI is to raise awareness about the importance of arts in the community. That is not even the prevailing purpose of LSI as communicated by the board members.

Even more evidence still about the lack of organizational identity, when asked to what degree volunteers agree with the following statement, “I believe the mission and purpose of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational is clearly defined and communicated to the public” nearly half neither agree nor disagree – half of survey respondent don’t know and only 5% agree (see Figure 15).

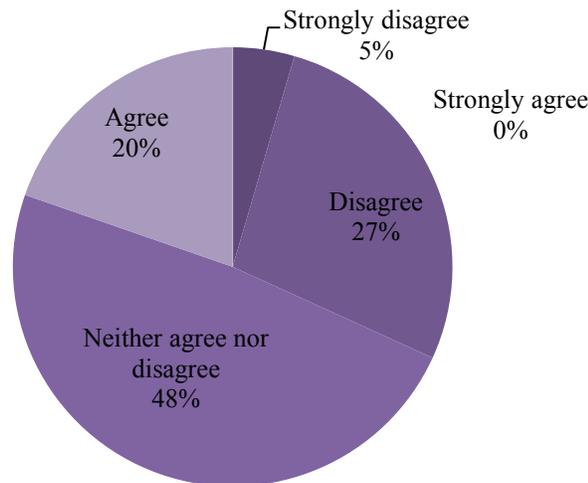


Figure 15. This LSI mission is clearly defined and communicated to the public

When asked to what degree volunteers agree with the following statement, “I believe the mission and purpose of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational is clearly defined and communicated to the LSI volunteers,” nearly half of volunteer survey respondents neither agree nor disagree.

Figure 16 shows that volunteer respondents are involved with LSI for the fact that LSI makes charitable contributions to local Loveland schools more than the artists. Largely a reason volunteers are involved with LSI is for its contribution to the local public schools, even though that is not the mission of LSI.

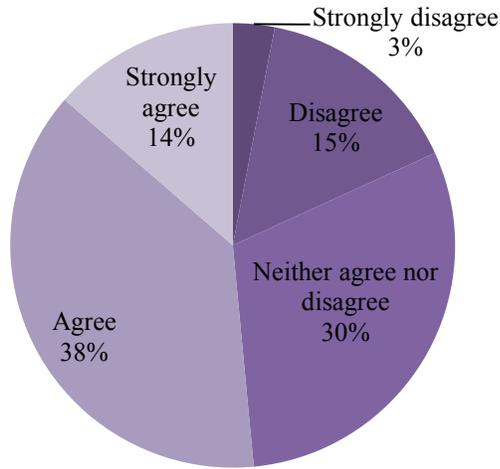


Figure 16. Volunteers participate because LSI donates money to local arts education

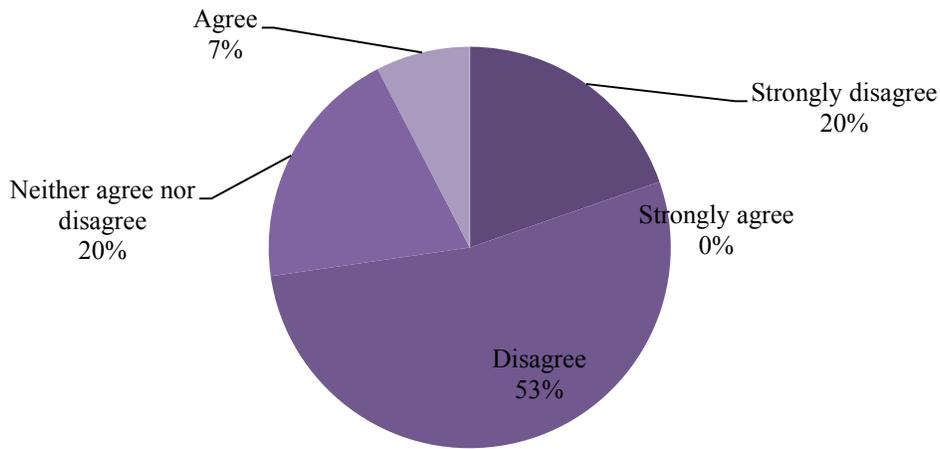


Figure 17. Volunteers who believe proceeds from LSI should go to scholarships for undiscovered sculptors

A likely explanation for the volunteer belief that LSI proceeds should go to local Loveland public schools is most of the LSI volunteers are local residents and most artists travel to Loveland for LSI and are not residential members of the Loveland community.

Since LSI was started to be a place for artists who couldn't get into SIP, LSI has not been able to differentiate itself from SIP without a clear identity of their own. It is of no surprise that

50% of volunteer survey respondents believe the attending public cannot differentiate between the two sculpture shows.

Volunteer survey respondents seem to loosely agree with artists survey respondents about whether or not they believe LSI would be more appealing for participating artists if the event included a sculpture competition in which artists could enter their work. Although nearly 40% disagree with this notion, 35% have no opinion. Overall, volunteer survey respondents don't seem to think a sculpture competition would make LSI more appealing for the attending public (see Figure 18).

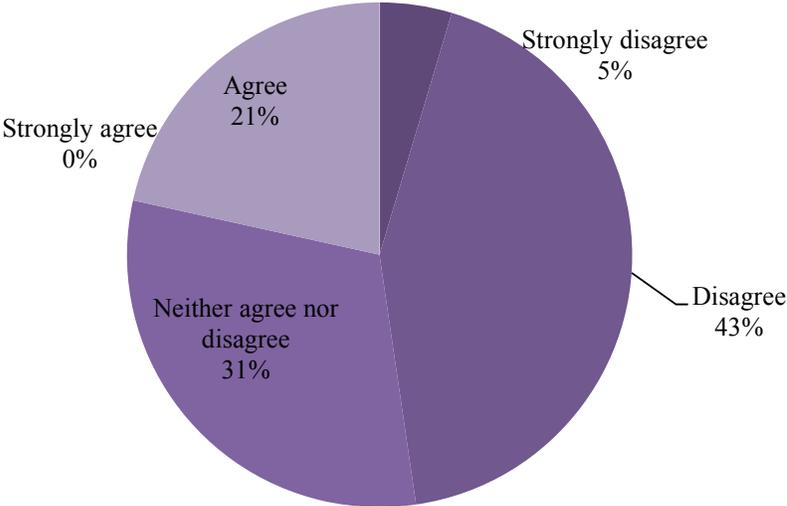


Figure 18. Volunteers who believe LSI would be more appealing for the attending public if there was sculpture competition

Volunteer survey respondents seem to indicate there is opportunity to make LSI more interactive for the attending public.

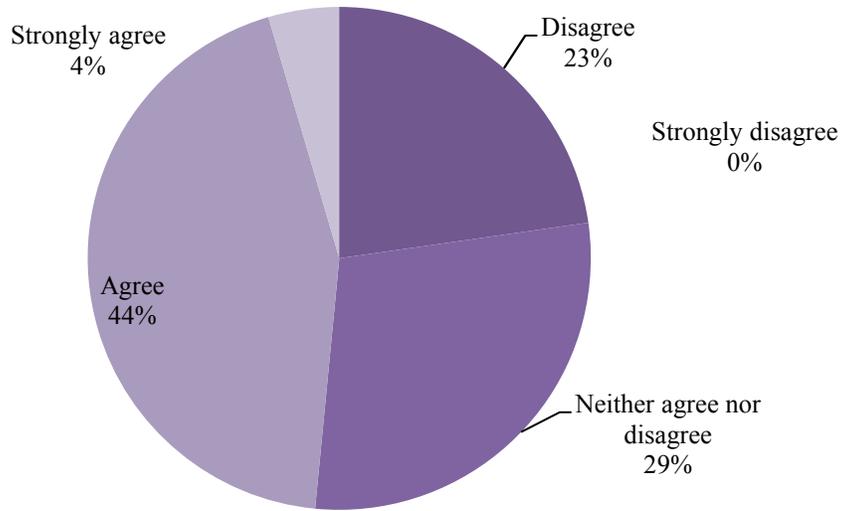


Figure 19. LSI would be more appealing for the attending public if it were more interactive

Overall the volunteer survey responses confirm a certain amount of disorganization and lack of organizational identity. There is little continuity in responses from board member interviews, artists survey responses, and volunteer survey responses confirm LSI is not clearly heading in one direction with a well-communicated mission as a guiding force.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Although art is a creative expression, something to be enjoyed at an emotional level, the sale of art needs to speak the language of the market. Artists and art organizations still need to define the unique value proposition and purpose their art offers and communicate that message to its publics. LSI's inability to effectively communicate its unique value proposition to its publics has resulted in a significant organizational challenge in maintaining involvement from artists, buyers, and the public alike. The aim of this thesis was to identify and provide a discussion of the relevant literature, use a thematic analysis of collected data to identify important organizational themes and trends, and analyze the themes that emerged to inform a recommended course of action for the organization.

The theoretical framework for this thesis project comes from the literature and research in the fields of public relations theory, arts management, social marketing, and strategic planning. Public relations theory tells us, as outlined in this thesis, that organizations knowingly or unknowingly are communicating some type of message to their publics. Public relations as a practice ultimately serves to help an organization communicate to its publics how the organization practices its core mission and values. Which is why an organization must have a clear organizational identity guided by a clearly defined vision, mission, and core values in order to have a compelling message to communicate to its publics. This thesis explored literature in the research field of arts management and gave an overview of how society consumes art, the concept of market saturation in the arts, and the literature gave a positive way forward of how arts organization leaders can navigate the changing waters of the arts market. The literature on social marketing provided some insight for an organization that seeks to influence societal

behaviors such as encouraging people to contribute to their communities. Social marketing literature is relevant to LSI especially if they decide the main tenant of the organization is to raise money for local arts education. However, the principles of social marketing can be useful for LSI if the main purpose of the organization is to indeed help emerging sculptors launch their sculpture careers. Both require LSI to be able to rally the community around a cause and convince their publics it is a social cause worthy of support. Strategic planning literature is the crux of this thesis. Any organization without a plan, will ultimately fail. Though an organization may not cease to exist, the organization will cease to be effective unless they have a strategic identity guided by a strategic plan. LSI must learn to harness the power of a strategic plan to really hone in on what it stands for, seeks to accomplish, and what they think the organization should look like moving into the future. One quality of an effective strategic plan is flexibility to change when the current model no longer meets the demands of the market. An effective strategic plan has the potential to significantly enhance the LSI and allow its continued growth into the future.

This thesis project was research-driven to guide the development of a strategic plan to shepherd LSI to overcome its pending challenges and begin to rebuild the organization. To do so, this project collected and analyzed survey and interview data from key stakeholders, including LSI board members, participating artists, and event volunteers. Research specifically included depth interviews with six members of the LSI board of directors, an online survey of 561 current and past participating artists with a 27% response rate, and an online survey of 500 current and past LSI event volunteers with a 14% response rate.

The thesis research has made it clear LSI lacks a clear identity and purpose to communicate to its internal and external publics. In order to compel its publics to participate in

and support LSI, the board must agree upon a central, guiding purpose for their organization to communicate to its publics. The research concludes that the leadership of LSI must focus on coalescing around a specific organizational purpose and follow a research-driven strategic plan in order to compel its publics to support LSI and survive in the arts market.

The research and analysis of LSI unearthed the need for the LSI board of directors to agree on an organizational identity, purpose, mission, and goal. In order to convince artists, volunteers, the community, or any outside others, of the virtues and benefits of LSI, the board of directors must first determine internally what exactly the purpose of their organization is. LSI is not so much paralyzed by the lack of an event plan, as it is the lack of an organizational purpose and goal. It is impossible to ask others, internal and external publics alike, to partner with an organization on a journey or in a cause, when the cause itself is undefined.

With the conclusion of this thesis project, the LSI leadership will now have strategic plan to illuminate a positive way forward for the organization. From thematic analysis of the thesis project research, the resulting strategic plan give LSI leadership detailed ideas and instruction on how capitalize on five areas of opportunity emerging from the research:

1. To create deliberate connections between emerging artists and potential sponsors
2. Recreate and reinvigorate a professional perception of LSI
3. Deliberately create mentorship for emerging sculptors from seasoned professionals
4. Create opportunity for artists to achieve award winning artist notoriety at LSI
5. Protect a reputation of quality work coming from LSI through juried standards

The strategic plan breaks down each area of opportunity into a current problem statement, an objective to a positive way forward, and specific action items to foster the desired result. With a

research-driven plan and practical steps toward success, LSI has the wherewithal to turn current crisis into opportunity and current weakness into future strengths.

While this thesis project set out to create a strategic plan, the process of creating a strategic plan leads one to explore the effectiveness of a hard and fast strategic plan. As the planning process and strategic planning literature has evolved, some argue the strategic plan is dead and any organization must learn to manage ever present tensions that are inherent to their said organization. Some scholars suggest that to provide structure in a fluid fashion means that an organization should focus on: 1) what is the vision the organization is trying to pursue, 2) how will that organization make a difference in its surrounding world, 3) how will the organization succeed and what does success look like, and 4) what capabilities does the organization need to achieve their success (O'Donovan & Flower, 2013). In any organization, there will be some ever present tensions; in the case of LSI, the organization will likely always have to manage the tensions between artistic freedom versus revenue, high-quality work versus inclusion and service of Emerging Sculptors, bronze-cast versus the creative evolution of the sculpture medium. Author and strategist Simon Sinek makes the compelling case that "It doesn't matter what you do, it matters *why* you do it" (Sinek, 2009). Sinek argues if you start with the why organizations are more innovative, more profitable, and have a greater loyal following and support. Admittedly, it begs consideration that on some level organizational problems may stem from a focus on hardline creation of a strategic plan rather than focusing on defining the greater why of the organization.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Loveland Sculpture Invitational “About Us” page on website.

landsculptureinvitational.org/about-us/

Largest Outdoor Sculpture Event in America **August 9, 10, 11, 2013**

About Us

What is the Loveland Sculpture Group?

The Show is presented by the Loveland Sculpture Group, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to expanding opportunities and appreciation for sculpture. Proceeds from The Show are used to purchase sculpture for the City of Loveland to use for public display. In addition, over the last 20 years, more than \$235,000 has been donated to support local art education in the Loveland area schools. In meeting the goals of their mission statement to assist up-and-coming artists, the organization has also contributed \$243,000 to local art education programs and other nonprofits. In the past three years, over \$30,000 has been donated to the art departments of the Thompson School District R2-J. In 2011, \$10,500 was donated to numerous art departments and each department may use the funds as they wish.

Mission Statement: To present an annual Sculpture Show and Sale that brings together sculptors from around the country and abroad during the second weekend in August to display their work and exchange ideas with other sculptors. To conduct a show that creates enough interest so that anyone can come and enjoy the work displayed by the sculptors. To use any profits made from The Show to fund sculpture projects for the City of Loveland and to establish a fund for the study of visual and three-dimensional art.

2014 Call For Artists

[Register Today](#)

Show Times

Friday, August 8: 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.
VIP Party: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Saturday, August 9: 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Sunday, August 10: 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Featured Artist

 **Dan Chen**
Eugene, OR

The well known art of Dan Chen is a blend of the finest qualities of art style and technique. His work is a true reflection of his passion for the art form.

Appendix B: May 21, 2013 Press Release from Tool Box Creative



STORY PITCH

For Immediate Release

May 21, 2013

CONTACT: Marti Bruening
Project Manager, Toolbox Creative
970-493-5755 office
marti@toolboxcreative.com
www.toolboxcreative.com

Artists celebrate 30 years of Sculpture in the Park

"Inspiring." "A shining jewel." "The best show in the country." In their own words, participating artists share why they keep coming back to the distinguished show and sale.

Loveland, Colorado — When a handful of local artists conceived of a high-end sculpture show and sale to be held in the picturesque Benson Sculpture Garden, no one thought that 30 years later, it would be considered the premier sculpture show in the nation. Through three decades of uncompromising standards in quality and continued refinement of the event, Sculpture in the Park has evolved from a small, Western art show in the foothills of Loveland, Colo., into a multi-media, multi-style national fine art show and sale that artists around the country spend years preparing for.

And their preparation pays off. This year, 160 artists will display their fine art at Benson Sculpture Garden during the show's run, held the second weekend in August. In fact, Sculpture in the Park typically sees more than \$1 million in sales in its three-day, 20-and-a-half hour event.

No one can explain the impact from Sculpture in the Park better than the artists themselves, some of whom have participated in the show since its inception in 1983.

On the benefits of being a participating artist...

"Sculpture in the Park has been quite successful for me. My first show was a bit of an experiment, but to my surprise, my work got a lot of attention, and I sold several pieces. And each year since I've done better than the previous year. Sculpture in the Park is the only show I do." Randy Mulder (4-year participant)

"It offers a lot of Western exposure. It's helped me attract a great group of patrons and a couple new collectors each year. It helps with branding and challenged me to have new pieces so I am always growing and stay excited to learn new things." David Turner (23-year participant)

"Artists sell a lot of pieces at Sculpture in the Park. When I was the Featured Artist at the 2002 show, I sold 58 pieces that weekend." George Walbye (founding artist and 30-year participant)

"Visitors expect that they will be seeing new sculptures every year. Most of us try to produce new work for each

(more)

PAGE 2

August show, so visitors will see new pieces from continuing participants as well as the work of new participants." Carol Gold (19-year participant)

"I have so many good memories from the show over the years. I will never forget a patron from another state calling the show one year and purchasing one of my sculptures over the phone." Connie Hendrix, 11-year participant)

"There are many educated buyers who make a point to attend the show each year. The show is an opportunity to make contacts with serious collectors. Many patrons budget for this show each year. It is also a great way to meet gallery owners. I have met many of my gallery connections at Sculpture in the Park." Jeannine Young (14-year participant)

On the show's unparalleled quality ...

"I do no other shows. I have searched for others but have found none that can compare with Sculpture in the Park – I have been spoiled." Merlin Cohen (9-year participant)

"Sculpture In The Park is the most prestigious show in the United States. It has built a strong foundation and reputation, which is respected throughout the art world. The show appreciates the sculptors and the patrons, and they strive to represent diverse and various media." Connie Hendrix

"Sculpture in the Park is the best show in the county by far, and I've been to a lot of shows. It's well organized, the publicity is top notch, it's well attended, and we sell a lot of pieces and bring in a lot of revenue. There's not a better outdoor sculpture show in the country. Sculpture in the Park is synonymous with quality." George Walby

"Through the jurying process, the Loveland High Plains Art Council assures that all sculptures are of the highest quality and there is a representative selection of all media and styles." Merlin Cohen

"There's better art every year. The operations just get smoother and smoother. It's never stagnant and continues to grow." George Walby

On the show's streamlined process and top-notch volunteers ...

"Shows can be a lot of work but this is as easy as it gets. Cheerful and efficient volunteers greet you and instruct you in the protocol, from the beginning until the end of the show. Everything you need is furnished: pedestals, labels, assistance unloading, loading, shipping, sales assistance and more." Jeannine Young

"This show is all about the art, the artist, the returning patrons and the first time visitors. The volunteers are knowledgeable, helpful, courteous, and gracious and pride themselves in making the show most successful for all." Merlin Cohen

On the venue ...

"Benson Sculpture Garden has become a shining jewel. It feels like coming home every August." Merlin Cohen

"Sculpture In the Park has a gorgeous location. Benson Sculpture Garden is beautifully landscaped and showcases extraordinary sculptures." Jeannine Young

"The setting is lovely. It's inspiring to be surrounded by the fine sculptures in Benson Sculpture Garden and the work of fellow sculptors." Carol Gold

On community ...

"It's like being a part of one big support group. Since I do one-of-a-kind pieces and my productivity is slow, I only participate in Sculpture in the Park. After months of preparation, I finally get to unveil my latest creations at the show. The engagement with the public and the camaraderie with my fellow artists is motivating and nourishing." Randy Mulder

"Sculpture in the Park has put Loveland on the map, not just for sculptors. It's brought painters and other artists, such as welders and some of the best patina people in the country. And we now have three foundries plus a strong artist community in Berthoud and Fort Collins." George Walbye

"It's inspiring to see all the extremely talented sculptors represented in the show and to see the growth of each artist from one year to the next. Most importantly, our patrons follow our work and growth." Connie Hendrix

"I've made life-long friends with the artists, show organizers, volunteers and staff. This community of sculptors has become my second home." David Turner

Benson Sculpture Garden

When you hear artists and patrons wax poetic about the breathtaking setting that is Benson Sculpture Garden, it's not just lip service. Each year, part of the proceeds from Sculpture in the Park sales go toward the purchase of new sculptures for the Garden, as well as the funding of improvements and landscaping. Currently, 136 pieces valuing \$4 million adorn the perimeter of a lagoon, with three more pieces slated to join the display in June. Open to the public year round, the Garden provides a respite for those seeking beauty in nature as well as an extraordinary collection of fine art.

###

Appendix C: The Loveland High Plains Arts Council Home Page

[Home](#) [Show](#) [Benson Sculpture Garden](#) [Online Gallery](#) [Media](#) [Contact](#)

Sculpture
IN THE PARK

The Loveland High Plains Arts Council

The Loveland High Plains Arts Council, a private non-profit organization, was established in 1984 for the purpose of promoting sculptural arts for the cultural and economic benefit of the entire community. The organization is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors and is supported by hundreds of extraordinary community volunteers. The main focus of LHPAC continues to be the organization and sponsorship of the annual Sculpture in the Park show.

Our Legacy

Each year the proceeds generated from the annual Sculpture in the Park show go towards the purchase of sculpture for Benson Sculpture Garden as well as towards the funding of park improvements and landscaping. Currently, 139 pieces of sculpture grace the grounds of the park. This extraordinary collection of art is situated around a lagoon in the midst of trees, flowers, and natural habitat areas. With the Rocky Mountains as a majestic backdrop, Benson Sculpture Garden has been described as "one of the most unique sculpture gardens in the nation". It is open to the public throughout the year, and annually this "public treasure" draws tens of thousands of visitors from around the world.

Contact Us

For more information about the Sculpture in the Park show, Benson Sculpture Garden, or our show catalog or park guide, you can contact us at (970) 663-2940.



Contact Us

Loveland High Plains Arts Council

P.O. Box 7006
125 East 7th Street
Loveland, CO 80537-0006
(970) 663-2940 (phone)
(970) 669-7390 (fax)
lhpac@sculptureinthepark.org

Benson Sculpture Garden

Benson Sculpture Garden is located at 2908 Aspen Drive, Loveland, CO 80538
[View Map](#)

Our Sponsors



Appendix D: March 20, 2013 Press Release from Tool Box Creative



March 20, 2013

STORY PITCH
For Immediate Release
CONTACT: Marti Bruening
Account Manager, Toolbox Creative
970-493-5755
marti@toolboxcreative.com
www.toolboxcreative.com

Loveland's Premier Art Show and Sale Celebrates 30 Years

Keeping the focus on high-quality sculpture and enriching the community through art, Sculpture in the Park remains a respected destination for artists and collectors.

Loveland, Colorado: For each of the last 29 years, the second weekend in August has brought some of the highest-caliber artists in the country, along with their work, to Benson Sculpture Garden in Loveland for the renowned Sculpture in the Park art show and sale. With the Rocky Mountains as the backdrop, the show continues to serve as a leader in the world of sculpture, evolving and refining every year and serving as resource and connection opportunity for sculptors and buyers.

Prepping to celebrate its 30th anniversary this summer, Sculpture in the Park increases in popularity each year for a multitude of reasons, one of which is its commitment to promoting the highest quality sculptural arts for the cultural and economic benefit of the community -- from the passers through, to the serious collectors, to the artists themselves.

What started as a primarily Western bronze art show -- a joint venture among five Loveland-based sculptors, the City and the Chamber of Commerce -- has blossomed into a multi-media, multi-style national fine art show and sale with an equally diverse audience. This year, 2,000 pieces of sculpture will adorn the picturesque Benson Sculpture Garden for the event, with contributions ranging from bronze, ceramic, glass, metal, mixed media, stone and wood.

Anne Worrell and her late-husband, Gene, began making the journey from Virginia to Loveland each year for the Sculpture in the Park show, specifically because of the welcoming community that greeted them. It was a tradition that began in 1987 and has resulted in a collection so grand the Worrells built an upscale office park in order to display their Loveland art purchases.

"We loved being there and would always get caught up in the enthusiasm at the show," Worrell said. "We were impressed with the support from the community and with how easy it was for participants and collectors to enjoy. We felt like family."

And embarking on its 30th year, the show's focus on community remains, says Show Business Chairperson Polly Juneau. "Because Sculpture in the Park operates with a philanthropic mindset, we've been able to have a valuable and lasting effect on Loveland and the surrounding areas."

(more)

PAGE 2 Sculpture in the Park

Proceeds from Sculpture in the Park are put toward the purchase of art for the Benson Sculpture Garden, which is now home to more than \$4 million worth of sculpture. This year, three new pieces will be installed, each representing a different style of sculpture - representational, stylized and abstract.

But as impressive as the actual sculptures are, the show's impact doesn't stop when the carvings are complete. The beautification of the community also includes numerous capital improvements, including a pavilion, bridges, sidewalks, picnic areas, landscaping and more, which were possible because of the revenue from Sculpture in the Park. The annual weekend-long show is also the highest revenue-generating period of the year for local businesses, and the City of Loveland takes in significant tax revenues from the show's sales. Sculpture in the Park typically sees more than \$1 million in sales in its 3-day, 20-and-a-half hour event.

Jeannine Young, a sculptor who has attended Sculpture in the Park for the last 14 years, says her favorite memories include watching the children who attend receive an early introduction to the arts.

"It's obvious that community is a huge part of the show," Young says. "Young children who come with their parents get an appreciation for sculpture, the processes and mediums. Over the years, these children grow up and buy art. It's difficult to imagine a better-educated and more appreciative art community than the Loveland community."

Indeed, Sculpture in the Park has earned its status as one of the finest outdoor, juried exhibitions as well as one of the most trusted and respected art shows and sales in the country. And as with many fine things, it only gets better with time.

CONTACT: Marti Bruening
Account Manager, Toolbox Creative
970-493-5755
marti@toolboxcreative.com
www.toolboxcreative.com

###

Appendix E: LSG Board Member Interview Questions

1. How did you get involved with the Loveland Sculpture Group?
2. What are you most passionate about when it comes to the Loveland Sculpture Invitational annual event?
3. What do you think are the most unique aspects of LSI that set it apart from other sculptor art shows?
4. What are aspects that you think LSI does really well? What makes you most proud of your organization?
5. What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing LSI? And what are some of your proposed solutions to those challenges?
6. Describe what you think the goals are of the LSI. Are there any changes to those goals you would like to see? PROBE: What do you think the goals for the LSI should be?
7. What do you think the value of community relations and community investment is?
 - a. What do you envision to be LSI's ideal level of community involvement?
8. Who do you want to participate in this show? Artists and public alike?
9. What do you think the purpose of the Emerging Artist Program is? What would you like to see done with the funds from the Emerging Artist Program?
10. Describe what you envision for the future of the show.
 - a. What are the three biggest changes you would like to see happen for LSI?

Appendix F: LSI Participating Artist Online Survey Questions



23 years Loveland
Sculpture Invitational
2014 Show & Sale

Dear valued artists,

My name is Meghan and I am Colorado State University Masters student. As part of my graduate studies, I am conducting research about The Loveland Sculpture Invitational and its role in the sculpture industry.

Will you please help me with my academic research and take a 10-15 minute survey?

Click [this link](#) to complete the survey.

Please fill out a survey regarding The Loveland Sculpture Invitational for a chance to win a \$100 gift card to The Compleat Sculpture for your sculpture supply needs.

Thank you for your help in my research and for being the best part of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational.

Best Regards,

Meghan Swella Norton

Masters of Science Candidate, Public Communication & Technology

Colorado State University

Journalism and Technical Communication Department

Email: miswella@rams.colostate.edu

1. How many years have you been a sculptor? (open ended)
2. How do you define your sculpture style?
 - a. Modern and contemporary
 - b. Western
 - c. Classic and traditional
 - d. Nature and wildlife
 - e. Other
3. How many years have you participated in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational? (can select 1-22)
4. On average, about what percentage of your annual sales do you make at the Loveland Sculpture Invitational?
 - a. 1%-10%
 - b. 11%-30%
 - c. 31%-50%
 - d. 51%-75%
 - e. 76%-100%
5. Personally, how successful was the Loveland Sculpture Invitational for you the last time you participated?
 - a. Very successful
 - b. Successful
 - c. Neither successful nor unsuccessful
 - d. Unsuccessful
 - e. Very unsuccessful
6. What made the Loveland Sculpture Invitational successful for you personally the last time you participated? (open ended)
7. Please tell us the main reason you participate in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational. (open ended)
8. If you have participated in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational more than once, do you feel your experiences have generally gotten more successful, or generally gotten less successful, or stayed the same?
 - a. Generally more successful
 - b. Stayed about the same
 - c. Generally less successful
9. How helpful is Loveland Sculpture Invitational to your sculpture career?
 - a. Very helpful
 - b. Helpful
 - c. Neither helpful nor unhelpful
 - d. Unhelpful
 - e. Very unhelpful
10. If you feel things need to change at the Loveland Sculpture Invitational, please tell us what they are. (open ended)
11. What type of sculpture do you feel is most popular among art collectors today?
 - a. Modern and contemporary
 - b. Western
 - c. Classic and traditional

- d. Nature and wildlife
 - e. Other
12. Where are the majority of your buyers coming from?
- a. Loveland, Colorado
 - b. Within a 2 hour radius of Loveland, Colorado
 - c. Outside a 2 hour radius of Loveland, Colorado but still in the state of Colorado
 - d. Outside the state of Colorado
 - e. Other
13. Do you personally invite potential art buyers to attend the Loveland Sculpture Invitational?
- a. Very frequently
 - b. Frequently
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never
14. Are you aware that The Loveland Sculpture Group donates the proceeds from the Loveland Sculpture Invitational to arts education in local public schools?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

15. The fact that the Loveland Sculpture Invitational donates money to local arts education has a strong effect on my decision to participate.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
16. I would stop participating if the Loveland Sculpture Invitational donated its proceeds to working sculpture artists instead of local arts education.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
17. It is important to me personally that the Loveland Sculpture Invitational gives proceeds to local arts education.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

18. I believe donating funds to local arts education is a very good use of the proceeds from the Loveland Sculpture Invitational.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
19. I believe the Loveland Sculpture Invitational should consider a different place to donate its proceeds.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
20. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational should use its proceeds for scholarships for emerging sculptors or undiscovered artists instead of donating to local arts education.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
21. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational should seek a more national scope and reach in its promotion.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
22. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
23. It would really improve the Loveland Sculpture Invitational if the event included a sculpture competition.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
24. If there was a sculpture competition, I would definitely want to enter some of my work.
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree

- e. Strongly disagree
25. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational should focus mostly on educating the public with lectures and conference-style events.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
26. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational should be more hands-on and interactive with live demonstrations for the public.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
27. I would participate in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational if it was a commission only show with no booth fee.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
28. I would participate in the Loveland Sculpture Invitational if it was held at an indoor venue in Loveland.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
29. Do you personally donate to arts education related causes?
- a. Very frequently
 - b. Frequently
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never
30. How appealing would artist workshops, art related panel discussions, or conference style breakout sessions at the Loveland Sculpture Invitational be?
- a. Very appealing
 - b. Appealing
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Unappealing
 - e. Very unappealing
- **Indicate to what degree you like the idea of using the following mediums to promote your art**
31. Online events such as virtual exhibits
- a. Strongly like

- b. Like
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Dislike
 - e. Strongly dislike
32. Social media promotion and announcements
- a. Strongly like
 - b. Like
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Dislike
 - e. Strongly dislike
33. Blogs and online news articles
- a. Strongly like
 - b. Like
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Dislike
 - e. Strongly dislike
34. Please provide some demographic information to help us understand our sculptors better
- a. Gender
 - b. Age

Appendix G: LSI Volunteer Online Survey Questions



Dear valued LSI volunteer,

My name is Meghan and I am Colorado State University Masters student. As part of my graduate studies, I am conducting research about The Loveland Sculpture Invitational and its role in the sculpture industry.

Will you please help me with my academic research and take a 10-15 minute survey?

Please, click the link to complete the survey.

Thank you for your help in my research and for being an intregal part of the Loveland Sculpture Invitational.

Best Regards,
Meghan Swella Norton
Masters of Science Candidate, Public Communication & Technology
Colorado State University
Journalism and Technical Communication Department
Email: mjswella@rams.colostate.edu

1. How many years have you volunteered at The Loveland Sculpture Invitational (LSI)? (0-22)
2. How frequently do you personally invite members of the public to attend The Loveland Sculpture Invitational?
 - a. Never
 - b. Rarely
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Frequently
 - e. Very frequently
3. What do you think is the biggest appeal for the public to attend The Loveland Sculpture Invitational? Please select one.

- a. The number of years LSI has been happening
 - b. The type of art being showcased and sold
 - c. The location of LSI (i.e., Loveland, Colorado)
 - d. Being able to find undiscovered artists
 - e. LSI's national notoriety
 - f. Other, please specify
4. What do you perceive is the main mission or purpose of The Loveland Sculpture Invitational?
- a. The main purpose of LSI is to raise awareness about the importance of the arts in the community
 - b. The main purpose of LSI is to be a forum for undiscovered, new sculptors to display and sell their work
 - c. The main purpose of LSI is to raise money for arts education in local public schools
 - d. The main purpose of LSI is to raise money to purchase sculpture pieces for the City of Loveland
 - e. The main purpose of LSI is to have fun

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

5. I believe the mission and purpose of The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is clearly defined.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
6. I believe the mission and purpose of The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is clearly defined and communicated to the public.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
7. I believe the mission and purpose of The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is clearly defined and communicated to LSI volunteers.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
8. The fact that the Loveland Sculpture Invitational donates money to local arts education has a strong effect on my decision to volunteer at The Loveland Sculpture Invitational.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree

- d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
9. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational should use its proceeds for scholarships for undiscovered sculptors instead of donating it to local public schools.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
10. The Loveland Sculpture Invitational is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists to launch their careers.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
11. The attending public knows the distinction between the two sculpture shows, The Loveland Sculpture Invitational and Sculpture in the Park.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
12. I believe The Loveland Sculpture Invitational would be more appealing for participating artists if the event included a sculpture competition in which artists could enter their work to be judged.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
13. I believe The Loveland Sculpture Invitational would be more appealing to the public if the event included a sculpture competition.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
14. I believe The Loveland Sculpture Invitational would be more appealing to the public if it were more hands-on and interactive with live demonstrations.
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree

15. Were you aware that The Loveland Sculpture Group donates the proceeds from the Loveland Sculpture Invitational to arts education in the Loveland school district?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
16. If you have volunteered at The Loveland Sculpture Invitational more than once, do you perceive the event has generally become more successful, or generally become less successful, or stayed about the same?
 - a. Generally gotten more successful
 - b. Stayed the same
 - c. Generally gotten less successful
 - d. Not applicable, this is my first year volunteering
17. If you have volunteered at The Loveland Sculpture Invitational more than once, do you believe the sculptors are generally more happy with the event, generally less happy with the event, or exhibit the same amount of happiness with the event?
 - a. Generally gotten better
 - b. Stayed the same
 - c. Generally gotten worse
 - d. Not applicable, this is my first year volunteering
18. From when you first started volunteering until 2014, do you feel like artists are generally optimistic about the future of the event, generally pessimistic about the future of the event, or neutral about the future of the event?
 - a. Generally more happy about the event
 - b. Exhibit the same amount of happiness about the event
 - c. Generally less happy about the event
 - d. Not applicable, this is my first year volunteering
19. From when you first started volunteering until 2014, do you feel like the public is generally optimistic about the future of the event, generally pessimistic about the future of the event, or neutral about the future of the event?
 - a. Generally optimistic
 - b. Neutral
 - c. Generally pessimistic
20. If you feel things need to change at The Loveland Sculpture Invitational, please tell us what they are. (open)

Appendix H: Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan for

The Loveland Sculpture Invitational

Developed by: Meghan Swella Norton

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Extensive research with board members, volunteers, and artists during 2014 and 2015 revealed that **the LSI has an opportunity to re-conceptualize itself into a clearer, more focused organization** that can pursue specific goals and find success among a core target audience.

The most notable take away from in-depth interviews with members of the LSI Board of Directors: When asked the question “what is the main mission or purpose of LSI” six different board members gave, six different answers. The answers to this one question revealed the lack of clear organizational identity and purpose for the organization’s board to cohesively pursue.

A thematic analysis of online survey results from LSI artists and volunteers revealed 5 opportunity areas:

1. Create deliberate connections between emerging artists and potential sponsors
2. Recreate and reinvigorate a professional perception of LSI
3. Create opportunity for seasoned artists to mentor emerging sculptors
4. Create the opportunity for artists to achieve award winning artist notoriety at LSI
5. Create a juried standards to protect the quality reputation of the work coming from LSI

LSI can build success on its long-standing name recognition in the sculpture industry. With clear, well-defined mission and purpose, LSI can really motivate stakeholders to take more interest and ownership in the goals and outcomes of LSI.

Extensive research finding a lack of organizational identity, precedes this organizational strategic plan with aim to guide the Loveland Sculpture Invitational Board of Directors to a path of defining the organizational purpose and a plan to achieve measured organizational success.

LSI can turn crisis into opportunity and current weaknesses into future strengths.

BACKGROUND

The Loveland Sculpture Invitational (LSI) was created in 1991 out of the growing sculpture scene in Loveland, Colorado. LSI was started by a group of four passionate sculptors, three of which are still participating sculptors at the LSI. LSI was originally created to provide a forum for emerging sculptors to be able to showcase and sell their art and thus provide an entry point into the sculpture industry. The six-member, volunteer board of directors is the leadership team of LSI.

Challenges facing LSI are a decline in artist participation, funding challenges and the inability to generate revenue, and a lack of organizational identity and an unclear message communicated to the public.

While bronze cast sculpture has traditionally been the cornerstone of the sculpture industry, the sculpture industry now includes many expressions of the sculpture medium like ice sculpture, food sculpture, digital sculpture, 3-D printing, etc. To date, LSI makes no concerted effort to make LSI a representation of the trending expressions of the sculpture medium. Bronze cast will indeed remain a cornerstone of the sculpture movement and community, increasingly rising sculpture talent practices the expression of sculpture in ways other than bronze cast. LSI has the opportunity include a growing pool of untapped talent.

While Jerry says LSI is a forum for young artists, only 6% of artist survey respondents are under the age of 40. Those motivated enough to provide feedback, indicate there are not as many young artists as the board would like to believe. Again, deliberately recruiting Emerging Sculptors to participate in LSI gives LSI the opportunity to reach out to new types of sculptors, grow where the industry is trending, and be the hip, new sculpture show for sculptors of the future.

Extensive research with board members, volunteers, and artists during 2014 and 2015 revealed that **the LSI has an opportunity to re-conceptualize itself into a clearer, more focused organization** that can pursue specific goals and find success among a core target audience. The process of talking and working through a strategic plan, gives LSI board members the opportunity to coalesce around a mutually agreed upon mission for LSI and what they want LSI to stand for in the world.

The purpose of a strategic plan is to get all the board members on the same page, have them coalesce around a united mission, present a clearly communicated, specific mission to the public, make LSI a valuable asset and opportunity for emerging sculptors of the future.

With a clear vision and purpose, LSI can move forward with success.

Clear vision will help LSI move from this to motivated, effective organization

“LSI has to be more professional.”

“I’m struggling to identify what it [the goal] really is. I feel like I keep missing the idea of what makes this run.”

“I want to help it [LSI] find its direction . . . I’ve always noticed that its sort of disorganization prevents its

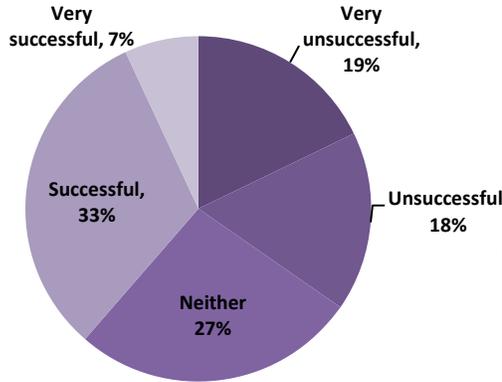


“We can really inspire people with sculpture with a professional, interactive experience.”

“LSI has the potential to be a celebration and educational forum the medium of sculpture.”

“We have the opportunity to educate the public, curators, and gallery owners on the evolution and excitement of the sculpture industry.”

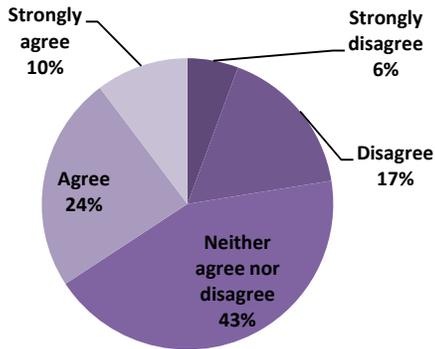
How successful artists were at LSI the last time they participate



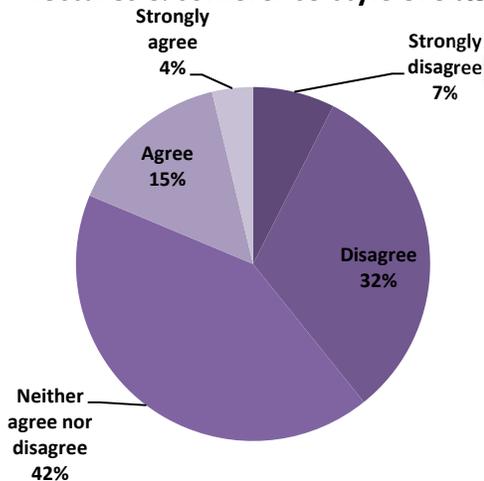
A survey of 561 past & present participating artists with a 26.9% response rate tell us the need for the following improvement:

1. Artists are having less success at LSI than in past years
2. There is not a commanding consensus as to whether or not LSI is an idea forum for Emerging Sculptors
3. Largely they do not think LSI should focus on educating the public through art related panels but rather be a place where artists can get mentorship and education and public can experience art

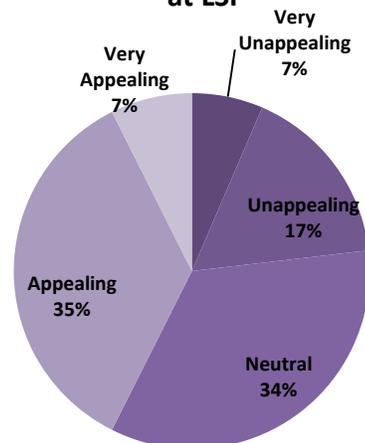
Artists who believe LSI is an ideal forum for undiscovered artists



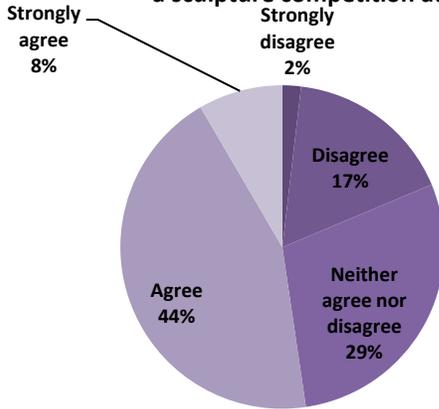
LSI should educate the public with lectures & conference-style events



The appeal of artist continuing education at LSI



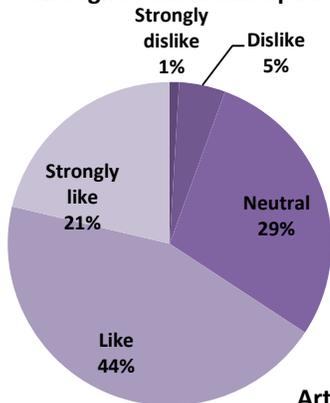
Artists who want to enter their work in a sculpture competition at LSI



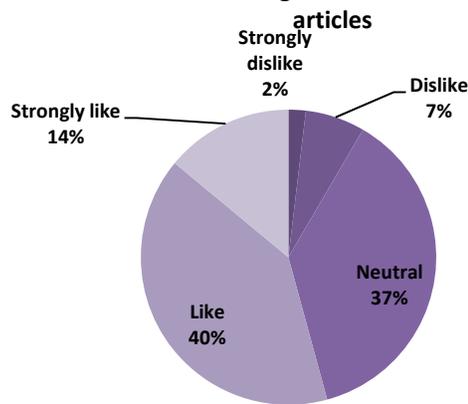
The artists survey results also tells us of the following opportunities for LSI to pursue:

1. Artists want to be able to compete for the opportunity to be an *award-winning* sculptor at LSI
2. Artists are mostly supportive of LSI held at an indoor venue to better create an environment of professionalism
3. Artists want to interact with LSI throughout the year online via social media, blogs, and frequent and fresh content on LSI's website

Artists who support an indoor venue for Artists who want to interact with LSI through social media updates



Artists who want to experience fresh content from LSI via blogs and other online news articles



Artists consider LSI a success when:

- “I make significant contacts for future sales.”
- “When I generate sales of over \$10,000.”
- “I get to meet others interested in sculpture, learn from other sculptors”
- There are “return customers from previous years. Also, having projects completed based on what people asked for from previous years.”
- “I’m not in the red and paid all my expenses there and home.”
- “I get recognition for participating.”

Artists feel unsuccessful when:

They don’t make sales

- “It’s a people pleaser, but not financially.”
- “I hoped for good sales or get commissions and I did not.”

They don’t build relationships

- “There is no real curation involved.”
- “I made no good customer leads.”

They feel their work is devalued by low quality work allowed to showcase

- “It is too overwhelming for the visitors to be able to absorb what they were seeing. It’s like a flea market and there needs to be a better juried process.”
- “There is other low quality work present.”

LSI must deliberately communicate how LSI meets the needs expressed by artists:

LSI is the must-go-to show to make good sales and network in the sculpture industry

- “To present my body of work to those who appreciate art.”
- “To get more exposure to buyers.”
- “I like connecting with other sculptors, seeing their work, and meeting collectors.”

LSI is a quality, reputable show that adds value to artists’ work

- “Way too many artists. It is set up like a huge flea market. Hard to focus on one thing. Extremely unprofessional . . . “
- “Need a reputation of high quality work, rather than a mix of stuff.”
- “Become more discerning about the quality of work that is selected or shown . . . “
- “I have visited the Invitational Show several times. I have consistently been disappointed in the quality of the work. There is too much of the same genre, in particular wildlife. There should be some kind of qualification for the artists, and some attention paid to the variety of work, and perhaps fewer participants.”

Artists envision changes to make LSI better and more successful:

A more professional atmosphere

- “It would be more professional held indoors.”

- “Wish it was indoors, more professional”
- “It used to be a prestigious show, its not anymore. Too much like a flea market”
- “It is not exclusive enough. Too much crafty work, not quality sculpture”
- “A more closely monitored jury system. Last year, there was work that was not sculpture, for example, metal patina flat panels. Also, the quality of the work was uneven-very uneven.”

Incentive and accommodation for Emerging Sculptors

- “Booth fees need to come down.”
- “Pricing for emerging artists. For those that are just starting out maybe a lower application fee could be implemented.”
- “I used to love the show but I feel it is very clicky now. Just seems the same artists get noticed and rewarded with pieces in the park year after year. I don't think it gives up and coming sculptors a chance. “

LSI builds better and stronger relationships with artists

- “I feel the communication and responsiveness to artists is lacking”
- “An outside source is handling the show now. I'm not sure they are at all connected with the artists, information is slow coming to the artists. More and better communication with artists is needed.”
- “There isn't good communication with the artists . . . this should be a priority and attention to the volunteers, which without, the show could not exist.”

The opportunity to be award-winning artists

- “A sculpture competition that involved the act of sculpting a figure would be GREAT! It would be nice & I would participate more if funds were available to apply to help with travel & booth fees, award or grant-like funds. If some of the proceeds could go towards this, it would be a way of feeding the event itself while helping artists.”
- “I want to be able to compete to add accolades to my resume.”
- “Potential buyers like to buy from artists who have won awards for their art. LSI should have a competition.”

LSI volunteers communicate the following will improve LSI:

- “Need to better define the Sculpture shows goals with the public.”
- “The public needs to understand the difference between the two shows.”
- “The public needs to be better informed about the fact that the 2 shows are completely different entities.”
- “Cut back on size, increase quality (sorry beginners).”
- “Things have gone downhill since Mantooth was hired to run it.”

LSI SWOT Analysis

This is a high level analysis of the current state of LSI and its position in the sculpture industry. The purpose is to give the organization a guide of its strengths and opportunities to maximize and the weaknesses and threats to minimize.

Review and revise the SWOT analysis annually; make all organizational decisions to maximize opportunities and minimize threats.

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 23 year history in the industry • The location of Loveland for the LSI event • Marc and DiAnne’s connections in the sculpture community • Name recognition in the Loveland community • Opportunity to hold the event at an indoor (Embassy Suites) or outdoor venue (Loveland High School) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear organizational identity • Confusion among board members as to what they are trying to accomplish with LSI • Declining number of participating sculptors • Difficulty getting sponsors • Difficulty convincing people to donate money because people do not know what their money will be used for
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding LSI as more than just bronze cast sculpture • Being the sculpture show for the Millennials, up and coming talent, new trends in the industry i.e. food sculpture, digital sculpture, 3D printing, etc. • Actually recruiting emerging sculptors to participate • To deliberately create mentor relationships between experienced sculptors and Emerging Sculptors • Create award-winning notoriety associated with LSI • Leadership vision from DiAnne with great connections to trends and the sculpture industry internationally 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding • Lack of event professionalism • Deterioration of the organization’s reputation • Board member reluctance to move away from a bronze cast centric show • Not enough artist participation • Booth fees being too costly for emerging sculptors • No clear target audience

DiAnne: “I want to create a show I want to go to. I want it to be an event that as a sculptor myself, I want to attend and want to invite people to attend.”

LSI needs a leader with vision to follow. DiAnne is most connected with Emerging Sculptors and emerging trends in the sculpture industry. She has a passion and vision to create a show that is professional and set trends in the future.

Loveland Sculpture Invitational Vision

To give emerging sculptors immersion in and exposure to success in the sculpture industry.

Loveland Sculpture Invitational Mission

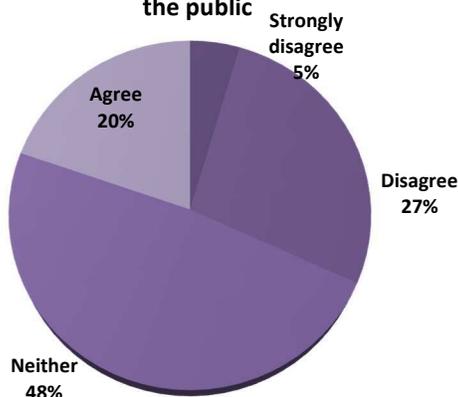
To provide a forum for aspiring sculptors to launch their careers in the sculpture industry and showcase and sell their work to the public in the heart of the sculpture scene, Loveland, Colorado. To identify, award, and mentor emerging sculptors who prove to have talent that will make a meaningful impact in the sculpture community and the public at large through their talented work.

Core Values of LSI
Professionalism Create a high quality show experience that is recognized as such within the sculpture industry
Personal connection Be powerful connectors in the sculpture industry to foster success for sculptors and create a stronger sculptor community
Supportiveness Support and mentor Emerging Sculptors
Trend-setting Be a force and forum for sculptors to practice, display, and celebrate sculpture of the present and sculpture of the future

Championing the Cause, Take the LSI Message to the World

Problem Statement: Currently the public, volunteers, the public, and even LSI’s own board of directors do not know the purpose of LSI.

LSI’s mission and purpose of LSI is clearly defined and communicated to the public



Solution: With a clear organizational identity, vision, and message, the LSI Board of Directors can now champion the cause – what LSI stands for, what are its goals, who does it help. Non-profits don’t have a product to sell they have a cause they need to convince others is important. The board can become ambassadors for LSI’s defined cause. The steps below will help LSI Board of Directors create a powerful message for the

sculpture world and the communities sculpture can affect.

LSI TARGET AUDIENCES

Primary & Secondary Audiences	
<p>Primary Audience: Emerging Sculptors who are passionately pursuing art – Those trying to break into the sculpture industry.</p> <p>LSI has the opportunity to differentiate itself from Sculpture in the Park by focusing on a specific target audience – Emerging Sculptors of the Future</p>	<p>Primary Audience's Values – What They Want</p>
	Exposure of their art to the public & buyers
	Mentorship from more senior, experienced artist figures
	To sell their artwork
	Awards/notoriety – To be award winning sculptors
<p>Secondary Audience: Attending public who have buying power</p>	<p>Secondary Audience's Values – What They Want</p>
	To buy quality, desirable art
	The intrinsic value of supporting emerging artist
	To meet and engage with the creator (artist)
	Shop with a reputable organization with national recognition within the sculpture industry

How To Champion the Cause

What groups does LSI need to serve most?	What do they need to hear from us?	What is the best way to find and communicate with them?	When will we communicate with them? How often?	How will we know if they have heard our message?
Emerging Sculptors	LSI is the show to launch your career. LSI is where you can gain notoriety, mentorship, and resources to break into the sculpture industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DiAnne’s connections in the industry to emerging sculptors. • University Art programs • Sculpture publications • International Sculpture Center, sculpture specific organizations, etc. 	Through a concerted online communication effort including building an email list, an interactive and informative website with fresh content, and frequent social media activity	An increase in participating Emerging sculptor registration
Gallery Owners	You will find quality, trendsetting, emerging sculptor work	Marc and DiAnne to communicate to their existing connections gallery owners and expand from there	Ongoing cultivation of interpersonal relationships with gallery owners	An increase of gallery owners attending to find up and coming artists to showcase at their galleries
Sculpture Community	At LSI you will find new, innovative, and cutting edge work; a must see show for networking and to stay connected within the industry	DiAnne’s connections in the industry to emerging sculptors, sculpture publications, online sculpture specific communities, social media	Through a concerted online effort to communicate including building an email list, an interactive and informative website with fresh content, and frequent social media activity.	An increase in participating sculptors

What groups does LSI need to serve most?	What do they need to hear from us?	What is the best way to find and communicate with them?	When will we communicate with them? How often?	How will we know if they have heard our message?
The Loveland Community	LSI is crucial in generating business, revenue, awareness, and exposure to the City of Loveland as a sculpture industry hub	Utilizing Craig, Joe, & Jerry, current members of the community, to cultivate interpersonal relationships with influencers in the City of Loveland	Ongoing cultivation of interpersonal relationships with influencers in city government and influential others in the City of Loveland	City involvement, supportiveness, and promotions of

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES THIS YEAR

This is a SMART action plan for the next year. These objectives are designed to help LSI get a few steps closer to the LSI's vision.

S	SPECIFIC	Specify the task to be complete
M	MEASURABLE	How you will know it is complete
A	ACHIEVABLE	What are the actions and resourced needed to achieve the task
R	RELEVANT	Is it relevant to the overall vision, mission, and reaching target audiences
T	TIME BOUND	When it needs to be completed

	Problem Statement	Objective Statement	Deliverables
	<p>Current fundraising problem: Sponsors don't know the return on their investment. WHY should sponsors give to LSI? WHAT is their donation going toward? WHO does their donation benefit and HOW?</p>	<p>Create clear, personal connection to the artists in order to increase sponsorships and donations</p>	<p>1) Find 15 emerging sculptors to feature at this years LSI</p> <p>2) Write compelling artist bios/marketing stories</p> <p>3) Sponsorships based on content of/connection to bios</p>
	<p>Current perception challenge: LSI show doesn't feel professional, which can negatively affect sculptor reputation</p>	<p>Establish more professional image via a more professional venue</p>	<p>1) Research venue options</p> <p>2) Price venue and negotiate non-profit rates</p> <p>3) Book venue</p>
	<p>Current overall experience deficit: The current show focuses only on selling art; it doesn't fulfill the additional audience's need for mentorship and artistic growth</p>	<p>Add value to LSI with a program for mentorship; connect Emerging Sculptors with experienced sculptors or sculptor industry professionals</p>	<p>1) Outline expectations for mentorship program</p> <p>2) Board members uses to contacts to identify 3+ mentors</p> <p>3) Match mentors with mentees based on interests or pursuits</p> <p>4) Make introductions at show (or alternate venue)</p>
	<p>Current notoriety deficit: No notoriety is currently associated with the show that the artists can gain from</p>	<p>Create formal awards program to allow sculptors to demonstrate their skills and promote the LSI</p>	<p>1) Create competition categories</p> <p>2) Identify a judging panel</p> <p>3) Establish judging criteria</p> <p>4) Gather prizes</p>
	<p>Current lack of juried standards: No clear minimum standards for entry (i.e.- juried process)</p>	<p>Clear criteria for show acceptance to promote quality work and enhance reputation</p>	<p>1) Outline criteria</p> <p>2) Outline and decide on an artist's application review process</p>

OPERATING BUDGET

The board of directors will need to develop a detailed operating budget for year 2016. Funding sources can include: Private donations, ticket sales, artist registration fees, and federal grants.

The Emerging Artists sponsorship program should be included in the operating budget as private donations. Recommended resources for LSI include:

- National Endowment for the Arts, Art Works Grant
- Colorado Creative Industries
- Westerns States Arts Federation
- Arts for Colorado
- ArtsJournal

MEASURING SUCCESS

The two most telling measures of success are: 1) Organizational profit generated from LSI, 2) The number of participating artists.

	2011	2012	2013	2014
Participating Artists	240	201	200	145
Net Income	\$2,904.47	\$5,459.89	(\$14,358.84)	(\$18,541.66)

Goals for future success include:

1. A 127% increase in profit for year 2016 to generate positive income of \$5,000
2. A 50% increase in profit for year 2017; a 25% increase in profit for years 2018-2019
3. A 10% year-over-year increase in profit (in dollars)
4. A reverse in participating artist trend back to 200 participating artists resulting in a 15% year-over-year increase of participating artists.

Future Goals	2016	2017	2018	2019
Participating Artists	159	174	191	210
Net Income	\$5,000	\$7,5000	\$9,375	\$11,718

Other measures of success include success in achieving:

1. Being able to identify and recruit 15 Emerging Sculptors to be able to feature in this year's show. Revisit, revise, and aim to increase this number year-over-year.
2. A successful match of 15 featured Emerging Sculptors with sponsors, either personal or businesses, to sponsor or give specific scholarship to those individual Emerging Sculptors.
3. A pool of 18 seasoned, professionals in the sculpture industry, 3 recruited by each board member, to participate in a mentoring relationship with Emerging Sculptors.