CREATING A COMMUNITY-BASED REGIONAL BOX OFFICE

1. Access your organizational capacity
   a. Staffing (tech savvy?)
   b. Technology Infrastructure (networks, software, hardware, phones, etc.)
   c. Physical/location, space
   d. Leadership (community organizing)
   e. Mission (is this consistent with your mission?)
   f. Board Commitment (financial investment, promoting other organizations)

2. Access the community need
   a. Identify existing box offices in the region… are you the right organization to undertake this project or should you be suggesting it to another
   b. Inventory presenting organizations that sell tickets
   c. Analyze the existing marketing / promotional strategy for the Arts in the region
   d. Interview reps from the travel & tourism industry and ask for their support
   e. Interview reps from the chamber of commerce and ask for their support
   f. Determine whether there are existing data centers for the Arts in the region

3. Identify Initial Ticketing Partners
   a. Start with the 2-3 largest (cornerstone) organizations during the first 90 days, taking on one per month
   b. Determine annual ticketing revenue
   c. Involve them as early as possible to build the box office together… since they will represent the majority of your ticketing volume, the box office systems/processes need to accommodate their operations
   d. Get signed agreements which establish all financial terms, expense sharing policy for customization work and tax related issues

4. Identify a Software Partner (THIS IS A KEY DECISION… CONSIDER THIS A PARTNERSHIP AND NOT JUST A VENDOR/CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP!!)
   a. Test drive as many systems as possible (they all offer guest access)
   b. Plan for tomorrow and ensure room for growth
   c. Check references carefully – ensure support services are excellent
   d. Investigate customization resources/procedures/terms
   e. Investigate networking/hardware requirements
   f. Staff training options
   g. Request at least 3 quotes
h. Remember, technology is changing very quickly! Access a license subscription model via the classic lease/purchase option. Three years is forever with technology

5. Budget Assessment
   a. Ensure the combined ticketing revenue of key partners and yourself cover the fixed costs of the project

6. Negotiate credit card processing terms
   a. Start with your local banks and ask for them to waive their fees as a donation
   b. Request at least 3 quotes

7. System design
   a. Always highlight/celebrate your ticketing partners in your design
   b. Ensure integration with existing website
   c. Establish fee structures / pricing rules early and stick with them… simpler is better
   d. Physically inspect venues to verify seating charts

8. System implementation
   a. Allow for at least 90-120 days to install equipment/networks, customize the software and train your staff
   b. Initial training should be done in person. Follow-up can be online/remote.
   c. Beta test: start with a medium size event the first week, and then introduce additional events slowly to work out bugs
   d. Carefully monitor network/system diagnostics and reports to identify problems. Do not assume that everything is going ok because you’re not hearing from people
   e. Anticipate problems/delays

9. After 30 days of beta… GO FOR IT!
   a. Market and promote! Flood the media-waves with a sustained 6 month ad blitz (print, radio, internet, etc.) establishing the new regional box office as the go-to location for performing arts information and tickets
   b. Issue press release highlighting the community partnerships and positive economic impacts of the project
   c. Actively recruit new ticketing partners by referring them to your existing partners… ask your existing partners to help recruit
   d. Check in routinely with your partners and get their feedback. Verify that they are satisfied with the presentation of their unique brand
   e. Start to leverage the data and tell the story of the collective economic impact of performing arts in your region
   f. Keep looking ahead in regards to technology upgrades and stay in constant communication with your software partner