**Adventures in Performance Packaging**

Characteristics of an Effective Performance Package

* A cohesive presentation that flows seamlessly from beginning to end.
* Performance engages the audience throughout and they are “transported”.
* The audience understands everything that is taking place and is thoroughly entertained by all the elements.
* The presentation (music, theme, script) is appropriate for the specific audience/demographic.
* It is theatrical and professional in its approach.
* High quality performance (music, visual and talking).
* Every decision choice made in the creation of the performance package is made with the audience in mind.
* Well rehearsed and prepared.

Typical Elements of a Performance Package:

* Music
* Theme / Script
* Emcee(s) / Actors
* Choreography / Staging/ Blocking
* Inclusion of props and set décor if appropriate
* Costumes / Make Up / Hair
* Sound system / microphones
* Lighting chosen to enhance atmosphere

Music Selection Considerations

* What drives the song selection for the package?
  + Theme/script?
  + Or existing repertoire?
  + Or?
* Are there limitations on music selections? For ex: contest music requirements.
* How long is the package and how many songs are required? Be sure to time the musical selections to ensure you are within the allotted time.
* Include a variety of music that will showcase the personality and vocal abilities of the ensemble.
* What is the audience demographic? Will they recognize your music? Is this a goal?
* What can your performing ensemble sing well? Do you have soloists?
* Do you have access to arrangements of the songs you wish to perform?

Theme Considerations

* An effective theme is one that has the audience engagement as its goal.
* Theme should be clearly evident to the audience.
* Ideally, theme is simple enough for the audience to follow, but not so simple that it’s predictable.
* Goal of theme is to cohesively tie the package together.
* Consider the desired tone for the package.

Script Considerations

* In general, more singing/music and less talking.
* Effective script has a clear beginning, middle and end.
* Consider the demographic of the audience.
* Ideally, script is intelligently simple – easy to follow and at same time not too complicated.
* Avoids telling the audience “the next song is”.
* Flows seamlessly and easily.
  + Generally, a musical show should start with music & not talking.
  + Start with something BIG, lots of action, upbeat tempo, big sound.
  + Close with something that will leave best impact.
* Use humor if appropriate. Humor can be a powerful tool for engaging an audience’s emotions.
* A consideration for the scriptwriter is the talent – who will be delivering the lines and can they pull it off? Always ask - What do you want to do? And can you pull it off?
* Emcee spot should flow with the rest of the performance and transition in and out of the emcee spot should be seamless.
* For a 15-minute package, you can typically include 4-5 songs, some talking and account for the audience response time.
* Estimate 15-30 seconds for applause and a transition.
* Include pitch cues in script and stage directions for singers/actors.
* What are the limitations (if any) on the performers (for ex., chorus on risers, quartet around a microphone) as this might impact script decisions.