

**American Public Gardens Association**  
**Marketing and Communications Professional Section**  
**2013 SURVEY RESULTS**

A survey was distributed to American Public Gardens Association members who attended the American Public Gardens Association Marketing and Communications Section luncheon at the 2013 conference, using a list generated at that meeting. The survey link was also shared on the American Public Gardens Association message board. A total of 27 people responded to the survey. Of the respondents, 68% work for botanical gardens and 28% work for an arboretum. One consultant also participated in this survey. The organizations represented in this survey were mostly are mostly located in an urban setting with 59.3% and 33.3% in suburban areas and 7.4% in rural areas. Most are privately owned (52.2%) with 21.7% privately owned and 26.1% affiliated with a university.

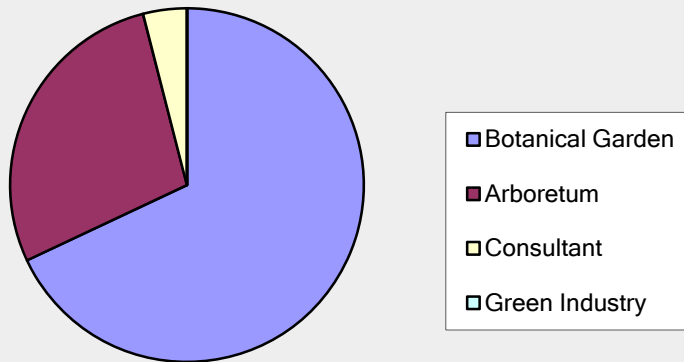
#### RESPONDENTS

The respondents mostly work in a marketing role including positions such as:

- Vice President of Marketing and Communications
- Vice President of Marketing
- Vice President of Marketing and Public Engagement
- Head of Marketing
- Director of Marketing
- Director of Communications
- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Director of Marketing and Public Relations
- Senior Manager of Marketing and Communications
- Manager of Communications and Marketing
- Graphic Artist
- Collections and Interpretation Manager
- Assistant Director of Development

Of these respondents, 72.2% have worked in the public garden/arboreta field for five years or less. Only 28.8% have worked in this field for 6 to 15 years. While the number of years worked in public garden arena is low, the level of experience is considerably higher with only 11.1% with one to two years of experience, 16.7% with six to 10 years of experience and 71.8% with over 11 years of experience in marketing and communications. Of these respondents, 33.3% have over 20 years of experience. This demonstrates that marketing staff, while seasoned professionals, most are new to the public garden and arboreta field. The majority of the respondents have expertise in marketing/communications/strategy although there were respondents with experience in visitor services, development, advertising, design, web, interpretation and PR.

1. What type of an organization do you work for?

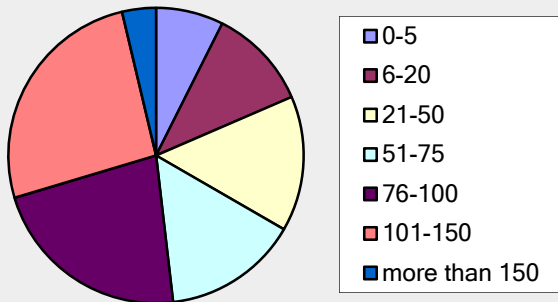


STAFFING

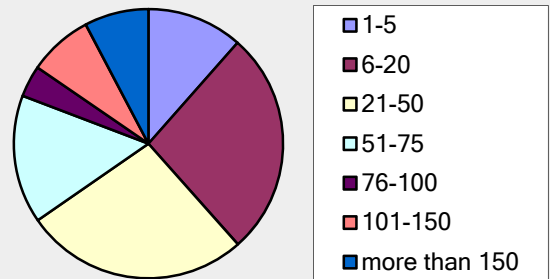
Of the respondents, there were a combined 48.1% of the reporting gardens/arboreta who have between 76 and 150 full time staff with only 7.4% with 0-5 staff members, 11.1% with 6-20 and 14.8% with 21 to 50 or 51to 75 staff. Only one reporting institution had over 150 full time staff members.

The number of seasonal or part time employees shows that 75.3% have fewer than 50 seasonal or part time workers.

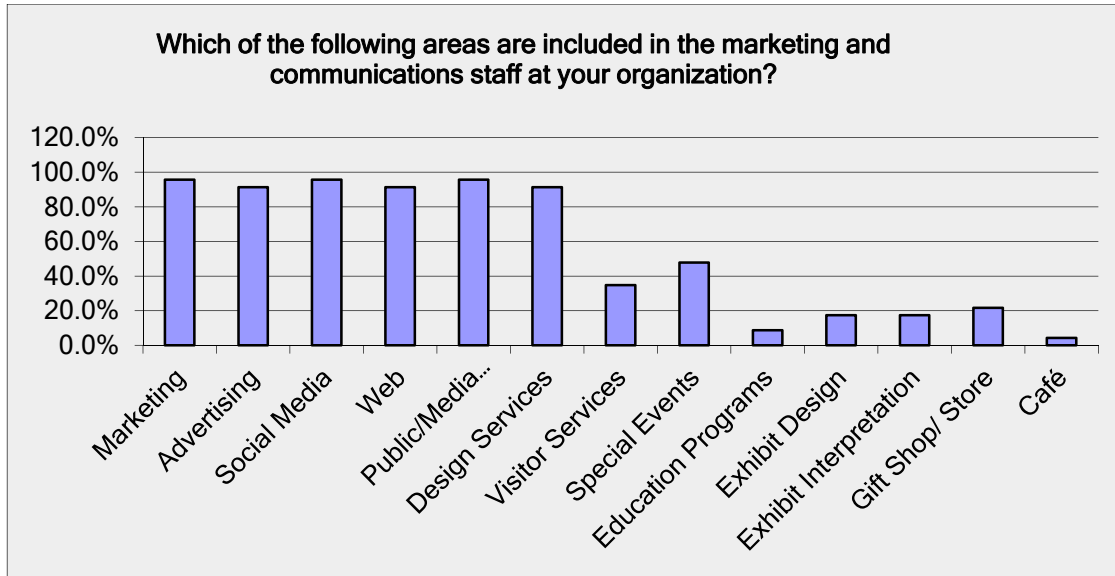
How many full time staff work for your organization?



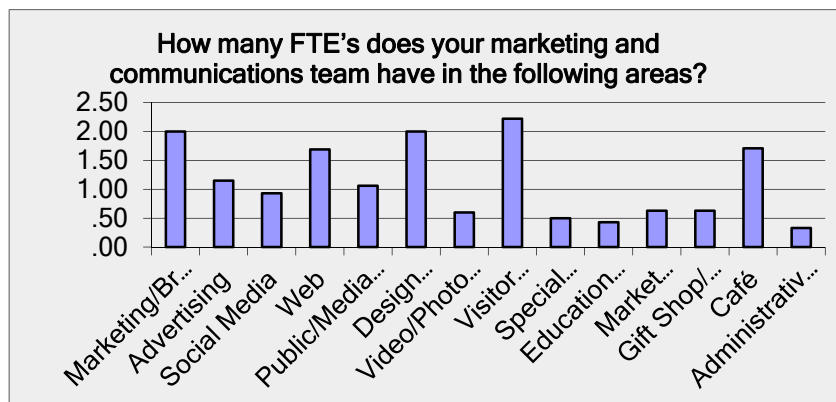
How many part time and seasonal workers does your organization have?



In the area of marketing and communications, the majority of the respondents work directly for the President/CEO/Director (73.3%). In addition, 6.7% work for a VP of Marketing and 20% work for a VP of Development. Of those who responded, 66.7% have five or less marketing and communications full time staff member, 8.4% of the respondents had eight or nine FTE's and 24.7% had 11, 12, 13 or 14 FTEs in the marketing departments. Within these departments, marketing and communications most often includes the following activities: marketing, advertising, social media, web, public/media relations and design services. There are fewer organizations that also include visitor services, education programs or exhibit design and interpretation.

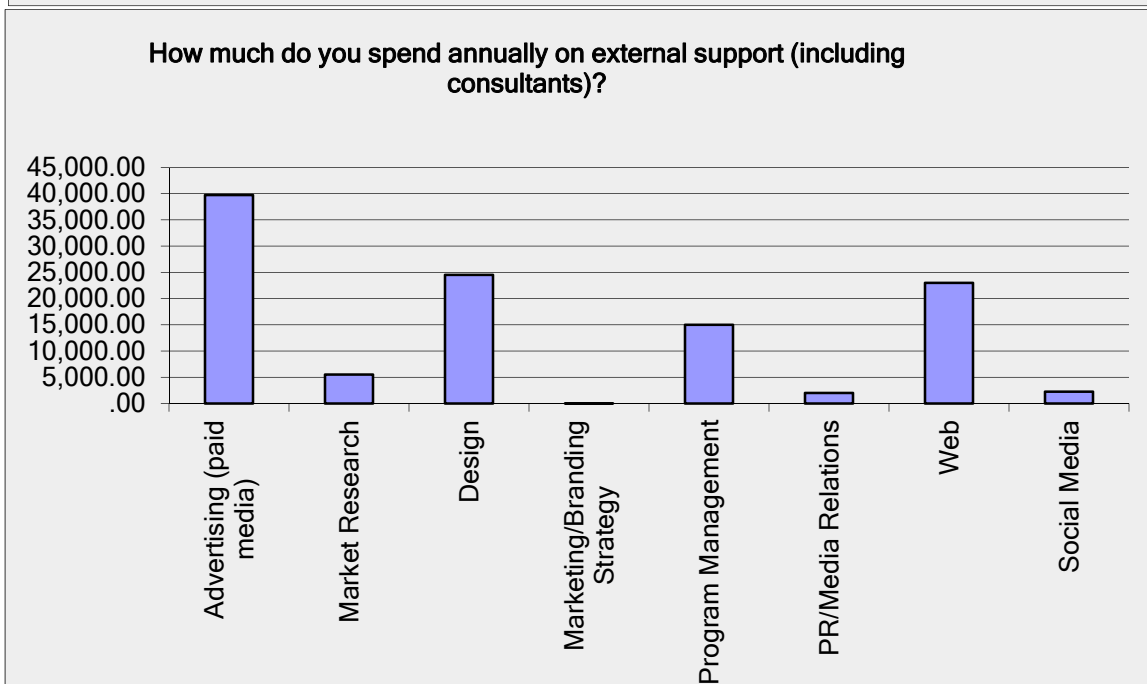
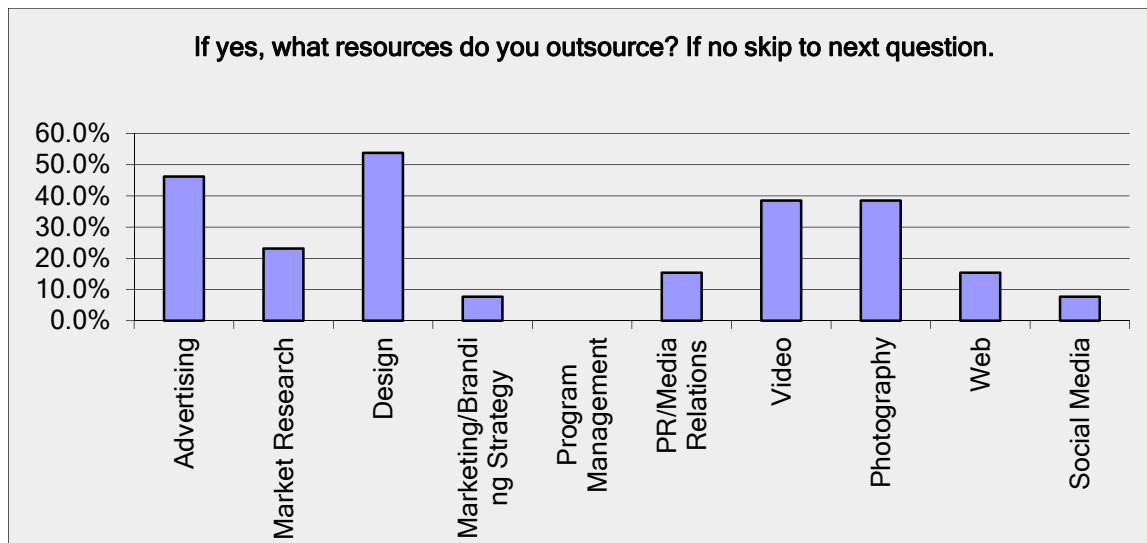


When broken down by FTE's within specific job responsibilities, the most staffing were found in visitor services, marketing/branding and design. Most of the respondents do not seem to have administrative staff support with only three respondents identifying one administrative staff member. There were on average less than one FTE in the areas of social media, video, special events, education programs, the gift shop or market research. One respondent had responsibility for the Café with 12 FTEs which skewed the results below which are shown as averages.



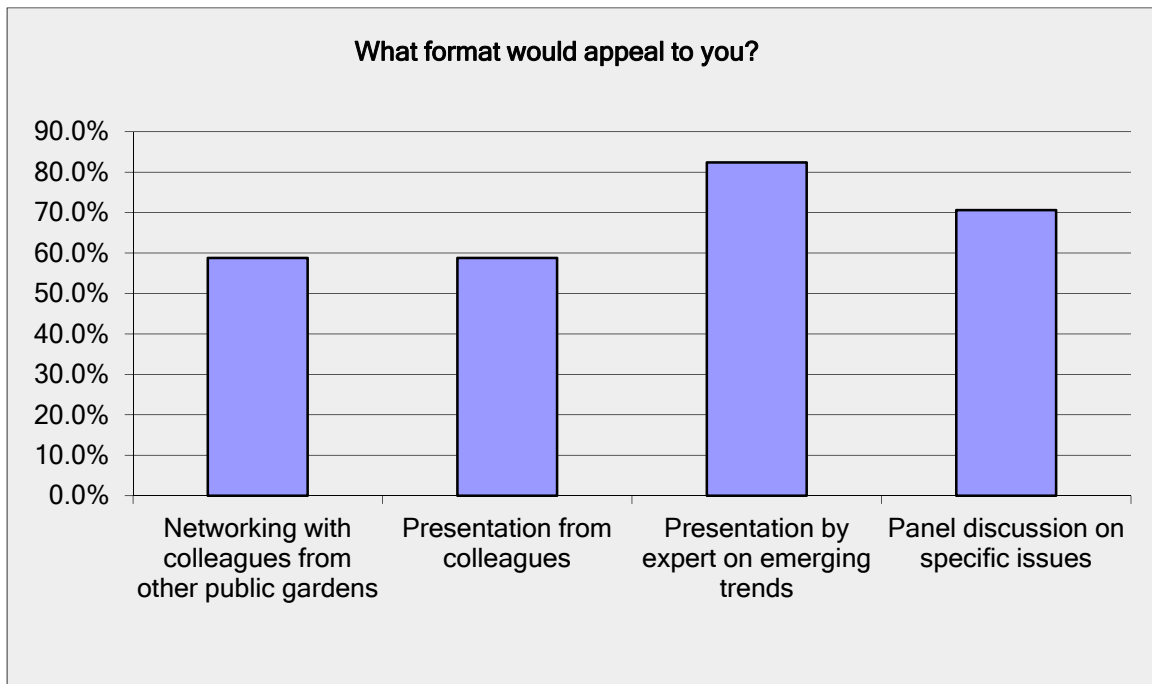
## BUDGETS

Of the respondents, less than half reported on budgets and they ranged significantly from \$25,000 to \$1.2 million for marketing and communications. Of these reporting, 35.7% had budgets of less than \$100,000; 21.4% had budgets from \$101,000 to \$250,000; 14.2% had budgets from \$251,000 to \$500,000; 21.4% had budgets between \$501,000 and \$1 million and 7.1% had a budget over \$1,000,000. Most organizations outsourced some marketing work with 77.8% reporting that they outsourced their work. The most common thing to outsource was design, advertising, video and photography and the most money spent was for advertising, with funds also spent on design, web and program management. There are limited external funds spent on PR, social media or marketing strategy.



## ONGOING ENGAGEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS

Most of the respondents attended the American Public Gardens Association conference in Phoenix (88.2%) and the same number were planning to attend the 2014 American Public Gardens Association conference in Denver. When asked about interest in attending a mid-year, one day event to network and share information with American Public Gardens Association colleagues, 100% of the respondents were interested in this opportunity. The format for this mid-year event is open for discussion as the group was interested in several formats. The most appealing format was a presentation by an expert on emerging trends.



Topics of interest included...

### MARKETING STRATEGY/BRAND

- Remaining Competitive as a Small Fish in a Big Pond
- Updating brand to appeal to new audiences
- Unconventional marketing tactics
- The Right Marketing Mix for a Mid-Sized Garden
- Marketing and Public Relations Strategy for Capital Campaign

### TRENDS

- Trends for public gardens and arboretum as attractions
- Marketing trends
- Trends and patterns

### MARKETING MANAGEMENT/BEST PRACTICES

- Best practices from other public gardens

- Being able to share successes and failures with colleagues
- Small budget marketing
- Trends in paid media
- Best Practices/Simple Success Stories
- Dividing your time to do it all
- Positioning marketing with education, horticulture staff
- Efficiencies
- Vendor recommendations
- Negotiated discounts for AMERICAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION marketing professionals with vendors

#### MEDIA RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Trends in social media
- Dealing with consolidation in media outlets
- Who reads the blogs? The tweets?
- Social media effectiveness
- Social media maximization
- Relevance to social media and search engine trends

#### WEBSITE

- Content management

#### PROGRAM MANAGEMENT/VISITOR EXPERIENCES

- Visitor experience interpretation
- Statistics on visitorship and sales
- Event Marketing on a Shoestring Budget
- Botanical garden target audience demo and psycho
- Digital interpretation in public gardens

All of the respondents thought that email was the best way to communicate with them regarding the American Public Gardens Association Marketing and Communications section. Significantly less effective was communicating through the American Public Gardens Association community forum (14.3%) or social media (7.1%). Fortunately none of the respondents thought snail mail was an effective means of communications.

#### SURVEY FOLLOW UP

Based on the conversations at the 2013 American Public Gardens Association meeting and information from this survey, a marketing plan for the American Public Gardens Association Marketing and Communications section will be developed to support the development and engagement with the section. When asked about what other resources would help people do their jobs better, the most common response was money (!). In addition, respondents were asking for more ideas, more audience research and data from other gardens, access to garden writers both regionally and nationally, and more

information from other cultural or edutainment organizations including. Topics recommended will be used to inform programming decisions for the 2014 American Public Gardens Association Marketing and Communications section as well as any other opportunities we are able to implement mid-year.