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10 November, 2025

Starcatching Allswell Productions' Next Hit

Allswell Productions, a young community theatre company in London, Ontario, is at a critical moment in its growth as it plans its next season. Allswell is dedicated to keeping community theater alive, adventurous, creative, and most importantly, unique. Founder and executive director Christine Gruenbauer is in a special position to plan after Allswell's award-winning debut success. Allswell has a choice this upcoming season: keep it classic or change it up. The marketing challenge is this: how to turn critical success into sold-out seats. The main goal is to strategically select which story will resonate most with local audiences and how to reach them. Allswell's greatest move will be a strong marketing plan that not only attracts larger audiences but also aligns with their mission of creativity, mentorship, and community engagement. By focusing on its target audience, demographics, and psychographics, Allswell is well-positioned to market its next show and cement its status as a London theatre staple.

Allswell's next production should be *Peter and the Starcatcher*, a show that perfectly balances imagination, accessibility, and artistic ambition. While *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* offers name recognition and opportunities for bold design, *Peter and the Starcatcher* presents something even more valuable: the chance to reach new audiences through creative storytelling and inventive staging. Relying on the actors' performances and imagination rather than elaborate sets or effects (Nicolaas 4–5), *Peter* aligns seamlessly with Allswell's community-driven mission and its desire to keep theatre adventurous, inclusive, and full of heart.

Peter will attract both old and new audiences, especially families, students, and young professionals. *Peter and the Starcatcher* is an innovative musical that offers actors a chance to deeply engage with their performance, the audience, and their imagination. The show has few set pieces and props, leaving room for creativity, growth, and an engaging, new experience. *Peter* has the space for creative development and new takes on the production, perfectly aligning with Allswell's mission to tell "exceptional stories" (Nicolaas, 4) as *Peter* will be the ideal center stage storyteller. Exploring the backstory of beloved characters (Peter Pan, Tinker Bell, and Captain Hook) will draw in families and carry the whimsy of nostalgia, love of fairy tales, and make-believe, which will reel in the experimental group, too. Affordable, flexible, and cross-generational, *Peter* is not only the practical choice but the strategic one, expanding Allswell's audience base while staying true to its creative heart.

The musical's most promising target audience is clear: families. Demographically, this group includes caregivers aged 30 to 50 with school-aged children (typically 6 to 14 years old) and middle-income households seeking affordable, enriching activities that engage everyone. *Peter* is a new take on beloved characters that children will love, and engaging enough for caretakers. *Peter*'s potential for eccentric, experimental staging also attracts a younger audience who want to see raw, unique theatre. Young professionals aged 25 to 40 represent a fast-growing demographic in Canadian theatre audiences (Nicolaas, 3), with an appetite for new experiences in the theatre. With moderate disposable income and a growing cultural curiosity, this group is drawn to "unique and creative shows" (Nicolaas 3) that they can attend with friends or a significant other. *Peter* is the show to bring in young people hungry for something fresh. College students, typically 18 to 24, also make up an essential part of the audience. With limited budgets and busy schedules, they view a theatre outing as a social activity, a chance to spend time with

friends and experience something new together. Open to unconventional productions, students will appreciate *Peter's* playful energy and nostalgic storytelling. Beyond its family-friendly appeal and youthful energy, *Peter and the Starcatcher* offers Allswell a chance to connect these different audience segments through shared wonder, bridging generations and tastes with a production that feels both classic and refreshingly new.

How does Allswell get the audience? The answer is through marketing that speaks directly to the motivations of its key groups: families, students, and young professionals. These audiences mainly fall into a segment that attends theater as an expression of emotion; they are motivated by shared experiences and connection, and thrive when others revel in the culture around them. They want a collective experience, whether it be as a family, with friends, or with a partner. Theater is a means for connection, socially with each other and emotionally with the work. This further emphasizes why *Peter and the Starcatcher* is the ideal second show. Perhaps risky given its lesser-known stature, but it offers a high reward and attracts a diverse audience. The younger crowd might be attracted to the stimulation and experience that live theater offers. They seek energetic, immersive, and surprising experiences that feel bold. Families want the affirmation and bonding experience of a night out. *Peter* brings an unexpected tale to life, immersing audiences in a never-before-seen, "behind-the-scenes," type look at a classic story. With the room *Peter* has to be creatively bold, it will hook audiences, making them feel as though they've discovered something new and unexpected, under the guise of a fairytale.

Focusing on the primary target audiences of families, young professionals, and students, to drive ticket sales, Allswell should employ three key marketing tactics: discounted ticket prices for families and students, social media storytelling, and local community partnerships. Families tend to be an expression and affirmation-centric audience, so the marketing needs to feel

personal, authentic, and risk-free, making room for the importance of quality time. Offering family ticket deals like a discounted “Neverland Family Pass” or “Kids under three, get in Free!” would appeal to caregivers seeking affordable, low-risk, engaging experiences that offer flexibility so the whole family can enjoy a night out. Students and young professionals, on the other hand, lean more toward expression and stimulation, prioritizing social connection, novelty, and fun. Special student discount nights or campus-exclusive promo codes can help make theatre-going accessible and exciting, especially if promoted through university partnerships and student organizations. Launching a targeted “Student Theatre Night” campaign with limited availability and exclusive perks, like discounted tickets and free snacks, would create a social, must-attend event that sparks urgency and excitement. Framing it with messaging such as “Save your seat before it’s gone!” taps into the FOMO mindset and encourages students to secure their tickets early. Furthermore, Allswell should create dynamic, visually striking social media storytelling through a “Catch the Magic” or “Behind the Starcatcher” campaign, featuring short videos, rehearsal moments, and interviews that showcase the artistry and energy behind the show and create buzz and FOMO. Community partnerships will allow Allswell to connect directly with the motivations of its key audience segments while rooting *Peter and the Starcatcher* in the heart of London’s arts scene. For expression-oriented audiences, families, and students who value connection and shared experiences, collaborating with the London Public Library on a “Storytime in Neverland” event featuring short performances and interactive activities creates an authentic, community-centered opportunity to experience theatre beyond the stage. For stimulation-driven young professionals, already drawn to London’s visual arts and nightlife, partnerships with downtown restaurants for a “Dinner & A Star: A Night Out in Neverland” package would position theatre-going as a bold, social, and exciting evening experience, and

reassures affirmation-driven families that attending is a safe, rewarding choice; an opportunity to feel connected to their community while sharing quality time over dinner and a show. Together, these audience-specific partnerships blend accessibility, creativity, and connection, ensuring *Peter and the Starcatcher* reaches diverse groups while strengthening Allswell's identity as an imaginative, inclusive theatre company rooted in community spirit.

In the end, *Peter and the Starcatcher* isn't just the right choice for Allswell's next production, it's the next step in the company's creative evolution. The show's imaginative spirit, nostalgia, and heart perfectly reflect Allswell's mission to tell exceptional stories and nurture a new generation of theatre-makers. With its cross-generational appeal, *Peter* opens the door for families, students, and young professionals to experience the wonder of live performance together. Supported by accessible pricing, dynamic digital storytelling, and authentic community partnerships, Allswell's marketing strategy transforms this production into more than a show; it becomes an event that celebrates connection, creativity, and the magic of community theatre.

Works Cited

Nicolaas, Lauren, and Ian Dunn. *Allswell Productions: A Tough Act to Follow*. Ivey Publishing, Ivey Business School Foundation, 2022.