

Pace University

DigitalCommons@Pace

---

Honors College Theses

Pforzheimer Honors College

---

5-9-2019

## Performing Arts Labor Unions and Young Industry Professionals: An Analysis of Current and Future Relations

Caroline Thompson

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/honorscollege\\_theses](https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/honorscollege_theses)



Part of the [Arts Management Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

---

Performing Arts Labor Unions and Young Industry Professionals: An Analysis of Current and

Future Relations

Caroline Thompson

B.B.A. Arts & Entertainment Management

Dr. Shinwon Noh, PhD

Department of Management

Presented 9 May 2019

Graduated 23 May 2019



**ABSTRACT**

This thesis surrounds the evolving topic of unionization, particularly within the performing arts industry. As trends and regulations develop that tend away from labor organization, with an increase in non-Equity professional opportunities and the enforcement and growth of legislation such as *Janus vs. AFSCME* and state-by-state right-to-work laws, unions such as the Actors' Equity Association (AEA) have more reason to market themselves than ever before. This thesis aims to examine the relationship between AEA and young theatre industry entrants, aged 18-25. The study, furthermore, employs an in-depth analysis of the AEA's social platforms, with particular focus on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, as well as a survey of young industry entrants aged 18-25.

The study proceeds to pinpoint four key ways wherein this relationship could be improved, so as to strengthen the relationship with and garner public support from said young industry entrants. These include improved use of hashtags, use of social media to directly engage audiences both on and offline, use of social media to facilitate an open dialogue with young and aspiring theatre professionals, and use of young people's passion for the theatre to drive results. Overall, the study is meant to serve as a framework for AEA, as well as other performing arts unions, in developing a better relationship with those young people whose livelihoods will be directly or indirectly impacted by the union's proceedings, and to encourage union membership where applicable.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Abstract.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Literature Review.....	6
Research Questions .....	16
Methodology.....	16
Results.....	17
Discussion.....	30
Conclusion.....	37
References.....	39
Appendix A.....	42

## INTRODUCTION

Labor unions throughout the United States that have long dominated various industries are facing a reality that they have rarely had to face - one without guarantee of a steady influx in membership throughout the coming years. Many labor unions have long sustained themselves on the promise of new industry entrants alone, with many professionals relying on their membership in one dominant, industry-wide union to aid them in their securing some of the highest paying, top-tier jobs within their field. In recent years, this reliance has been compromised with the conception of legislation providing citizens the right to enter a particular industry without being swayed into supporting any publicly regulated, industry-specific labor union. One prime example of this reliance of labor unions on guaranteed membership is seen within the performing arts industry, where many professional stage actors have long been required to affiliate with AEA in order to receive some of the highest-paying, most prestigious Broadway and Off-Broadway jobs. If such labor unions wish to sustain themselves in a future overseen by the aforementioned national legislation, there is great potential that much of their future membership will be dictated by marketing, advertising, branding and promotional efforts.

Without a comprehensive understanding of not only how such unions should market themselves, but why such unions should market themselves, any given union will remain unable to release appropriate, truthful, persuasive campaigns. As labor unions, for the aforementioned reasons, have not had great reason to market themselves in the past, an investigation is necessary in order for such unions to realize how they may use marketing to sustain themselves with this new, uncertain future in mind. How should a labor union that previously relied largely on “required membership” build a relationship with potential union candidates? Furthermore, how can such a union use social media tactics to garner support industry-wide? Analysis of these

issues as a whole, focused on the aforementioned performing arts labor union, AEA, and its social media efforts, will work to answer these questions, and serve to educate those working within professional acting and other entertainment-specific labor unions on what their future might look like and how they ought to be preparing for it, if they hope to sustain high levels of incoming membership and public support.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

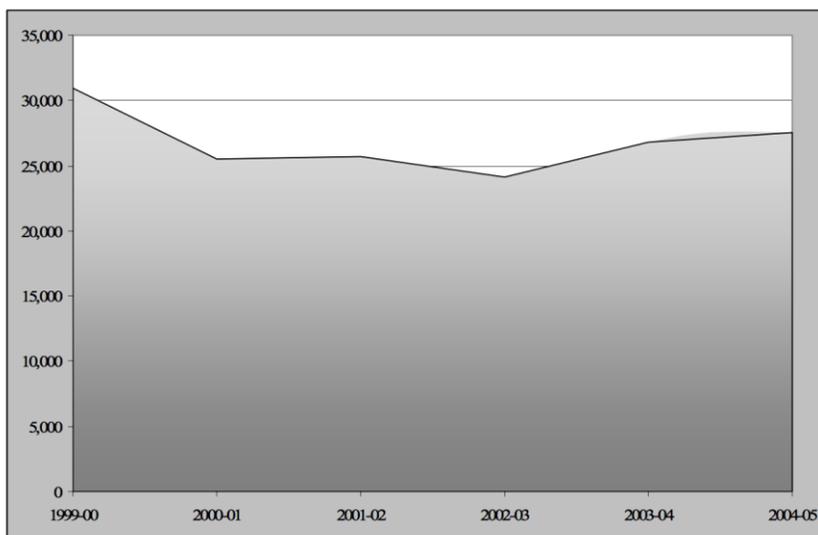
*EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF UNION REPRESENTATION.* The relationship between the labor union and its membership is one that has varied greatly throughout the years, from industry to industry, and from union to union. Some unions have remained discretionary - meaning two people can sit in the same, top-tier position and not necessarily both be a member of the same union. This is not necessarily the case in other modern industries. Many unions currently “require” membership - meaning that workers must be unionized prior to receipt of what many may consider the highest paying, top-tier industry jobs. Performing arts unions, such as AEA, are notorious for “requiring” industry members to join the union prior to working in a substantial portion of industry roles. More often than not, if you are a non-AEA performer (a performer who is not a member of AEA) who has received an offer for a Broadway job, you must sign an AEA contract prior to receipt of said job. Even stricter, many Broadway auditions will require applicants to be a member of AEA in order to be “seen” - meaning that, if you are not a member of the union, you will not be able to audition, nor be considered for the position at hand. If one desires to “make a living” as either a stage actor or stage manager (covered as a part of AEA), it is often considered imperative that he or she be taking steps toward membership in AEA – otherwise, many of the jobs with the highest pay and steadiest, most reliable schedules will remain unavailable to him or her.

Long has there been debate surrounding labor organization. Many states have long held “right-to-work” practices, which free workers from compulsory unionization, or legislation that mandates workers be a part one existing union that might monopolize an industry (“Compulsory”). Such legislation applies to unions such as AEA in right-to-work states such as Florida, where performers at entertainment companies such as the Walt Disney World Resort, under contracts considered eligible for AEA membership, are not required to pay union fees in order to be protected by union benefits (United States). In recent years, regulations surrounding labor organization have become even tighter, as seen in the passing of the Summer 2018 ruling on *Janus vs. AFSCME*. The ruling dealt with union exclusive representation practices, determining that forced union fees within public sector unions are unconstitutional. Furthermore, the ruling functions on the understanding that, in industries where union membership is a “requirement”, non-union supporters being forced to pay union fees is a form of coercion. Supporters of this ruling believe that these employees are being forced to support speech they do not agree with, a substantial First Amendment violation (Baude 171-204).

Even without the ruling on *Janus vs. AFSCME*, AEA has seen changes in the shows Broadway presents that have forced them to take a deeper look at what the AEA contract is, and why it is necessary. With changes in Broadway productions, and a general movement away from the traditional musical and toward concert and cabaret-style performances, AEA has seen a tendency of said untraditional musicals to deviate from the AEA contract when handling pay and other contractual issues for chorus members and other musicians. One example of such a situation was seen in *Rocktopia*, a concert-style production which played a short stint on Broadway in March-April 2018. The show, initially, refused to pay its part-time chorus members AEA wages - triggering a great deal of backlash from the union. Eventually, due in part to

widespread support of AEA from union members and non-union members alike, *Rocktopia* agreed to pay its chorus members AEA-mandated wages and allowed such employees the ability to serve under AEA contracts (“Actors”). Though such scenarios are currently few and far between, they are slowly becoming more and more prevalent.

Recent years have also seen vast increases in the number of touring productions that function outside of a union environment. 40% of all Broadway tours, by 2007, were composed of non-AEA casts (Shane 370-372). Because non-AEA actors generally tend to be less expensive to employ than AEA actors, producers who see this trend as successful and financially beneficial will likely pursue the model, giving reason to AEA performers to leave the union behind - particularly in right-to-work states. The proliferation of non-AEA tours has resulted in a loss of AEA tour workweeks (See Figure 1) (Shane 370-372).



**FIGURE 1: EQUITY ROAD WORKWEEKS, 1999-2005, "NEGOTIATING THE CREATIVE..." ELECTRONIC THESIS OR DISSERTATION. OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, 2006, PP. 370-372, 374. OHIOLINK ELECTRONIC THESES AND DISSERTATIONS CENTER.**

In terms of the benefits AEA members might reap leaving the union: non-AEA performers, though without many of the fringe benefits that accompany unionization, often are able to earn a higher base wage than those who are unionized, as a result of companies and

producers not being required to pay for said benefits - benefits which are not available to all AEA performers anyway, as few qualify for benefits such as a pension or health benefits as a result of high industry unemployment rates (Shane 374).

*UNION MARKETING AND YOUNG PEOPLE.* While union marketing efforts, like all marketing, can be targeted toward a wide variety of audiences, it would be beneficial for AEA to cater future marketing and advertising efforts toward young people. This is of value as to avoid the negative stereotypes that often accompany labor organization at large. Labor unions, regardless of industry, have a reputation as controversial, leading some to wonder whether unions' efforts produce true benefit for their membership, as well as society at large. This concern was shown to transcend time. Kochan claimed that in a 1977 national Quality of Employment Survey, 70-80% of respondents were wary of union leaders' intentions, and believed that such leaders were set on delivering results best for themselves rather than results best for union members (23-31). Over 30 years later, in 2008, another study on the same subject was conducted (Panagopoulos and Francia). The study depicted data proving that Americans had the same skepticism of unions and their motives come 2008 as they did in 1977 (134-159). When considering union membership, and throughout their lives, this concern clearly has weighed gravely on many minds – and, based upon trend, we can assume that said concern will continue into the future.

It is also comprehensible that one should say labor unions ought to focus their promotional efforts on young industry entrants as they are the future membership and leadership of their respective organizations. Among those people who will join a labor union over their lifetime, a vast majority will do so within a very short period of time early in their career. In 2010, Bailey, of *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, called this short period of time a metaphorical “recruitment window”, wherein people will be most willing and able to join unions.

Bailey's window falls within the first few years of a person's career – upon the conclusion of that short timeframe, it can be deduced that far fewer workers will be willing to unionize at all, regardless of marketing tactics (43-60). If unions are to miss this pivotal recruitment window, not only will union membership as a whole suffer, but unions will miss key opportunities to gain membership from motivated youth whom may be most well-suited to lead the union to future success.

Not only does education on union policies leave young people in the know, but it leaves room for newly informed young industry entrants to feel excited about and involved in their respective labor organization, even prior to official extension of membership. Today's young people live in a generation more widely exposed to a variety of public opinions than ever before. Similarly, modern youth are getting more involved in and becoming more informed about causes they consider important – largely due to the rapid expansion of technology and explosion of social networking seen in recent years. A recent national survey examining the correlation between media usage and political participation, in which 2,409 people aged 16-24 were examined, found that survey respondents' media usage was positively correlated with political participation (Bakker 451-470). Furthermore, young people's internet usage was more strongly positively correlated to both online and offline political participation than traditional media usage, such as newspaper or television (Bakker 451-470). It is understood from this data that not only does media allow young people aged 16-24 to get more involved in subjects that they are passionate about, such as politics, but that modern media such as the internet leaves young people aged 16-24 more *excited* to participate in these areas than ever before.

Trends show that the ability of young people, namely college students, to express their political views online leads to heightened effectiveness of politically-focused media, both online

and offline, and heightened political involvement (Yamamoto 890-898). Studies have also shown that young people, particularly those between the ages of 15-16, are more likely to participate in civic and entertainment-related activities as a result of social media forums such as Facebook (Theocharis 817-836). The trend of increased social media sharing opportunities correlating positively in relation to young people's online and offline participation in a variety of fields leads us, again, to believe that young people, with access to technology, are now more willing and able to support new causes both privately and publicly than ever before. Not only are young people feeling the desire to get involved in the causes they care about as a result of technological advancement, but they are taking the steps to translate this desire into action – something that those less engaged with the internet or social media are less likely to do.

*EVOLUTION AND EMERGENCE OF THE ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION.* To consider the subject from another's perspective, why should young performers consider it of value to be both well-informed about and excited to join their respective union? To illustrate the point simply – because of a union's variety of benefits. While labor unions do typically come with a financial obligation, a primary goal of labor unions as a whole is to provide their members with the benefits some might say they are “paying for”. Throughout history, unions have been considered by many an overwhelming support system for their members. Many were born out of a need for regulation and standardization - AEA being a prime example. Founded in 1912, AEA was created out of a need for a response to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century theatrical producers. These producers possessed vast influence over an actor's contract which was, at the time, unstandardized. The actors were one of few theatrical groups still “unorganized” at the time (Arnesen 8-13). One may assume, as a result of this, that the unionization of theatrical stage employees would have been more widely accepted. This was not the case – the attempt of said

actors to unionize was met with much backlash from the producers, who were unwilling to give up their control over the terms in actors' contracts. After one month-long strike, with actors refusing to work for any Producer who did not agree to the actors' proposed minimum contractual pay, the Producers gave in and AEA was fully formed (Arnesen 8-13).

This story of conception serves as modern proof of the original intention of the organization. To modern youth, many of which have little to no experience with labor unions at large, these stories may act as comfort and effectively serve as background when considering modern relevance of performing arts labor unions as a whole. But what of these original intentions remain intact today? What causes have these labor unions, since inception, consistently committed to, and what is it that, as a result, young performers should expect to see regarded as key issues addressed by their respective union as time goes on? According to research, there are several broad canvases that have recurred throughout the years and that can be considered key elements of AEA's philanthropy. One of these key issues is working conditions. Jessica Cook, director of the DePaul University Labor Education Center, told her students that if there was one thing she wanted them to take away from their education on labor unions, it would be that it's "easier to have a voice in your working conditions when you're together" (Preston 22-25). Another one of these key issues is pay.

Proper pay has been a major topic of pursuit by AEA throughout its history. At the time of its inception, AEA was combating compensation issues such as unpaid rehearsal time and lack of proper financial care when touring productions failed, leaving actors stranded (Seidman 72-75). Worldwide, members of the union are still fighting the battle for proper pay today – such as in 2016, when profit-sharing came into the picture as AEA negotiated a contract with the Disney Broadway-bound musical *Frozen*, wherein the show's AEA collaborators and talent involved

from the point of the 2016 developmental lab in New York City to Opening Night would be given “0.5 percent of the net profits from the first three English language productions for the first 10 years of profitability” (Lindsay 6). Today, AEA still fights for better financial compensation for its member, with its most recent success being that AEA members who had been a part of the 2018 Broadway run of *Mean Girls* would be given a cut of the show’s profits – making this and *Frozen* two of the first instances of Broadway actors having been allotted a portion of a show’s financial success (“PHOTOS”).

Another modern sample of AEA’s push for better pay for its members can be seen in its strike on the Broadway League Lab Agreement. The strike called for a “halt” for those working on the development of new Broadway shows with the Broadway League. Under the agreement, weekly salaries have been frozen since 2007. The goal is not only for an increase in wages for union members participating in developmental labs, but for the regular inclusion of profit sharing in contracts for those working on Broadway productions who have been with a show since said developmental lab. The fact alone that wage is still as important an issue within the union today as it was in its first days serves as proof that the union’s fight for proper pay will continue as a benefit of union membership. However, with the fight for increased pay comes strikes, “do not work” rules and more that union members will be subject to.

*MARKETING EFFORTS OF UNIONS.* A union in itself is unique, as it is not necessarily a product nor a service that can be promoted using “typical” marketing tactics. Bailey of *The Journal of Industrial Relations* describes how unions, in general, partake in two varieties of marketing, known as “services marketing” and “social marketing”. While services marketing focuses on the marketing of intangible “services”, typically spent as they are purchased, social marketing regards the use of marketing tactics to achieve “socially desirable” results (Bailey 43-60). One

could equate social marketing to the use of marketing to reduce the collective consumption of alcohol or fast food. In the case of labor unions, social marketing is used with the goal of informing workers of their rights and allowing them to understand the potential benefits of collective action. Bailey goes on to describe unions as “unsought goods”, meaning that, because of negative connotations that may come with thinking about unionization (such as costly membership fees or the connection between unions and “fixing problems”), one might not seek out admission to a union on his or her own (43-60). This is important to consider when marketing a labor union as it serves as a “preliminary barrier” of sorts when trying to reach clientele: the labor union must surpass this premonition in order to reach its target audience.

When discussing with various cross-industry union leaders regarding what they thought their biggest marketing challenges were, many leaders discussed their beliefs that young people, overall, believe unions to be something needed by “other people”, and not needed by themselves (Bailey 43-60). This is in part a result of young people’s perception that, because they are well-off and well-educated, they can “do it themselves” – meaning they consider themselves able to personally mandate all of their own needs within the workplace. Additionally, union leaders discussed their beliefs that, because we are generally in “good times” economically and with regard to factors typically regulated and negotiated by unions today, young industry entrants do not fully understand the benefits of unionization – as they have not personally seen nor experienced them (Bailey 43-60).

Unions experiencing these problems thus suggest pursuing experiential marketing rather than taking a “sales” approach (Bailey 43-60). When recalling successful union marketing experiences, one instance was described wherein two unions marketed themselves to the same student body – one advertising “free pizza-plus-membership”, while the other offered free

membership and union “sample bags”. The latter union was able to secure more members than the first (Bailey 43-60). Similarly, DePaul University has modified their curriculum in recent years to allow the education of incoming industry entrants on unions via an experiential approach. Adam Sanchez used simulations, such as a wage negotiation simulation, to educate his college students about the practical application of union benefits – highlighting that the information provided in textbooks is impractical and often irrelevant. The simulation allowed students to become not only more in the know of but more excited about partaking in union affairs – and gave them practical insight into the importance of using their voice and collectivity in affairs such as salary negotiation and workplace rights (Preston 22-25). One can deduct from both of these samples that getting young people involved in and allowing them to experience the benefits of unionization is an ideal way to get them excited about unionization being a part of their future.

Another area that union leaders identified as “needing improvement” in terms of advertising was unions’ interaction with technology. Many unions already have in place “face-to-face strategies” for recruitment – namely, visiting worksites or colleges and speaking directly with students or small groups of young industry entrants. While this has proven successful in the past, gaining unions about 90% of their young, new membership, many consider the technological route the way to proceed (Bailey 43-60). The use of the internet was proclaimed by union leaders a way to diminish the elusiveness of what it means to be a part of a union by providing potential new members a place to take their time in analyzing the union’s services as a whole. The reliance on the internet also removes the barrier between unions and young people, allowing them a convenient place to access information. Such union leaders emphasized the lack of union adaptation to technological advancements up until this point, considering it a missed

opportunity to not only cater to young people, but to provide services in more than one place at any given time. The consensus among such industry leaders is that, more than anything, labor unions need to cater their promotional efforts toward ever-growing technology if they want to most directly interact with and impress young industry entrants (Bailey 43-60).

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What does the Actors' Equity Association's social media presence (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) currently look like, both with regard to opportunities for audience engagement and relevance of information being shared?
2. How can the Actors' Equity Association better use social media to inform and engage young and aspiring theatre professionals on union membership so as they are prepared for and excited about union membership, as well as properly equipped to publicly support the union publicly?

## **METHODOLOGY**

Here will be discussed the intended exploratory research design and an overview of why such modes of research were selected. It will describe, at length, the instruments and procedures used to conduct said research, which will lead to further analysis.

*RESEARCH DESIGN.* The researcher chose to employ an exploratory research design. An in-depth analysis of AEA's Instagram, Twitter and Facebook accounts will occur, considering all publicly accessible elements of the union's presence on each platform - including but not limited to engagement statistics, hashtag usage and quality of content. This in-depth analysis will include a comprehensive review of @ActorsEquity's 200 most recent Instagram posts and 100 most recent

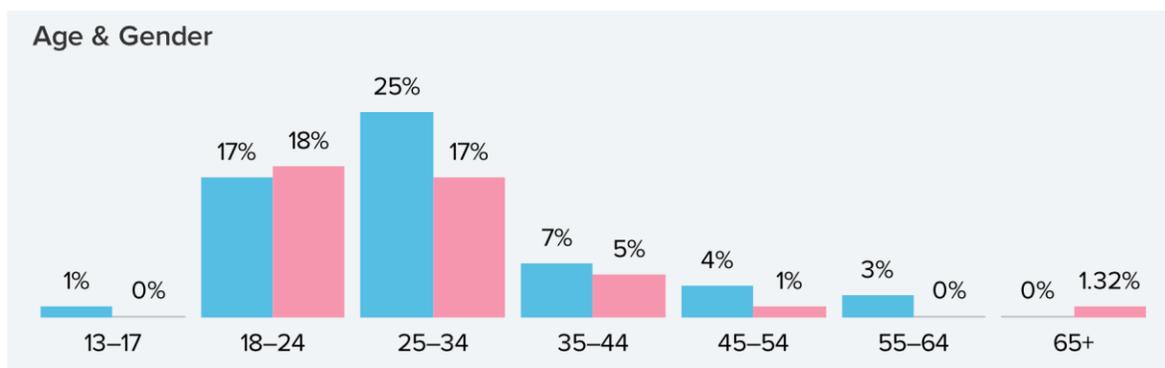
tagged photos, as well as a review of the organization's 100 most recent tweets and recent Facebook presence and engagement.

A survey will be conducted, consisting of 9 multiple choice questions, and open to participation from those aged 18-25 who consider themselves a part of the professional performing arts industry in any capacity. The survey will serve the purpose of gathering supplemental information with regards to the target audience's opinions and understanding of, as well as standing relationship with, AEA. The survey will collect information on what social media campaigns directly linked to AEA our target demographic (18-25 years) has heard of, how they first heard of them, and how they think they would better be able to learn more about and form better informed opinions on them in the future. As previously mentioned, this information will serve as a supplement and a buffer to allow us to better understand the decisions being made with regard to AEA's future on social media.

These research methods combined will allow the opportunity, based upon data collected, for further analysis of standing relations between young and aspiring theatre professionals and AEA, as well as for discussion of potential new social media tactics the union might consider employing, based upon results compared to preliminary research on standing marketing tactics, union history and trends, and feelings expressed by union leaders in regard to their relations with young people.

## **RESULTS**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA STATISTICS & REACH**

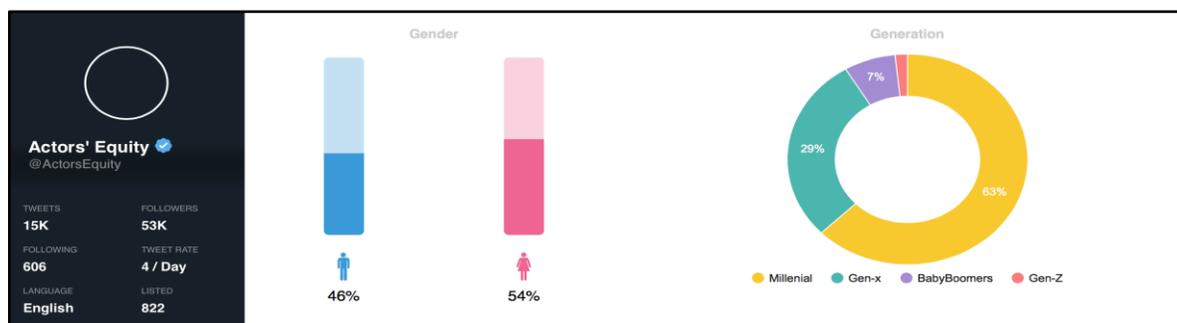


**FIGURE 2: FOLLOWERS OF AEA INSTAGRAM BY AGE & GENDER, @ACTORSEQUITY. 31 MARCH 2019, HYPEAUDITOR.COM. [HTTP://HYPEAUDITOR.COM](http://hypeauditor.com).**

AEA’s Instagram following is composed of 78% followers aged 34 and under, and 36% followers aged 24 and under (35% of which are ages 18-24). Of those 78%, approximately 35% are female, and approximately 43% are male. This is illustrated in the Instagram analytic report above, as calculated by HypeAuditor (see Figure 2), a social media & influencer analytics company. Based on this data, it can be deduced that approximately 10.6k of AEA’s followers are from people within our targeted age bracket of 18-25. AEA, or @ActorsEquity, has publicly shared 200 posts within the past 242 days (since 23 August 2018, data collected on 22 April 2019). These posts have averaged around 247 likes each, reaching about 0.8% of their potential when comparing individual likes with overall followership. Out of said 200 posts, 139 have used hashtags.

Of the most recent 200 @ActorsEquity Instagram posts, 96 contain a call to action. Such calls to action include phrases beginning with verbs such as, “read...”, “RSVP...”, “visit...”, and more. A large portion of these 96 posts include the phrase “RSVP in the Member Portal”, meaning this call to action is only applicable to standing union members. Additionally, of these 200 posts, only 6 have exclusively new member-oriented content, while only 1 utilizes an exclusively youth member-oriented hashtag - #EquityNMO, NMO short for New Member

Orientation. These posts were typically associated with AEA’s Membership Candidacy program, or EMC (Equity Membership Candidacy), and EMC was mentioned in very few posts that did not utilize this hashtag. 44 posts feature Broadway actors, while only 4 of these posts are associated with any sort of call to action or information about AEA membership and/or procedures. 16 of these 44 posts are those which feature a Broadway takeover, which generally garnered fewer likes than the average post, at about 160 likes. This is despite the survey results, which will be discussed later in this section, that led us to believe more interaction with a post would occur if a Broadway actor’s photo or comment was present. Meanwhile, posts featuring Broadway actors accompanied by hashtags such as #MotivationalMondays garnered some of the most likes seen within the aforementioned 200 posts - such as that post featuring Grey Henson of *Mean Girls* on Broadway, shared on April 8, 2019, and having garnered 1,384 unique likes to date - 1,137 more likes than that of the average @ActorsEquity Instagram post.



**FIGURE 3: FOLLOWERS OF AEA TWITTER BY AGE AND GENDER @ACTORSEQUITY. 31 MARCH 2019, ZOOMPH.COM. [HTTP://ZOOMPH.COM](http://zoomph.com).**

The union’s presence on Twitter, based upon followership alone, is even more notable than its presence on Instagram, with the Twitter account @ActorsEquity garnering 57.6k distinct followers as of April 2019. The union’s Twitter following is composed of 54% women and 46% men, with 62.7% these followers falling under the “Millennial” age range, 28.7% “Gen-X”, and 1.7% “Gen-Z” - meaning that all but 6.9% of followership is by those aged 37 and under, and

30.4% of followership is by those aged 21 and under (see Figure 3). Above is a graphic representation of this data, as calculated by Zoomph.com, a social media analytics company. On Twitter, @ActorsEquity has publicly shared 100 posts within the past 20 days (since 2 April 2019, data collected on 22 April 2019). This count includes all content, such as retweets and replies. The vast majority of posts are either unique shares regarding union updates or retweets from outside sources related to AEA affairs. Those tweets that were originally created and shared by AEA average fewer than 10 likes a piece, reaching about 0.02% of potential when comparing individual likes to overall followership.



FIGURE 4: AEA FACEBOOK FOLLOWING STATISTICS, 31 MARCH 2019, FACEBOOK.COM. [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ACTORSEQUITY/](https://www.facebook.com/actorsequity/).

On Facebook, AEA garners the largest followership yet, with an average of approximately 70,941 unique accounts having “subscribed” to the page (see Figure 4). This number is calculated based upon the number of “likes” and the number of “followers” linked to the Facebook page @ActorsEquity, or <https://www.facebook.com/ActorsEquity/>. Both of these numbers illustrate a group of people who have pledged their social media loyalty to AEA in that they have agreed to receive notification of and updates on the happenings and posts of @ActorsEquity on a regular basis.

The AEA Facebook page is the most wide-reaching of all, with a higher number of followers than any other social media platform. This page, however, brings in significantly fewer

likes and about the same amount of comments as any other AEA social channel, with posts garnering, on average, about 2-6 likes each regardless of content. Facebook is unique in that it presents a wide array of features for its creators to explore, one of which being Facebook Events. To date, the AEA Facebook page has created two events. People were more responsive when interacting with these events than with general posts, with over 300 people having responded either “going” or “interested” to the “My Whitelist Cabaret” event, which took place in August 2017.

*HASHTAGS.* #EquityWorks, often paired and interchanged with #EquityStrong, is one of the most common and one of the most popular hashtags used by AEA on Instagram (Figure 5). The hashtag, as a whole, has been used by public accounts on Instagram, including @ActorsEquity, 4,114 times since the first usage in April 2014. This does not include usage in stories, usage on private accounts, and untraceable usage - such as usage in a photograph - meaning 4,114 usages is the minimum, and there are likely more that remain unaccounted for. These hashtags are very broad and are used not for one specific purpose nor campaign, but in many different instances.



Often, the posts shared by @ActorsEquity using these hashtags are posts falling into one of three categories: AEA elections, pro-AEA rallying, and do not work notices.

#IWishIHadKnown is another hashtag used by @ActorsEquity on Instagram, though significantly less popular at only 230 public posts. However, unlike #EquityWorks and #EquityStrong, very few of these 230

**FIGURE 5: THE ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION'S INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT, FEATURING THE HASHTAG #EQUITYWORKS.**  
[HTTPS://WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/ACTORSEQUITY/](https://www.instagram.com/actorsequity/)

posts using the hashtag are actually relevant to AEA. The hashtag has not been used since November 2018, with only two posts made

by AEA using the hashtag to date. This is despite the fact that @ActorsEquity has shared more than two photos dedicated toward the campaign on its Instagram account - however, very few said posts utilized the aforementioned hashtag - thus, there is no way for those interested in the campaign to track posts directly related to it without navigating directly to AEA's Instagram profile.

#NotALabRat is one of the most recent and successful campaigns AEA has launched and supported primarily over social media. The campaign was spread over all three social media platforms - Instagram, Twitter and Facebook - and utilized video content, images and links to petitions to increase general awareness of and engagement with the campaign. On Facebook, ads were created that, once interacted with, redirected audiences to an external landing page where they could gain additional information on and show their support towards the updating of the Equity Lab Agreement, as discussed in the Literature Review portion of this thesis. Here, audiences supportive of the campaign signed a petition and were able to share said petition on their own social media profiles. On Twitter, users shared video content that engaged people offline, showing AEA members taking the streets to educate non-members and theatregoers on how they can contribute to and support the #NotALabRat campaign. While the hashtag only has seen 479 posts on Instagram, many of these posts featured interactive video content displaying Broadway actors talking about their personal take on the issues of the Lab Agreement.

Such hashtags have acted as the cornerstone with regard to many of the union's most widely recognized social media campaigns. It is difficult to measure whether usage of such hashtags has led campaigns to become more successful than they would have otherwise been. Among the 100 most recent photos AEA was tagged in on Instagram by those users with public accounts, none of those included an AEA-specific hashtag, such as #EquityWorks or

#NotALabRat. Each photo either included no hashtag, or a non-union specific hashtag, such as “#actor” or “#actorslife”.

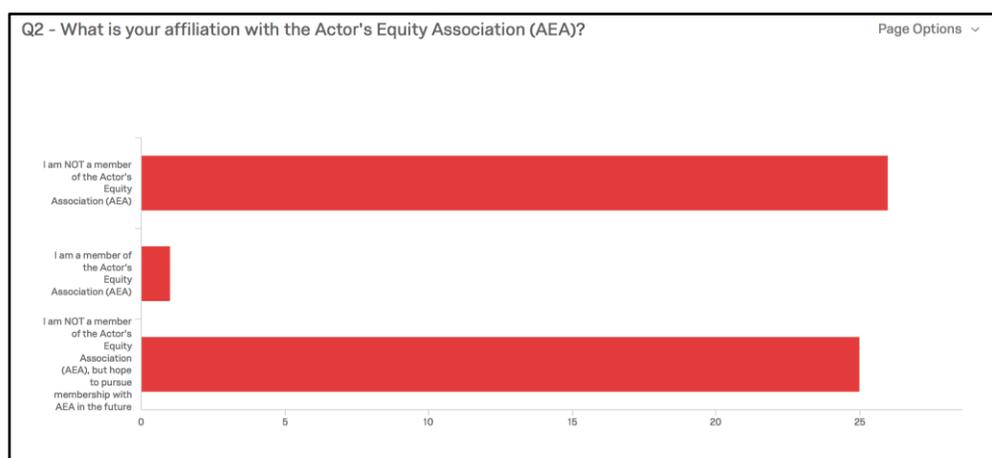
*POTENTIAL AUDIENCE AND SURVEY.* In 2016, 11,186 degrees were awarded in General Drama & Theatre Arts within the United States, as determined by DataUSA in association with the Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS). The majority of these were Bachelors’ Degrees (“General”). Only 639 degrees in Musical Theatre were awarded in the U.S. in the same year, with the vast majority, again, being Bachelors’ Degrees (“Musical”). According to DataUSA, these two degrees are considered a part of the Visual & Performing Arts field, which more broadly reaps 150,490 degree earners each year - thus, Drama, Theatre Arts & Musical Theatre compose about 11,825 of the 150,490 national Visual & Performing Arts degrees awarded each year, or only about 7.86% of degrees (“General”). The most common jobs among visual & performing arts graduates in 2016 included designers, elementary & middle school teachers and miscellaneous managers. Furthermore, less than 3% of degree earners combined went on to participate in the performing arts industry, with a portion of that 3% also dedicated to the spectator sport and related industries (“General”). It can thus be deducted that approximately 4,515 of the 150,490 Visual & Performing Arts degree earners go on to partake in the performing arts industry in a capacity that will likely be directly impacted by the proceedings of AEA, or about 38% of the total Drama, Theatre Arts & Musical Theatre degrees obtained nationally each year.

Figure 6 was sourced from the 2016-2017 AEA Annual Report, showcasing the total number of active members within the union during that year, as well as the number of new members obtained within said year. We can assume only a portion of the industry entrants fell within the 18-25 age range - for our sake, and to be as conservative as possible, we will say that

the workforce ranges from ages 18-70, thus, about 13% of these 2,344 members likely fell within our target age range, or approximately 304 persons. Thus, we can assume that only about 304 of the 4,515 national industry entrants each year, or about 7%, are actually joining the union each year (DiPaola). Naturally, there are other factors that might further hinder a young industry entrant from joining the union, such as membership in the EMC program, lack of job opportunities, or participation in a different facet of the industry (ex: Front of House or Production). These factors would only further limit portion of young industry entrants that are actually actively pursuing union membership each year.

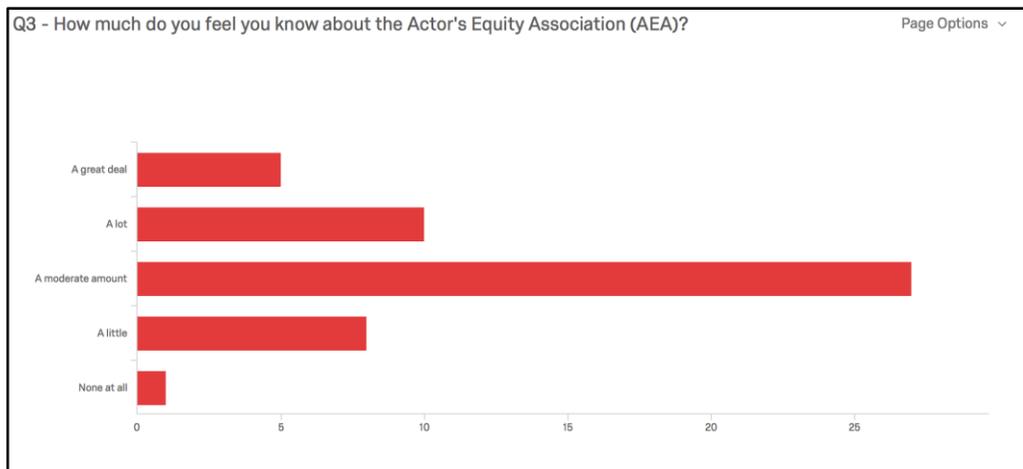
<b>Table 1, 2016-2017 Season Membership Summary</b>	
<b>New Members</b>	<b>2,344</b>
Eastern Region Members	32,705 63.3%
Central Region Members	5,017 9.7%
Western Region Members	13,914 26.9%
<b>Total Active Members</b>	<b>51,636</b>

**FIGURE 6: 2016-2017 SEASON MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY, ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION. 25 APRIL 2019, ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, [HTTPS://WWW.ACTORSEQUITY.ORG/ABOUTEQUITY/ANNUALSTUDY/2016-2017-ANNUAL-STUDY.PDF](https://www.actorsequity.org/aboutequity/annualstudy/2016-2017-annual-study.pdf).**

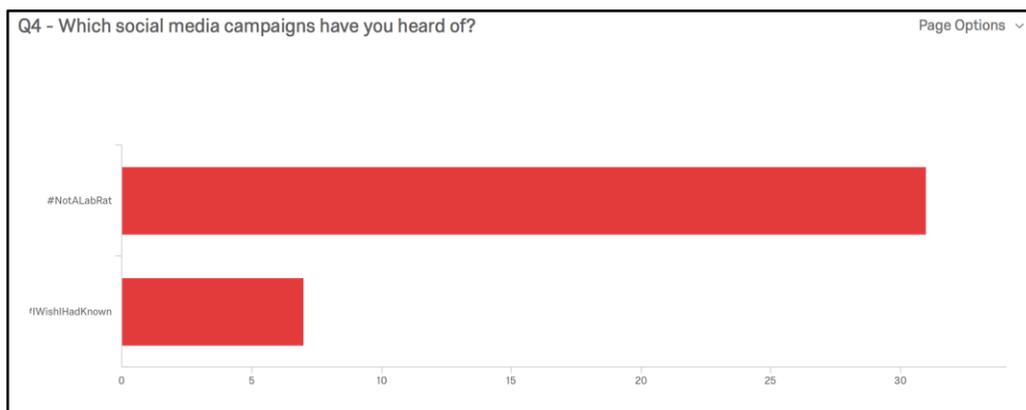


**FIGURE 7: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' AFFILIATION WITH AEA**

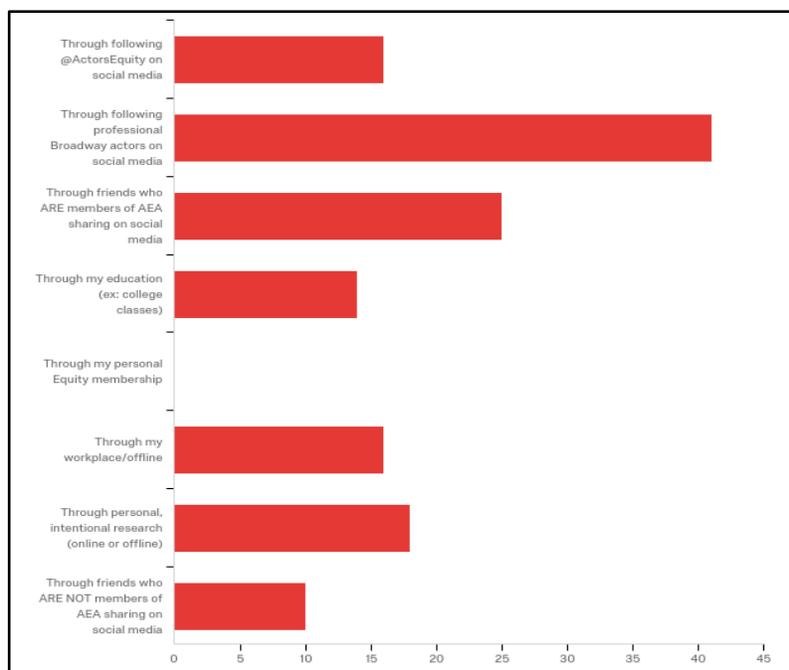
*Survey Results.* 51 respondents completed this survey. The confines of this survey, to which all respondents agreed, were that all participants must be aged 18-25 years and must consider him or herself in pursuit of the professional performing arts industry in any capacity. The vast majority of respondents were not members of AEA. However, nearly half of all respondents desired future membership within the organization.



**FIGURE 8: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH AEA**



**FIGURE 9: POPULARITY OF AEA SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS**

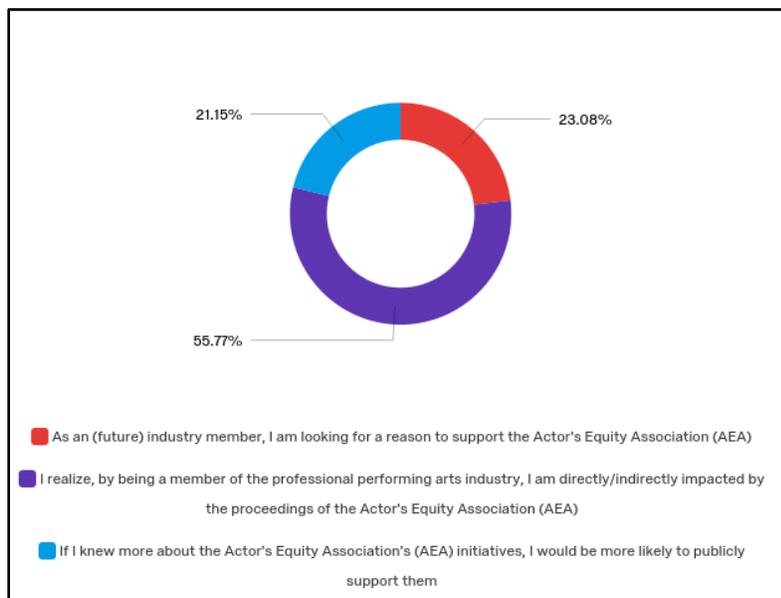


**FIGURE 10: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON AEA**

The majority of respondents (27/51) considered themselves to know a moderate amount about AEA, whereas 15 considered themselves to know more than a moderate amount, and 9 considered themselves to know less (see Figure 8). When asked whether they had heard of the campaigns #NotALabRat and/or #IWishIHadKnown prior to the commencement of this survey, 31 out of 51 respondents claimed they had heard of #NotALabRat, whereas 7 out of 51 respondents claimed they had heard of #IWishIHadKnown (see Figure 9). When asked to identify where they had gained information on such campaigns from, the vast majority of respondents - 41 out of 51 - claimed they had learned of the campaigns through following Broadway actors on social media. 24 out of 51 respondents said that they had learned of the campaigns through friends who *are* members of the AEA's sharing of said campaigns on their own social media channels, while 18 out of 51 respondents claimed they had heard of the campaigns from their own personal, intentional, offline or online research (see Figure 10).

Only 16 out of 51 respondents claimed that they had heard of the campaigns through their following of AEA itself on social media. Dissimilarly, 16 respondents claimed that they had heard of such campaigns through their workplaces or other offline sources. 14 survey respondents claimed that they had learned of the campaigns through their education - another primarily offline source. 10 respondents claimed they had heard of the initiatives through friends who are NOT members of AEA sharing the campaigns on their personal social media profiles. Finally, none of the respondents - including the one who claimed that he or she was a part of AEA - said that they had learned of the campaigns through their own personal AEA membership (see Figure 10).

The following three questions asked the respondent to identify the answer he or she felt best fit him or her:



**FIGURE 11: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD AEA SOCIAL MEDIA ENDEAVORS**

In Figure 11, three statements were examined by respondents included “As an (future) industry member, I am looking for a reason to support the Actors’ Equity Association (AEA)”, “I realize, by being a member of the professional performing arts industry, I am directly/indirectly impacted by

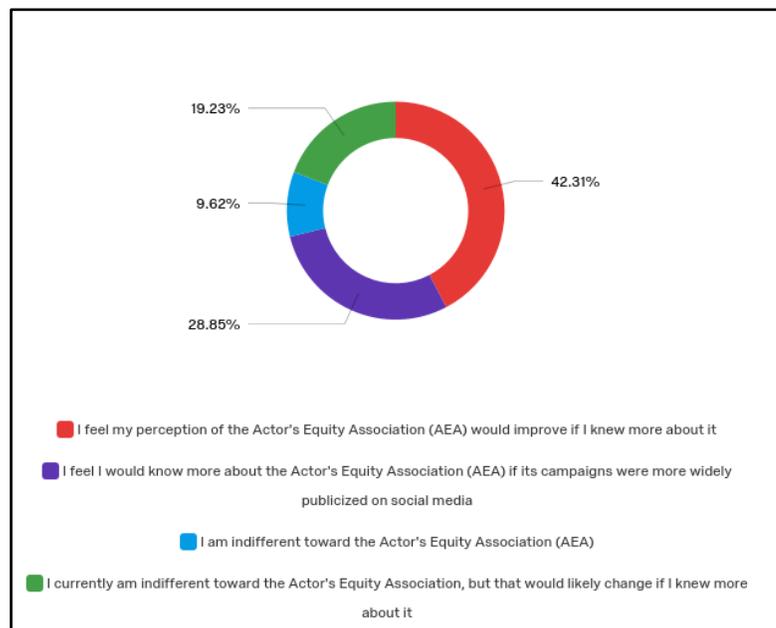
the proceedings of the Actors’ Equity Association (AEA)”, and, “If I knew more about the Actors’ Equity Association, I would be more likely to publicly support them”. 23.08% felt they

most identified with the first statement, while 21.15% felt they most identified with the third. 55.77% claimed they most identified with the second option, as listed in Figure 11.

Figure 12 examines the respondent's feelings toward their understanding of such AEA campaigns and how they hope or anticipate to interact with them moving forward. The majority of respondents - 42.31% - most identified with the statement that their perception of AEA would improve if they understood more about it. 28.85% of respondents most identified with the statement, "I feel I would know more about the Actors' Equity Association (AEA) if its

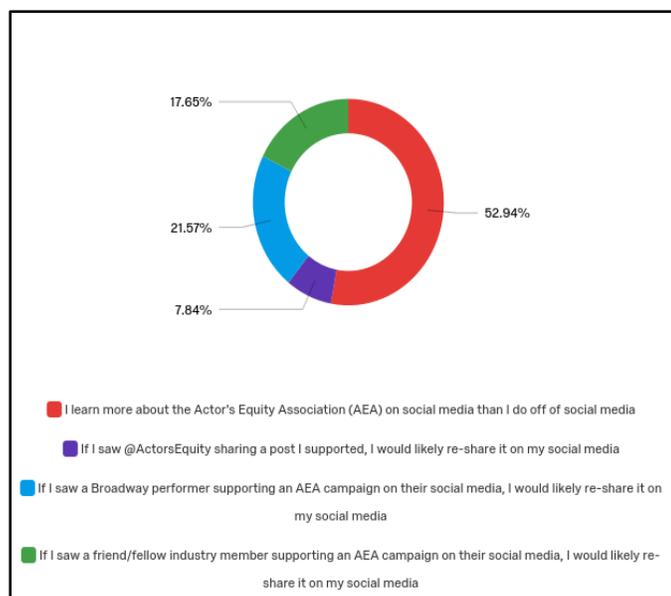
campaigns were more widely publicized on social media". 19.23% of respondents most identified with the statement, "I am currently indifferent toward the Actors' Equity Association, but that would likely change if I knew more about it". The aforementioned statement does not specify whether said perception would change for the better or for the

worse. Finally, 9.62% of respondents most identified with the statement, "I am indifferent toward the Actors' Equity Association (AEA)".



**FIGURE 12: SURVEY RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS AEA SOCIAL MEDIA ENDEAVORS**

Figure 13 illustrates the opinions of respondents toward how they access information and how likely they would be to further spread said information, given different circumstances. The vast majority of respondents - 52.94% - most identified with the statement, “I learn more about the Actors’ Equity Association (AEA) on social media than I do off of social media



**FIGURE 13: POTENTIAL STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING AEA'S SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE**

than I do off of social media”. The remainder of respondents claimed that different factors would lead them to re-share the aforementioned AEA social media campaigns on their own personal social media. The first factor is Broadway performers. 21.57% of survey respondents most identified with the statement, “If I saw a friend/fellow industry member supporting an AEA campaign on their social media, I would likely re-share it on my social media”. 17.65% of respondents most identified with the statement, “If I saw @ActorsEquity sharing a post I supported, I would likely re-share it on my social media”. Lastly, 7.84% of respondents most identified with the statement, “If I saw a Broadway performer supporting an AEA campaign on their social media, I would likely re-share it on my social media”. It is important to note that only the statement regarding @ActorsEquity directly specifies that the shared post is one the respondent initially supported. Furthermore, it is also important to note that, throughout this survey, respondents consistently were given the option to select no answer and move forward with the assessment.

*LIMITATIONS.* It is important to note that the participants in this survey were primarily sourced from the New York Metropolitan and surrounding areas, thus placing a slight bias on survey results, as young industry entrants from areas mentioned throughout this thesis, such as Florida or other areas of the United States where students are graduating with theatre-related degrees, are not proportionately represented.

## **DISCUSSION**

AEA is only garnering, at most, 6.7% of its potential when it comes to the amount of young industry entrants pursuing union membership each year. It is clear that the union has much room to grow, and social media marketing proves itself a great place for the union to start, both as a result of reliance on technology as illustrated in the Literature Review portion of this thesis, and as a result of the great potential AEA currently has to engage its target demographic on social media as a result of a disproportionately large portion of its followership on both Instagram and Twitter falling within the 18-25 age range. While it is unlikely that all of these 18-25 year-olds are planning to pursue involvement in the professional performing arts industry, we do know a statistically significant portion are, as 16/51 survey respondents claimed that they not only were they pursuing a career within the performing arts, but that they had gained a portion of their information on the proceedings of AEA as a direct result of their following the union on social media. Despite this, AEA remains unable to engage a large portion of its potential audience on social media.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly claimed that they knew a “moderate” amount about the proceedings and policies of AEA, thus implying that there is significant room for growth with regard to our audience’s understanding of union initiatives. Said respondents also noted that they had learned more about the union online than they had offline, thus further proving the

importance of targeting young industry entrants on social media rather than off. Survey respondents displayed great willingness to think favorably about the union, even before they knew much about it. Data showed that respondents considered themselves more likely gain a positive view of the union as they learn more about it than a negative one, thus showcasing the positive bias many young industry entrants already hold toward the union, likely as a result of various environmental factors. Furthermore, survey respondents displayed overall willingness to share and re-share union campaigns and initiatives on their own social media pages without prompting, particularly when those campaigns had already been promoted by friends and/or well-recognized Broadway stars. Furthermore, survey respondents displayed an understanding that the proceedings of AEA would impact their lives as members of the performing arts industry, whether members of AEA or otherwise.

Regardless of this positive bias, AEA still currently overall misses the mark when it comes to modern social media marketing initiatives. The union is currently met with overall low levels of engagement across all three social media platforms, with, as previously mentioned, only 16/51 survey respondents stating that they gain their information from AEA social accounts themselves. While this is a statistically significant number, there is still plenty of room for growth, as approximately 69% of survey respondents claimed they did not gain any information on the union from direct followership on social media. Particularly on Twitter and Facebook, the union is met with overall disproportionately low levels of engagement, whether in the form of likes, comments, or otherwise. The union's highest relative levels of engagement on each of its social platforms came from the creation of Facebook Events, posts featuring Broadway performers, and the use of highly-specified hashtags to further union campaigns.

From analysis of these aforementioned successes and missed opportunities, we are able to pinpoint four areas to which the union might want to pay special attention as they attempt to improve their social presence: improved use of hashtags with regard to campaigning, use of social media to directly engage people both on and offline, use of social media to facilitate an open dialogue with young and aspiring theatre professionals, and use of young people's passion for theatre to drive results.

*IMPROVED USE OF HASHTAGS WITH REGARD TO CAMPAIGNING.* AEA's use of hashtags to frontline many of its campaigns is one that, in theory, would prove useful in increasing external engagement with union initiatives on social media. However, we saw that it is rather infrequent that use of hashtags is reciprocated by those interacting with @ActorsEquity from an outside standpoint. Additionally, many of these campaigns have proven to be either unsustainable or too broad, with the result being little chance of audience engagement. Hashtags such as #NotALabRat have a limited shelf life and are no longer relevant once a new Equity Agreement is negotiated, until new concerns arise along the same lines. Hashtags such as #EquityWorks and #EquityStrong are too broad and encompass so many different AEA promotional efforts, making their use confusing to those who do not fully understand the meaning behind them - particularly, non-union members.

While campaigns such as #NotALabRat might have a shorter shelf life than others, these campaigns have proven some of the most successful as they employ a call to action. Union members and non-union members alike feel compelled to stand in solidarity with those experiencing issues within areas such as the Equity Lab Agreement. Campaigns such as #EquityWorks and #EquityStrong, though they are broad and not subjected to any time constraints, are less likely to move union supporters to share the hashtags because audiences

have no motivation nor reason to encourage more people to get involved as they might in the case of the Lab Agreement, where a concrete goal is being worked toward and the sharing of posts with the hashtag #NotALabRat is done so with intention of increasing awareness for an issue considered vital to many Equity members. This is compared to #EquityWorks, #EquityStrong and #IWishIHadKnown, where there is no call to action as no explicit goal is being worked toward.

Regardless of the fact that outsiders might not use AEA hashtags as frequently as the union might like, it cannot be denied that those who are members of our target demographic recognize those AEA campaigns - such as #NotALabRat - that are the most well-known. If AEA wants to create campaigns that are more relevant to young people, they need to thus make alterations to their broad hashtags rather than to their “unsustainable” ones - campaigns such people feel motivated to engage with and to share. One way AEA might accomplish this is by turning #EquityWorks into one specific hashtag meant to encourage union pride and further educate the public to union initiatives, while another hashtag exclusively covers all of those items currently tagged #EquityWorks that do not fit into the new categorization. Without differentiation and a bit of catering toward a younger audience, there is no reason for young and aspiring theatre professional to examine, let alone get involved with, that content currently contained within the #EquityWorks hashtag.

For instance, if AEA chose to remove do not work notices and voting information from their #EquityWorks campaign and rather house it under another hashtag - let's call this hashtag #EquityInvolved - the #EquityWorks campaign would then primarily contain information on AEA benefits, recent wins in negotiations, etc. Using the #EquityWorks to promote how AEA's existence benefits actors and the theatre industry as a whole would allow the hashtag to become a

reliable, accessible place for aspiring industry professionals to turn to to gain information and insight on what their future may hold.

Even more so, if AEA were to include action items in its #EquityWorks campaign, similar in idea to the “call to action” #NotALabRat provides, this would give young theater professionals even more reason to engage with and share the AEA campaign. For instance - an #EquityWorks Instagram post that includes the hashtag, discusses a union benefit (ex: “the newly negotiated Equity Lab Agreement marks the first time in 11 years that the salary for Lab participants has risen”), and then suggests a follow-up action to audiences that allows everyone to get involved (ex: “Share if you think it is important for actors to get the pay that they deserve.”) This paired with the newfound specificity within the hashtag would ensure not only that young people are receiving the most accurate, relevant information, but that the information being shared is being spread to others both within and without the industry - furthermore, the information is receiving the farthest possible reach.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO DIRECTLY ENGAGE PEOPLE BOTH ON AND OFFLINE. Not only should AEA’s use of social media be aimed to directly engage people online, but it should also be created with the intention of engaging young people offline. The AEA has some young people-specific initiatives meant to help young people break into the industry, which were hardly mentioned in our findings. If AEA wants to get young people excited about being a part of a union, as well as keeping them in the know about what unionization truly means, discussion of the aforementioned EMC (or “Equity Membership Candidacy”) program should be present on social media. One way AEA might accomplish this is by including EMC-specific marketing on social channels or through the creation of an EMC-specific account or hashtag solely dedicated to the exploration of what it meant to be an EMC. A great way to take advantage of a missed

opportunity on social media here is to engage Facebook's Events tool to create and promote special events meant specifically for non-AEA members regarding what the EMC program entails and how one might navigate it. Social media users interested in the event - which, we can assume, would be either young people or those closely involved with young people such as a parent, guardian or coach - would then have the ability to mark themselves as "attending" the event, something automatically made public and shared to one's own Facebook profile. The Facebook user would then have the option to share the event with his or her friends on their personal "News Feed" - allowing the event to gain more widespread publicity than it might have gained on Twitter or Instagram.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO FACILITATE AN OPEN DIALOGUE WITH YOUNG AND ASPIRING THEATRE PROFESSIONALS. A third suggestion regarding how AEA might improve its social media presence in order to better relations between itself and young and aspiring theatre professionals is by taking the opportunity to discuss engage with young and aspiring theatre professionals directly on social media platforms. AEA, at the moment, does not actively engage with other accounts on social media besides to retweet union-related information or to like tweets in which the @ActorsEquity handle is mentioned. Particularly on Twitter, AEA does not actively take the time to encourage a dialogue between Twitter users and the AEA page, nor to reply to Twitter users who mention @ActorsEquity in any of their posts. On platforms meant largely for the purpose of facilitating open discussion, this is a missed opportunity - particularly as such a large percentage of the union's Twitter and Instagram followership is composed of young people aged 18-25. One way through which this could be improved is through the introduction of a new campaign - let's call it #AskEquity - where open dialogue is encouraged and shared publicly between the @ActorsEquity and curious Twitter users, and popular or particularly useful

questions are either turned into a graphic or a video, with the permission of the involved Twitter users, that can be shared on various social media platforms to further encourage open dialogue and to aid and educate curious young and aspiring theatre professionals who might have had the same question.

USE OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S PASSION FOR THEATRE TO DRIVE RESULTS. Similarly, a fourth and final way AEA might improve its social media presence in order to better relations between itself and young and aspiring theatre professionals is by encouraging and playing off of young people's passion for the theatre. While passion for the theatre is something shared among many theatre professionals of all ages, it is something particularly prevalent in young, new industry members, given that they have likely just made the transition from theatre fan to theatre professional. That being said, these young people, as was revealed in our survey, consider themselves likely to be swayed by the inclusion of Broadway stars and other industry professionals in campaigns – more so than older, more established theatre professionals might be. Broadway stars and other industry professionals have already been employed by AEA to partake in social media campaigns, such as #NotALabRat. These performers have made videos in which they discuss why the campaign is important to them, which were then shared on AEA social platforms – often to great success.

If AEA were to employ this video technique to the #AskEquity campaign - meaning content would be created centered around questions that young and aspiring performers have provided via Twitter, answered by Broadway stars & recognizable industry professionals – this content would likely continue to prove significantly more popular than the average AEA post. Furthermore, young industry entrants – regardless of their current relationship with AEA – would be far more likely to engage with and share #AskEquity posts, as revealed by the

aforementioned survey. The campaign would not only directly serve to educate and engage young people who plan to join AEA, but would engage and educate those young industry professionals who might not plan to join the union, but might want to know how the union might impact their professional life and feel prepared to readily support said union.

## **CONCLUSION**

AEA is already pretty savvy when it comes to the social media world. As of 2019, the union has a strong presence on social media and have generated a base of supportive union members through their use of AEA-specific hashtags and membership-related content. However, there is much more that could be done to better relations with those pursuing both union & industry membership. Though the union has not actively needed to build a relationship with, market to, nor engage young, aspiring theatre professionals in the past, due to the recent federal action against “exclusive representation” unions, right-to-work laws, and changes in variety of Broadway performances and performers, it is now foreseeable that unions will have to start marketing to and building rapport with such young professionals in the near future - not only to encourage potential new union members to pursue membership, but to encourage union members and non-union members alike to become actively involved in supporting and sharing union causes.

While unions may market to young people in a variety of ways, many marketers and union professionals say the best way to reach young people is via social media and the internet, as this relieves communication barriers between and young and aspiring theatre professionals. Additionally, such efforts remove much of the elusiveness of unions, allowing potential new members to feel better connected with AEA or any other union with which they might be interacting. Social media leaves room for newly informed industry entrants to become excited

about and feel involved in their respective labor organizations even prior to official extension of membership, something the youth of today are more excited and, because of technological advancements, able to do than ever before.

Though AEA does maintain a relatively strong social media presence, there is currently little to no opportunity for engagement with young theatre professionals - thus creating a gap in knowledge and a gap in engagement that can only be fixed by AEA more carefully curating their social media efforts to cater to young people like they do current union members. After analysis of AEA's current presence on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, as well a survey examining the current relationship between AEA and young industry entrants, we were able to pinpoint and explore four ways through which AEA might be able to simultaneously improve its relationship with young theatre professionals and best market itself - those being through improved use of hashtags with regard to campaigning, use of social media to directly engage people both on and offline, use of social media to facilitate an open dialogue with young and aspiring theatre professionals, and use of young people's passion for theatre to drive results.

This research method and these findings can be adapted and applied to any union, particularly within the performing arts, facing the same or similar "exclusive representation" and adaptation issues. This study illustrates not only that social media is a great tool for union marketing in general, but serves as a framework for how relations between young people and unions that may not have previously had to consider how to effectively reach young people might be improved in the future. The future of social media as a business tool is ever-growing, and through said analysis, we are now one step closer to being equipped to grow with it.

## WORKS CITED

- “Actors' Equity Reaches Tentative Agreement with Producers of Broadway Production Rocktopia.” *Actors' Equity Association*,  
[www.actorssequity.org/news/PR/RocktopiaAgreement](http://www.actorssequity.org/news/PR/RocktopiaAgreement).
- Arnesen, Eric. *Encyclopedia of U.S. Labor and Working-Class History*. New York: Routledge, 2007, pp. 8-13. Print.
- Bailey, Janis, et al. “Daggy Shirts, Daggy Slogans? Marketing Unions to Young People.” *Journal of Industrial Relations*, vol. 52, no. 1, Feb. 2010, pp. 43–60, doi:[10.1177/0022185609353984](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022185609353984).
- Baude, William, and Eugene Volokh. “Compelled Subsidies and the First Amendment.” *Harvard Law Review*, vol. 132, no. 1, November 2018, pp. 171-204. *HeinOnline*,  
<https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/hlr132&i=181>.
- Bakker, Tom P., and Claes H. de Vreese. “Good News for the Future? Young People, Internet Use, and Political Participation.” *Communication Research*, vol. 38, no. 4, Aug. 2011, pp. 451–470, doi:[10.1177/0093650210381738](https://doi.org/10.1177/0093650210381738).
- “Compulsory Unionism.” *National Right To Work Committee*,  
[nrtwc.org/about/the-problem/](http://nrtwc.org/about/the-problem/).
- Costas Panagopoulos, Peter L. Francia, “The Polls—Trends: Labor Unions in the United States.” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 134–159, <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfn002>.
- DiPaola, Steven. “2016-2017 Theatrical Season Report An Analysis of Employment, Earnings, Membership and Finance.” *Actors' Equity Association*,  
[www.actorssequity.org/aboutequity/annualstudy/2016-2017-annual-study.pdf](http://www.actorssequity.org/aboutequity/annualstudy/2016-2017-annual-study.pdf).

“General Drama & Theater Arts.” *Data USA*,

[datausa.io/profile/cip/500501/](https://datausa.io/profile/cip/500501/).

Kochan, Thomas A. “How American Workers View Labor Unions.” *Monthly Labor Review*, vol.

102, no. 4, 1979, pp. 23–31. *JSTOR*,

[www.jstor.org/stable/41840979](https://www.jstor.org/stable/41840979).

Lindsay, Benjamin. "'Frozen' Strikes Profit-Sharing Deal." *Back Stage*, vol. 57, no. 42, 2016, pp.

6. *ProQuest*,

[https://rilib.pace.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-](https://rilib.pace.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.rilib.pace.edu/docview/1831190387?accountid=13044)

[com.rilib.pace.edu/docview/1831190387?accountid=13044](https://rilib.pace.edu/docview/1831190387?accountid=13044).

“Musical Theatre.” *Data USA*,

[datausa.io/profile/cip/500509/](https://datausa.io/profile/cip/500509/).

“PHOTOS: Following Broadway Strike Launch, Actors' Equity Members Take #NotALabRat

Campaign to Broadway Audiences.” *Home · Actors' Equity Association*,

[www.actorsequity.org/news/PR/NotALabRat4/](https://www.actorsequity.org/news/PR/NotALabRat4/).

Preston, Caroline. "Can Educating Kids about Unions Prepare them for the Future of Work?"

*Tech Directions*, vol. 77, no. 9, 05, 2018, pp. 22-25. *ProQuest*,

[http://rilib.pace.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/2032387533?accounti](http://rilib.pace.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/2032387533?accountid=13044)

[d=13044](http://rilib.pace.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/2032387533?accountid=13044).

Seidman, Joel. “The Trend among Professional Groups Today.” *The American Journal of*

*Nursing*, vol. 65, no. 1, 1965, pp. 72–75. *JSTOR*,

[www.jstor.org/stable/3419373](https://www.jstor.org/stable/3419373).

Shane, Rachel. "Negotiating the creative sector: understanding the role and impact of an artistic

union in a cultural industry a study of Actors' Equity Association and the theatrical

industry." Electronic Thesis or Dissertation. Ohio State University, 2006, pp. 370-372, 374. *OhioLINK Electronic Theses and Dissertations Center*.

Theocharis, Yannis, and Ellen Quintelier. "Stimulating Citizenship or Expanding Entertainment? The Effect of Facebook on Adolescent Participation." *New Media & Society* 18, no. 5, May 2016, pp. 817–836. doi:[10.1177/1461444814549006](https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444814549006).

United States, Senate. "The 2018 Florida Statutes, Title XXXI, Chapter 447: Employees' Right to Self-Organization." 2018. *Online Sunshine: Official Internet Site of Florida Legislature*.  
[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0400-0499/0447/0447.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0400-0499/0447/0447.html).

Yamamoto, Masahiro, Matthew J Kushin, and Francis Dalisay. "Social Media and Mobiles as Political Mobilization Forces for Young Adults: Examining the Moderating Role of Online Political Expression in Political Participation." *New Media & Society* 17, no. 6, June 2015, pp. 880–898. doi:[10.1177/1461444813518390](https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444813518390).

**APPENDIX A.**

**SURVEY CONTENTS**

This survey is hosted through Qualtrics.

**Q1 ELECTRONIC CONSENT:**

If you agree to take part in the research, please print a copy of this page to keep for future reference, check the “Agree” box below, and email this completed form to ct10144n@pace.edu.

Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

You have read the above information/You voluntarily agree to participate

Agree (1)

Disagree (2)

Q2 Please note that this survey is meant to be completed by those aged 18-25 pursuing a profession within the theatre industry. Please confirm that you meet these requirements.

I do (1)

I do not (2)

Q3 What is your affiliation with the Actor's Equity Association (AEA)?

I am NOT a member of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) (1)

I am a member of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) (2)

I am NOT a member of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA), but hope to pursue membership with AEA in the future (3)

Q4 How much do you feel you know about the Actor's Equity Association (AEA)?

A great deal (1)

A lot (2)

A moderate amount (3)

A little (4)

None at all (5)

Q4 Which social media campaigns have you heard of?

#NotALabRat (1)

#HowIGotMyEquityCard (2)

#EquityStrong/#EquityWorks (3)

#AskIfItsEquity (4)

#IWishIHadKnown (5)

None of the Above (6)

Q5 How have you gained information on any of the campaigns mentioned in Question 4?

- Through following @ActorsEquity on social media (1)
- Through following professional Broadway actors on social media (2)
- Through friends who ARE members of AEA sharing on social media (3)
- Through my education (ex: college classes) (4)
- Through my personal Equity membership (5)
- Through my workplace/offline (6)
- Through personal, intentional research (online or offline) (7)
- Through friends who ARE NOT members of AEA sharing on social media (8)

Q6 Choose the option(s) that best fit you...

- As an (future) industry member, I am looking for a reason to support the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) (1)
- I realize, by being a member of the professional performing arts industry, I am directly/indirectly impacted by the proceedings of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) (2)
- If I knew more about the Actor's Equity Association's (AEA) initiatives, I would be more likely to publicly support them (3)

Q7 Choose the option(s) that best fit you...

I feel my perception of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) would improve if I knew more about it (1)

I feel I would know more about the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) if its campaigns were more widely publicized on social media (2)

I am indifferent toward the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) (3)

I currently am indifferent toward the Actor's Equity Association, but that would likely change if I knew more about it (4)

Q9 Choose the option(s) that best fit you...

I learn more about the Actor's Equity Association (AEA) on social media than I do off of social media (1)

If I saw @ActorsEquity sharing a post I supported, I would likely re-share it on my social media (2)

If I saw a Broadway performer supporting an AEA campaign on their social media, I would likely re-share it on my social media (3)

If I saw a friend/fellow industry member supporting an AEA campaign on their social media, I would likely re-share it on my social media (4)