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Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance Marketing Plan

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WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY’S DEPARTMENT OF DANCE MARKETING PLAN

Cassandra Reed Hartline
SENIOR CAPSTONE: DANC 4700  Due Date: 17 April 2017
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Executive Summary

The following report constitutes the formal marketing plan for the department of dance at Western Michigan University. This plan is intended to synthesize all of the marketing related information pertinent to Western’s dance department and provide easy one step access to this material at any time. The other purpose of this plan is to dictate the primary objectives the department is looking to accomplish through implementation of marketing tactics.

The first primary objective includes increasing visibility of the department of dance as a whole to both our primary and secondary target audiences; the second objective is to create innovative marketing designs that consistently remain cost effective in nature. Throughout this plan there is no indication of cost for any of the suggested marketing tactics. This was done intentionally in order to allow lenience when enacting said plans and to avoid future potential issues if funds continue to decrease. Currently, the department of dance is allotted no more than $5,000 for marketing according to the department chair Megan Slayter; therefore this was the budget upon which marketing suggestions were made.

Overall, through implementation of this plan the goal is to increase prospective student attendance, maximize Western’s reach throughout the entire dance community, and exponentially amplify attendance for every dance performance. Through specifying our competition, understanding our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, realizing the industry with which we reside, and creating a strategic plan for implementation, these goals will become a reality for the dance department of Western Michigan University.
Positioning Statement

Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance targets two differing age categories: prospective college dancers between the ages of 17-22 and artistic dance enthusiasts of all ages. This audience is provided the opportunity to expand their dance education and expertise through a nationally acclaimed tri-focal program providing the student and audience member with the most talented, well-rounded dancing experience possible. The WMU Department of Dance does this by providing each student an equal opportunity to grow in all three genres of dance education (jazz, ballet, and modern technique), hiring professional current choreographers to set work on students of any age within the program, and offering both a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts degree which allows each student to maximally individualize their time in the program and find what best suites their interest.

Industry Analysis

The following is a direct excerpt from IBISWorld’s “Colleges & Universities in the US: Market Research Report” and provides an analysis for the relevance of this report for the target market of the WMU Department of Dance specifically:

The Colleges and Universities industry is projected to exhibit steady growth over the next five years to 2021. While labor market improvements will encourage many individuals to pursue employment rather than higher education, growing rates of high school retention will keep college enrollment strong. Moreover, the growth of online education, through platforms like Coursera, edX and Udacity, will enable colleges to offer services to a rising number of nontraditional students. These courses may increase interest in industry institutions, boosting enrollment and revenue. Over the five years to 2021, the number of students enrolled in industry
institutions is expected to increase at an annualized rate of 1.6% to 13.2 million. Additionally, as state budget deficits begin to narrow, government funding for universities will rise, increasing at an annualized rate of 2.0% over the next five years. As a result, IBISWorld projects that industry revenue will increase at an annualized rate of 2.8% to $571.4 billion over the five years to 2021, starting with a 2.4% increase in 2017. International student enrollment is also anticipated to rise over the next five years. US institutions are still extremely competitive on a global scale, occupying many of the top spots in world university rankings. Universities and colleges will likely make education more accessible to international students by expanding their use of distance education technologies, developing links with other colleges across the world and improving their marketing efforts. Online education will enable industry operators to increase enrollment without major facility expansions. However, while online education proves an increasingly tempting choice for the traditional college student, those pursuing a career in dance will not find this a possibility, therefore creating no threat to any dance department country wide.

 Costs and Competition

Continued tuition increases will make it more difficult for some students to pursue higher education. While the federal government has taken steps to increase student loan availability, the rising cost of attending a traditional four-year college will cause some students to choose more affordable alternatives. As a result, this industry will face increased competition from community colleges, trade schools and for-profit universities. In fact, in September of 2015, President Obama created a committee to organize legislation that would make the first two years of community college free for all Americans. Introduced in the House of Representatives in July of 2015, the America’s College Promise Act of 2015 would allocate $79.7 billion over the period of 2016 to 2025 to establish grants for community college students. This bill has not yet been voted on by either chamber of Congress.
Still, competition from community colleges will likely remain moderate as traditional colleges and universities dominate the higher education sector; for an individual seeking a premium higher education, industry institutions are often the only choice. Furthermore, because many students transfer to a four-year institution after having completed two years at a community college, lower tuition for community colleges may ultimately result in higher demand for industry institutions. As a result of these factors, the number of colleges and universities is expected to increase over the five years to 2021, growing at an annualized rate of 1.4% to 2,072 enterprises.

**Budget Cuts**

Although this industry operates on a nonprofit basis, colleges and universities will continue to cut costs over the next five years to bolster the long-term sustainability of higher education. Universities are anticipated to merge redundant departments and courses to reduce administrative costs. The number of tenure-track positions, which typically have higher salaries, will also likely be reduced. Instead, industry institutions will continue to hire part-time lecturers and nontenured professors at lower wages. Overall, employment is projected to increase an annualized 2.3% to 3.2 million people over the five years to 2021. This increase in part-time professors will result in, for a dance department, more variance of class style and a larger variety of teachers with which one will come into contact (further expanding the dancer’s resume).

**Market Analysis**

The following is a direct excerpt from IBISWorld’s “Colleges & Universities in the US: Market Research Report” and provides an analysis for the relevance of this report for the target market of the WMU Department of Dance specifically:
According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, public industry establishments receive about 30.0% of their yearly operating budget from federal, state and local government funding. Conversely, private industry establishments receive about 15.0% of their funding from government grants. Generally, private institutions receive much larger percentages of their annual revenue from tuition fees compared with public institutions. While the largest share of total industry revenue is generated from various levels of government funding, the primary buyers of industry services are US consumers. Consequently, major markets can be segmented by student age groups.

**Students aged 18 to 21**

Recent high school graduates constitute the largest market for the Colleges and Universities industry. The high school retention rate has improved consistently over the past five years, increasing the number of recent graduates that move on to colleges and universities. However, while total enrollment in industry institutions is expected to continue rising in coming years, this demographics’ share of total college students will likely decline. In 2016, students aged 18 to 21 are expected to account for 40.0% of total industry revenue. This percentage means that, of all college students, 40% make up the target market for the department of dance.

**Students aged 22 to 29**

Students aged 22 to 29 typically include high school graduates in the final year of their undergraduate studies and individuals returning to college after a short hiatus, as well as the majority of students pursuing professional and graduate degrees. According to the US Census, just 12.0% of the US population aged 25 and older possessed an advanced degree in 2015, likely because the financial and professional returns on graduate degrees are often smaller than those of a person's original bachelor's degree. The number of students who pursue a graduate degree is, therefore, relatively consistent. As a result, this segment's share of the industry's total market
has remained largely unchanged over the past five years. In 2016, students in this age demographic are estimated to constitute 34.3% of industry revenue. While this does not mean anything for Western Michigan University specifically, considering the department of dance does not have a graduate program, these numbers and their consistency read that WMU has made a smart decision by not offering this type of degree.

Customer Profiles

The primary target market for Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance would be prospective college students between the ages of 17-22 looking to pursue a degree in dance. The key message we will attempt to send to this market is that Western provides an excellent, well rounded dance education and can be a place where students find inspiration, success, growth, and a home away from home.

Primary Target Market

17-year-old woman: Ashleigh

One of our primary target customers is a seventeen-year-old girl, currently attending high school in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and dancing
competitively at the dance studio she’s attended since the age of four. She is looking to pursue a degree in dance and exercise science and loves that Western offers both a BA and a BFA in dance. She has four very close friends and interacts with a variety of people at her school. She enjoys social interactions but tends to come off as shy upon initial meetings.

On the weekends, she is usually training for dance competitions or traveling to conventions. She is always looking to help her friends stay healthy and active and whenever a dancer friend gets hurt, she is the first person the go to, as she is always reading kinesiology journals and articles. This is another element of Western’s program that Ashleigh loves: emphasis on how the body works in relation to dance. This is why she is interested in double majoring upon entering college. She is also auditioning at other, bigger schools such as the University of Michigan, Arizona State, Grand Valley State University, and New York University. Her decision will depend heavily on where she gets in and what the atmosphere is like at each school.

Her friends, family, and classmates would describe her as intelligent, dedicated, fun, and passionate.

18-year-old man: Josh
This primary target consumer is an eighteen-year old man who has just graduated high school and is entertaining the thought of pursuing a degree in dance. He is from the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois and has grown up with his older sisters always in and out of dance classes. He has taken a few hip-hop and gymnastic classes and was on the dance core in a musical at his school. He is a hard worker and good student, making the honor roll at his high school and is considering attending schools such as the University of Illinois-Urbana Champagne, Indiana University, The Ohio State University, and Western Michigan University. Only three of the four schools offer a dance program but he thinks he might have to attend the school in Illinois due to out-of-state tuition costs. However, because of WMU’s recent tuition drop, this option might also now be possible.

He is currently working part time at a pizza restaurant in his area. He has an abundance of close friends, two older sisters and a father (his mom passed away in elementary school), and would best be described as hard-working, fun, caring, smart, and responsible.

**Secondary Target Market**

The secondary target market for Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance would be potential audience members for the multitude of shows that are put on throughout the year. This sector consists of any age group, young to old, child to grandparent. The key message we will attempt to portray to this market is that Western dance performances are an entertaining, compelling, and artistically advanced way to spend one’s night out. These are events that the whole family can enjoy together. A description of these audience members can be viewed on the following pages.
This forty-seven-year-old Kalamazoo resident has never attended one of the department of dance performances. She is well established in her career and has a Ph.D. in Education. She has lived in Kalamazoo almost her whole life, however, she lived in Arizona while earning her undergraduate degree from Arizona State University. She currently works at Portage Central High School and loves her job, colleagues, and students. Her husband works at MPI and together they have three children. All three of her kids attend elementary school at Kalamazoo Public School. Her kids are very busy and are usually involved in some sort of activity or sport. Because of this, her and her husband enjoy going out to events in Kalamazoo, particularly art events around town. For this couple, taking a night out on the weekend either as a date or as a family is a lot of fun. They have been looking for more art events around the community to which they can bring their children.

Since this customer and her spouse are well established in their careers, they have the ability to spend money on performances and donations. The department of dance is the perfect date night destination for them because they can watch beautiful art while also donating their money to help further the education of these talented and hardworking dancers. This customer’s friends, family, and colleagues would describe her as goal driven, responsible, occasionally shy, kind, generous, light-hearted, and funny.
This typical audience member is a sixty-year-old man who graduated from Hope College with an undergraduate degree in Chemistry, a master's degree in Biology, and just retired from working full time for a medical company. He is the grandfather of a junior BFA dance major in Western's dance program. He and his wife attend every production in which their granddaughter performs even though they currently live in Ohio. Though dance was never something that he himself was personally interested in, he goes to support his granddaughter, her friends, and spend additional time with the family. During the week, he can found splitting his time between tending to the house and golfing, fully enjoying his retirement. There are a few other couples that live near him who have dancers at WMU as well. Because of this, on many weekends, him and his wife, along with other grandparents in the neighborhood, enjoy taking group trips up to Kalamazoo to visit their grandkids.

His friends, neighbors, and family would describe him as friendly, talkative, relatable, open minded, adventurous, and a family oriented man.
## SWOT Analysis

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<th>Strengths:</th>
<th>Weaknesses:</th>
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<td>• Trifocal program</td>
<td>• Inconvenient location</td>
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<td>• Nationally accredited</td>
<td>• Poor current visibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National Choreography Competition</td>
<td>• Low budget and staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Great Works Dance Project</td>
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<th>Opportunities:</th>
<th>Threats:</th>
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<td>• Tuition change</td>
<td>• High market saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chicago dance scene</td>
<td>• Growing major competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work study students</td>
<td>• What is a dance major?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Far fewer academic scholarships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Strengths:

**Trifocal Program**

- As one of the only trifocal dance programs in the country, let alone in Michigan, this is one of the primary strengths of the WMU department of dance. This program equally emphasizes each genre, encouraging every student to reach the advanced level in ballet, modern, and jazz, requiring to get to at least one or two of the top levels. Because of this emphasis, Western produces extremely well-rounded, technically advanced, and artistically driven dancers.

**Nationally Accredited**

- Western’s Department of Dance is one of only 80 schools in the entire country that is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance. This means that based on our curriculum, teaching standards, level of technical skill, etc. our program
meets/exceeds expectations and is verified as an excellent dance education in which to receive.

**National Choreography Competition**
- As the only college in the country to offer the National Choreography Competition, Western stands apart by delivering excellent new and emerging talent to our students, providing them with an abundance of opportunities to perform and build their network within the dance community. This competition also allows for new choreographers to build their body of work and experiment with new dancers’ movement while also further promoting Western’s name and reaching a larger audience.

**Great Works Dance Project**
- The Great Works Dance Project introduces WMU’s students and southwest Michigan audiences to the finest world-class historic and contemporary dance works. Renowned choreographers and guest artists travel to WMU to stage and rehearse these masterworks. While here, they also teach master classes in the style of the choreographer and provide dynamic seminars to students and the general public about the historical significance of the dances.

**Weaknesses:**

**Inconvenient Location**
- Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance is located in the southwest Michigan city of Kalamazoo. While it is only a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Chicago, one of many major dance scenes, this location is off the beaten track. Upon graduation, students pursuing a career in dance performance will be required to move to a larger, more populated city in order to obtain work.

**Poor Current Visibility**
- As compared to other dance programs in the country, WMU does not currently have the capacity to reach the number of
prospective students looking for a strong dance program. In the ranking of dance majors, Western’s is not currently on the public radar as it should be.

**Low Budget and Staff**
- As a selective and competitive program, the WMU Department of Dance is small and when compared to larger programs in a school of over 25,000 students, funding tends to be limited. Because of this, budgets are extremely limited when it comes to marketing. We are also limited in budgeting when it comes to funding a staff to be able to cover the work necessary to enact said marketing.

**Opportunities:**

**Tuition Change**
- There has been a significant tuition change to be enacted for this upcoming academic year: out-of-state residents will from now on be charged 125% of in state costs as opposed to the previous 200%. This could potentially be a great marketable asset when catering to out-of-state dancers. We could also use this to cater to more than just the surrounding states. States such as Texas and Arizona that have more graduating high school students than spots in their state colleges. Therefore this tuition adjustment could potentially be very beneficial in catering to a wider range of students.

**Chicago Dance Scene**
- Though, as previously stated, Chicago being close to three hours away is inconvenient, we are beginning to see more and more students coming to school at WMU from this area. We have the potential to utilize this connection more effectively by uniting more extensively with current working alumni in that area. In doing so we would reach a larger audience of both perspective students and potential audience members.
Work Study Students
- In the department of dance we currently have work study students that are paid by the government to work in our office and conduct paperwork for the program. There is an opportunity to potentially hire more of these students and train them on social media and marketing tactics. In doing this we could reach a larger audience by essentially creating more jobs and bodies to conduct the marketing work, all while growing the students’ skill set by providing them with real life experience in the workplace.

Threats:

High Market Saturation
- Western Michigan University is one of sixteen schools in the state of Michigan that offers a degree in dance. The sheer number of competition in our state alone is a threat. This in addition to the multitude of states surrounding Michigan that offer strong dance programs is a constant risk and proves an issue with this high level of market saturation.

Growing Major Competitors
- One of WMU’s major competitors, Wayne State University, is constantly growing due to their strong connection with the contemporary ballet company, Complexions. This connection consistently draws potential students away from our program. This factor will constantly pose a threat to our department.

What is a Dance Major?
- Unfortunately there is a current lack of understanding among prospective students and parents alike regarding what it means to be a dance major and what are the potential career paths. As a department, it has been threatening the growth of our program simply due to lack of knowledge about the various career paths that can be made in the field of dance. In order to potentially
combat this issue, this should be address in the next social media campaign.

Far Fewer Academic Scholarships

- As a university, Western Michigan University gives far fewer scholarships than many of our surrounding institutions in regards to academia. There is also a much smaller portion of money given by FASFA to those attending WMU as opposed to other schools such as Grand Valley State University or Wayne State University.

Competitive Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Michigan University</th>
<th>Grand Valley State University</th>
<th>Point Park University</th>
<th>Wayne State University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>This program includes three large studios and one medium sized studio all including a piano, percussion instruments, sound playback units, and sprung floors. A conditioning room with Pilates reformers &amp; exercise mats as well as locker rooms with showers are also included.</td>
<td>There are two studios, one large sized and one medium sized, both with grey Marley and sprung floors. There are lockers with showers, and changing spaces. There is also a costume shop and a Mac Lab used for video-editing and digital media applications.</td>
<td>This program offers four floors with extra-height ceilings comparable in size to a six-story building, eight studios with dance flooring, grand pianos, and sound systems. Students also have access to lockers, showers, and changing spaces.</td>
<td>Wayne’s department includes five dance studios and three rehearsal spaces. Dancers also have access to a digital dance library and become fluent in technologies such as final cut pro, audacity, iMovie, etc.</td>
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</table>
| Price Points  | Resident: $21,119  
Non-Resident: $23,992 | Resident: $22,263  
Non-Resident: $26,944 | Resident & Non-Resident: $34,700 | Resident: $24,422  
Non-Resident: $36,742 |
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>BA, BFA, Dance Minor</td>
<td>BA, Dance Minor</td>
<td>BA, BFA, MFA, Dance Minor</td>
<td>BA, BFA, MFA, Africana Theatre, Dance Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Presence</td>
<td>Consistent posts on Instagram &amp; Facebook; Has a Twitter but is used inconsistently.</td>
<td>Regular posts on GVSU Music and Dance Instagram, Facebook, &amp; Twitter.</td>
<td>Instagram used for updates and events; No Facebook or Twitter.</td>
<td>No Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Easy to navigate and very informative. Offers a home page, an about page including mission statement, facilities, alumni, and employment, degrees offered, student resources, audition and scholarship information, Dancing with the Stars page, an event calendar, guest artists, Partners in Dance information, performance opportunities, student organizations, SIP Trip info, a directory, and a contact page. Updated info, outdated pictures and videos.</td>
<td>Website is a combination of the music and dance departments. The dance section features an “about dance” segment, dance company description, degrees offered, guest choreographers in residence, momentum, and a studios/facilities section. Relatively easy to follow. Exhibits minimal pictures and videos of their dancers from Fall 2015 and before. A bit outdated.</td>
<td>Upon getting to the dance section of their website, information is very descriptive. There is a description of majors offered and separate ballet, modern, and jazz concentration descriptions which include degrees offered, courses, and alumni. There is also a facilities, faculty and staff section, guest artists, performance photos and videos, international summer dance program and national high school dance festival tabs, the pre-professional dance program description, and the application process.</td>
<td>A bit difficult to navigate. Page includes both theatre and dance information. For the dance section there includes information on admissions, degrees offered, student resources, faculty, dance companies, Complexions Summer Intensive, and Alumni &amp; friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Opportunities</td>
<td>Great Works Dance Project, ACDA, Winter Gala Dance Concert, Western Dance Project, Graduating</td>
<td>Dance Company, Fall Arts Dance Concert, ACDA, Senior Dance Concert, &amp;</td>
<td>There are six dance productions staged throughout the course of the season. The 2015-2016 season</td>
<td>December Concert, Dance Workshop Showcase, Spring Dance Gala, Guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking Capabilities/Student Organizations</td>
<td>Presentations, Orchesis Dance Concert, Fall Showcase, Senior Capstone Projects, Noon Dance Showings, Dancing with WMU/KAZOO Stars, National Choreography Competition, Luscombe Collaboration Project, Zupko Collaboration Project, &amp; IABD.</td>
<td>Spring Dance Concert consisted of the Student Choreography Project, Contemporary Choreographers, Point park Connections, Five, &amp; Conservatory Dance Companies both at Point Park and Byham Theater.</td>
<td>Artist Work, WSU Dance Company, African Dance Company to Sangana, Dance Workshop, ACDA, &amp; IABD.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Size</td>
<td>Orchesis Dance Society, Hip Hop ConnXion-Michigan, Movement Exchange, Student Investment Project.</td>
<td>Momentum, GVSU Dance Troupe, Move to the Beat.</td>
<td>**Not specified</td>
<td>Senior Semester Study Abroad, Complexions Summer Intensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techniques Offered</td>
<td>Program Size</td>
<td>Number of Faculty (Full &amp; Part-Time)</td>
<td>**Not specified</td>
<td>124 students pursuing BA &amp; BFA, 55 pursuing dance minor</td>
</tr>
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Technology in Marketing Analysis

The strategic selection of technology utilized throughout the entire department of dance will be very important when attempting to effectively target both our primary and secondary markets. One of the selection’s most pertinent elements involves a cost-effective plan that will be able to fit into the nearly nonexistent budget that the department is allotted for marketing. Due to this constraint, one of the most effective technological tools we can use would be promoted posts on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. With these you are allowed to set a budget of any amount to ensure the avoidance of overspending and you only pay when a post has an “impression” from a user. This type of marketing is not only cost effective but also ensures greater attention from our targeted audiences due to the nature of social media. A screen shot of this set up is featured below.

Other technology that will prove both useful and cost effective is the use of the film school at WMU. Videos posted online algorithmically receive higher precedence when it comes to being viewed on social media sites; therefore if we could find a way to create more videos of our dancers (in rehearsal, in class, “a day in the life”, etc.) we would innately be reaching a larger audience. We would also be saving money because, by contacting
the film department, we could encourage growth of each concentrations body of work while providing these services to one another for free and building deeper bonds through collaborations within the fine arts community.

Further collaborative strategies that would prove both cost effective and reach a larger audience would be further development of the dancer blog posts on the WMU website “The Fine Print”. This site current hosts stories told by dancers on any topic spanning from how WMU has affected them throughout their career to discussing international dance residencies hosted by the department of dance. In order to increase our marketability I believe we should highlight even more topics that could be of interest to prospective students. Some of these stories could include study abroad experiences, stories of the everyday life from the perspective of a student in each year, or even learning to balance being a successful dancer and a normal college student. When viewing prospective schools, learning what the everyday life is like for students as well as learning about all of the amazing opportunities that they are offered are very important factors. I believe that utilizing this type of “content advertising” will be the most effective way to market our department to our target audience while simultaneously showcasing the interests and talents of our current dancers to our secondary market.

Finally, the last technologic medium that could be utilized in order to improve the marketing for the department of dance would be press releases sent through the WMU news. While this is also a print newspaper, the majority of readers get this information from online, reading articles and checking what is happening throughout Western’s campus. This would be a great way to showcase all of the amazing work our students are creating while also advertising for every show, in turn reaching a larger audience.
Marketing Mix

**Price**

In regards to pricing, Western Michigan University has become increasingly competitive due to lowered out-of-state tuition rates. Beginning in the Summer 1 semester of 2017, non-residents will now be charged 125% of what in-state tuition costs as opposed to the standard 200%. This allows WMU to become a much more competitive option for prospective students. While Western is notoriously lacking in scholarship grants university wide, this shift should increase the appeal of our school immensely.

For our secondary market, pricing for each performance is extremely competitive. They range anywhere from $12-$20 for general admission and $5 for student admission, providing a large “bang for your buck” considering the high level of professionalism exhibited in each show.

**Product**

The WMU Department of Dance’s product, when focusing on our target market, includes a superior dance education, offering a tri-focal structure, wide range of academic dance learning, and superior networking possibilities through various performance opportunities, peer relationships, and more. This vast range of opportunities provided to our students is where our true point of differentiation lies among competitors.

In regards to our secondary market, our product includes the highly professional dance performances that are staged more than six times per year. In each concert a variety of styles are exhibited, ranging anywhere from classical ballet, to postmodern work, old school hip hop, commercial jazz, and anywhere in between. This variety, as well as the multitude of internationally known choreographers that come in to stage work on our dancers and the professional level of stage production exhibited in each show highlights our product exquisitely.
**Place**

The location of Western Michigan University’s Department of Dance is the Dorothy U. Dalton Center, located on the south side of campus near Miller Auditorium and Shaw Theatre. This location is primer for our dance students as it is near local housing complexes, is adjacent to our performance venue for the Winter Gala Dance Concert, and is also near Shaw Tower which offers food and a place to study. Within Dalton Center there are five studio spaces that are used for both technique class and rehearsals. One of our studios also has the ability to be transformed into a theatrical stage, a space that is used for the majority of our dance concerts. The versatility and comfort this building offers provides a competitive advantage over our local competitors.

**Promotion**

The promotional elements that will prove most beneficial in regards to a cost-effective mindset and targeting our primary audience will be online marketing and positive word of mouth publicity. These tactics will most effectively reach our young audience through social media and online mediums while consistently proving to be the most cost effective method of reaching this designated sector.

In regards to promotional tactics for our secondary audience, utilizing a variety of methods will prove most effective. Switching between a multitude of mediums such as social media promoted posts, emailing, visual/digital design, and press releases will help reach the widest range of audiences possible.
Sample Academic Year

Fall 2016 Semester
Sept. 11-16: Marianela Boán Residency**
Sept. 16: Marianela Boán public performance
Sept. 18-30: Lilac Garden Residency**
Sept. 30: Lilac Garden Open Rehearsal
Oct. 1: Orchesis Concert Adjudications
Oct. 1: Charanga, Frank Chaves Audition, Chorus Line Audition**
Oct. 2: CFA Medici Performance
Oct. 7: Noon Dance Showing***
Oct. 1-7: First Year Performance guest artist residency**
Oct. 8: Homecoming
Oct. 14: Dancing with the WMU/Kazoo Stars scholarship fundraiser*
Oct. 21: Department Entrance and Scholarship Auditions
Oct. 26-30: Orchesis Dance Concert**
Nov. 4: ACDA Adjudication/Noon Dance Showing***
Nov. 7-13: Abraham.In.Motion, The Gettin’ Residency**
Nov. 11: Department Entrance and Scholarship Auditions
Nov. 11: Abraham.In.Motion, The Gettin’ Open Rehearsal**
Nov. 18-19: Oakland Dance Festival
Nov. 19-22: Fire Dance, Jessica Lindberg Coxe Residency**
Nov. 23-25: Thanksgiving Recess (University classes dismissed at noon)
Dec. 2: Western Dance Project & guests at Art Hop
Dec. 2, 3: WMU Medallion Scholarship Competition
Dec. 10: Fall Showcase: Performance by first year students***
Dec. 12-16: Final Examination Week
Dec. 17: Commencement

Spring 2017 Semester
Jan. 5-6: Advising Days
Jan. 8: Brush-up rehearsals, mandatory for all Great Works dancers
Jan. 9: 8am classes begin
Jan. 16: MLK Day Recess
Feb. 2-5: Great Works Dance Project 20th Anniversary Gala*
Feb. 3 or 4: Great Works Anniversary Reception
Feb. 17: Department Entrance Auditions
Mar. 3: Spirit Day (no classes)
Mar. 6-10: Spring Break
Mar. 17: Noon Dance Showing***
Mar. 23: Junior Jury Presentations***
Mar. 25-28: ACDA East-Central Conference, Kent State University
Mar. 28: Presidential Scholars Ceremony, 8pm
Apr. 5-6: NASD Re-Accreditation Site Visit
Apr. 6-9: Graduating Presentations in Dance**
Apr. 10: BA Capstone Presentations **
Apr. 16: Easter
Apr. 18: WDP Final Showing***
Apr. 24-28: Final Exam Week
Apr. 28: Senior Brunch
Apr. 29: Commencement
May 2-6: Student Investment Project Senior Trip- New York

**Event Breakdown**
Every event put on by the department of dance will now be categorized into a specific tier level in relation to importance and significance. The tier system is as follows:

*Top Tier Events*- These events will receive maximum attention as they will constitute as chief priority. They bring in the highest profit margin and largest media attention, therefore catering to both our primary and secondary markets exquisitely. These events will be indicated on the event calendar by one asterisk (*) and will receive an extensive planning schedule, often times beginning marketing tactics as far in advance as two or three months. The two events that fall under this category include Dancing with the WMU/Kazoo Stars and The Winter Gala Dance Concert (Great Works Dance Project). A sample of this type of plan can be viewed in both Appendix A and B.

*Second Tier Events*- These events, while not as important as our top tier events, will still receive a large amount of marketing distribution. These
performances are on a slightly smaller scale and will begin marketing closer to around one or two months prior. The type of marketing tactics that will be used for this tier will include: emailing pertinent audiences, consistent social media promoted posts, video coverage on rehearsal preparation, and a press release in the WMU News. On the events calendar these will be indicated by two asterisks (**). For reference, these events include things such as residencies by guest artists and student performances such as Orchesis Dance Concert, Graduating Presentation’s, and Senior Capstones.

**Third Tier Events**- While these events will still receive marketing distribution, the scope is much smaller and will begin 1-2 weeks prior to show. The types of marketing included for these events will be emailing to pertinent audience lists and social media announcements. These events will be indicated by three asterisks (***).
Project Summary/Conclusion

Throughout this entire process I found it very important to take what I've learned in both my Dance and Sales and Business Marketing majors and combine the two in order to create a conducive plan. Because the department of dance did not previously have a marketing plan, I felt it was important to list a multitude of elements that make up a typical plan in order to cover the basics while simultaneously including essentials that derived directly from dance.

When I first met with Megan (Department of Dance Chair) to discuss this idea, she was thrilled. We then set up a meeting to discuss the primary goals she envisioned for the plan. She longed for something that would consist of all the ideas she wanted/needed to be in just one singular place. There is a very limited number of staff in the dance department therefore finding the time to put all of the needed marketing ideas together has been difficult. This is why having all of this information in one place to serve as a reference and basis for ideas was what proved to be most beneficial.

Following these initial meetings with Megan I met with Dr. O’Reilly, one of my marketing professors at WMU. At this meeting was where the project truly took flight. After extensive discussion she steered me in the right direction in regards to creating the most effective marketing plan, one that would encompass all aspects of what we learn in our major as well as what would prove most beneficial to the department of dance. She was also able to provide me with a multitude of ideas that could potentially make the task of reaching both our primary and secondary audiences easier.

In summary, I created this marketing plan as a way to combine all of the knowledge that I've taken away from my two majors and create an end product that could potentially be of use. The department of dance has molded me into the person that I am today and because of that, I created this project in order to enhance the possibility that a larger audience, whether prospective student or dance enthusiast, could see how amazing this department of dance is here at Western Michigan University.
Bibliography

---. Great Works Dance Project Excel Timeline. 2016, Western Michigan University College of Fine Arts.
---. Personal interview. 7 April 2017.
Event Storytelling

Great Works Dance Project 20th Anniversary Gala – February 2-5, 2017

Just like any good story, the successful promotion of an event must have a beginning, middle and end: slowly introducing audiences to the premise and characters, gradually building up anticipation for the event itself, executing an excitement-generating event, and then affording audiences with a satisfying wrap-up after the event concludes.

For that reason, the general outline found in the pages that follow documents objectives and tactical ideas at each point in the event storytelling story arc: the exposition, rising action, climax and falling action. A sample content calendar, which illustrates suggested posting frequency and a proposed timeline of campaign efforts at each of these storytelling phases, can be found in the accompanying excel spreadsheet.

General preparation tips and suggestions:

- **Social Media:**
  - Tag pertinent and related individuals, organizations, etc. whenever possible so as to include visibility and reach
  - Use a consistent event hashtag – in addition to other relevant hashtags (#GreatWorksWednesdays, #WMUDance, etc.) – in all posts to create awareness of event and encourage participation and usage among audiences

- **Visual/digital assets:**
  - As event materials are prepared (flyers, programs, etc.), I would suggest requesting coordinating digital assets for use in online promotion
- Facebook profile picture
- Facebook cover photo (for event page and WMU Dance page)
- Square image for posting on Instagram
- Email header(s)
  - Empower students and audiences with visual assets to share and use as the event grows closer

**Exposition**

November-December 2016

- During the exposition phase, the purpose is to introduce audiences to important background information and details. Set the stage for what’s to come and slowly familiarize your audience with the event, its purpose, its format and its participants.

**Tactics:**

**Social Media**

- Establish social media presence for event and begin to introduce it to your followers.
  - Create Facebook event
  - Create and begin to circulate event hashtag
    - #20yearsofGreatWorks

**Email**

- Create email save-the-date and distribute it to pertinent audience lists (students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, community members, etc.)
  - A very visual (limited text) email message to alert audiences of event details. Include links to outside information (WMU News piece, blog post), but email itself should be short and sweet.
  - Repurpose graphics/imagery designed for event promotions to create a cohesive email template.

**Other Media**

- Blog post: Introduce the Great Works Dance Project for those unfamiliar
  - Author and share a blog post on the Fine Print to answer “what is the Great Works Dance Project?”
A summary – free of promotional language – to describe what exactly the GWDP is, what it consists of, what it means for our students, how audiences can enjoy it, etc.

**Rising Action**

December-January 2016

- During the rising action phase, the purpose is to gradually generate interest and build anticipation for the event as it grows closer. Create suspense surrounding the event to entice and excite audiences.

**Tactics:**

**Social Media**

- Increase frequency of posting efforts, and excite audiences with exclusive content and a pattern of posts
  - #GreatWorksWednesdays
    - Each Wednesday, spotlight one of the works to be performed at the Winter Gala
    - A photo of a rehearsal, the choreographer, the work performed by another company, etc. (whatever visual asset you have access to) along with a description of the piece
  - #BehindtheScenes
    - Every other week leading up to the gala, share photos, boomerangs, interviews or video clips that shed light on what goes on behind the scenes as dance prepares for the Gala (rehearsals, event set-up, space preview, etc.)
  - 20 years in 20 days
    - 20 days leading up to event, post images to represent all 20 years of GWDP (performance photos or program graphics; whatever you have access to and have permission to circulate)
    - Each image should be accompanied by a quick caption to summarize the highlights of that particular year.
- Initiate a promoted campaign
  - In mid-January, depending on the success of efforts to date, invest in boosting the event to a targeted audience on Facebook/Instagram.
Email

- Distribute event specifics (times, what will be performed, all program details, etc.) via email to contacts
- Like the “save-the-date,” this should also be a very visual communication

Other Media

- Ensure that the Gala is posted on the university’s event calendar
- Submit another release to University Relations and other news outlets to generate further awareness.
  - Needs newshook beyond what was already shared in early piece
    - “Winter Gala to feature all ‘great works’”

Climax
Late January – Early February
The climax stage is the event itself. It’s the peak of excitement and the point towards which all of your promotion efforts have been building, so they can’t stop now.

Tactics:
Social Media

- Be conscious of maintaining a social media presence during these days. Many accounts build up anticipation for an event, yet never share the day-of details when the event has finally arrived.
  - “Today’s the day” post on Day 1 of the concert (along with graphic and link to event page)
  - Recaps and previews each day to summarize what happened and excite audiences about the next day
  - Continue sharing behind the scenes posts, interviews with dancers/choreographers and other exclusive content during these days

Email

- Send a “Don’t forget!” email the week before the event to secure last minute ticket sales and attendance.
  - Remind recipients of all relevant event information, including ticket
prices, where to buy tickets, what’s on the program, when/where the event is, etc.
- Link to outside sources to keep email short, sweet and visual.

**Falling Action & Denouement**

**February**
The falling action phase gradually concludes the event’s narrative and gives closure to what has been an exciting couple months of build-up. The denouement satisfies audiences with a conclusion wrap-up.

**Tactics:**

**Social Media**

- Share photos from the event and a message of gratitude for those who attended and participated.

**Email**

- Send one final email to thank those who attended and participated, recycling event visuals and including a photo or two from the concert itself.
  - Secure ticket sales email list (if possible) to ensure those individuals receive a message of thanks.
### Appendix B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Post Ideas</th>
<th>Email Marketing</th>
<th>Other Promotion</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 Weeks to Event</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, November 14, 2016</td>
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<td>Tuesday, November 15, 2016</td>
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<td>Wednesday, November 16, 2016</td>
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<td>Thursday, November 17, 2016</td>
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<td>Friday, November 18, 2016</td>
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<td>Saturday, November 19, 2016</td>
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<td>Sunday, November 20, 2016</td>
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| **10 Weeks to Event**   |                 |                 |
| Monday, November 21, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Tuesday, November 22, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Wednesday, November 23, 2016 |             |                 |
| Thursday, November 24, 2016 |             |                 |
| Friday, November 25, 2016 |             |                 |
| Saturday, November 26, 2016 |             |                 |
| Sunday, November 27, 2016 |             |                 |

| **9 Weeks to Event**   |                 |                 |
| Monday, November 28, 2016 | Create and share facebook event | EMAIL 1: Save the Date |
| Tuesday, November 29, 2016 |                 |     |
| Wednesday, November 30, 2016 | Share WMU News article |     |
| Thursday, December 1, 2016 |                 |     |
| Friday, December 2, 2016 |                 |     |
| Saturday, December 3, 2016 |                 |     |
| Sunday, December 4, 2016 |                 |     |

| **8 Weeks to Event**   |                 |                 |
| Monday, December 5, 2016 | #GreatWorksWednesday: Lilac Garden | Submit Gala to university calendar |
| Tuesday, December 6, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Wednesday, December 7, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Thursday, December 8, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Friday, December 9, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Saturday, December 10, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Sunday, December 11, 2016 |                 |                 |

| **7 Weeks to Event**   |                 |                 |
| Monday, December 12, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Tuesday, December 13, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Wednesday, December 14, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Thursday, December 15, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Friday, December 16, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Saturday, December 17, 2016 |                 |                 |
| Sunday, December 18, 2016 |                 |                 |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, December 12, 2016</td>
<td>#GreatWorksWednesday: The Gettin'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, December 13, 2016</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 14, 2016</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 15, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, December 16, 2016</td>
<td>Share blog post</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 17, 2016</td>
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<td>Sunday, December 18, 2016</td>
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<td><strong>6 Weeks to Event</strong></td>
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<td>Monday, December 19, 2016</td>
<td>#GreatWorksWednesday: Charanga</td>
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<td>Tuesday, December 20, 2016</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 21, 2016</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 22, 2016</td>
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<td>Friday, December 23, 2016</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 24, 2016</td>
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<td>Sunday, December 25, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5 Weeks to Event</strong></td>
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<td>Monday, December 26, 2016</td>
<td>#BehindTheScenes</td>
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<td>Tuesday, December 27, 2016</td>
<td>#GreatWorksWednesday: Dipthong</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 28, 2016</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 29, 2016</td>
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<td>Friday, December 30, 2016</td>
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<td>Saturday, December 31, 2016</td>
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<td>Sunday, January 1, 2017</td>
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<td><strong>4 Weeks to Event</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, January 2, 2017</td>
<td>#GreatWorksWednesday: Fire Dance</td>
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<td>Tuesday, January 3, 2017</td>
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<td>Wednesday, January 4, 2017</td>
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<td>Thursday, January 5, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, January 6, 2017</td>
<td>EMAIL 2: Event Specifics (Program)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, January 7, 2017</td>
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<td>Sunday, January 8, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3 Weeks to Event</strong></td>
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<td>Monday, January 9, 2017</td>
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Submit Gala release to WMU News and other news outlets.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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</table>
| Tuesday, January 10, 2017 | Introduction to 20 years in 20 days  
#GreatWorksWednesday: Foreground |
| Wednesday, January 11, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 1997  
Thursday, January 12, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 1998  
Friday, January 13, 2017 | #BehindTheScenes  
Saturday, January 14, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 1999  
Sunday, January 15, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2000 |
| **2 Weeks to Event**  | Begin 2-week promoted campaign on facebook (boost event to targeted audience) |
| Monday, January 16, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2001  
Tuesday, January 17, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2001  
Wednesday, January 18, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2002  
Thursday, January 19, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2003  
Friday, January 20, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2004  
Saturday, January 21, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2005  
Sunday, January 22, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2006 |
| **1 Week to Event**   | EMAIL 3: Don't Forget  
Monday, January 23, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2007  
Tuesday, January 24, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2008  
#BehindTheScenes  
Wednesday, January 25, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2009  
Thursday, January 26, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2010  
Friday, January 27, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2011  
Saturday, January 28, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2012  
Sunday, January 29, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2013 |
| **Event Week**        |  
Monday, January 30, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2014  
Tuesday, January 31, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2015  
Wednesday, February 1, 2017 | 20 years in 20 days: 2016  
Thursday, February 2, 2017 | Tonight's the night!  
Friday, February 3, 2017 | Recap of Thursday, intro to Friday  
Saturday, February 4, 2017 | Recap of Friday, intro to Saturday  
Sunday, February 5, 2017 | Final day!  
**1 Week Post Event**  | EMAIL 4: Thank you  
Monday, February 6, 2017 | Gala recap  
Tuesday, February 7, 2017 |  
Wednesday, February 8, 2017 | Share event photos  

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Thursday, February 9, 2017
Friday, February 10, 2017
Saturday, February 11, 2017
Sunday, February 12, 2017

2 Weeks Post Event
Monday, February 13, 2017
Tuesday, February 14, 2017
Wednesday, February 15, 2017
Thursday, February 16, 2017
Friday, February 17, 2017
Saturday, February 18, 2017
Sunday, February 19, 2017

#tbt to the 20th anniversary of GWDP