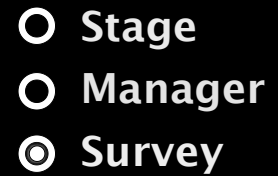


## 2013 STAGE MANAGEMENT SURVEY UNITED STATES

Conducted: November 2013

Report Published: February 2014

<http://smsurvey.info>



Since 2006, the Stage Management program at the University of Iowa has conducted national surveys of stage managers to track demographics and new trends in the field. David McGraw, Head of the Stage Management program, conducted the 2006 survey with 283 participants. The number of participants has increased with every survey cycle: 878 stage managers completed the 2013 survey. In order to reduce participant fatigue and continue strong participation rates, questions that are not demographic-based (level of experience, age, gender, etc.) are rotated through the survey cycles. Please visit <http://smsurvey.info> for reports on previous surveys.

The 2013 survey exceeded all estimates in participation, due primarily to support from national organizations and social media. Actor's Equity Association (AEA) published a notice in its monthly *Equity News* and promoted the survey through its social media networks. In 2011, 332 AEA stage managers participated; this year's survey recorded 478 AEA stage managers. Equity's 2012-2013 Theatrical Season Report ([http://actorsequity.org/docs/about/AEA\\_Annual\\_12-13.pdf](http://actorsequity.org/docs/about/AEA_Annual_12-13.pdf)) stated that 876 AEA stage managers worked on union contracts in the 2012-2013 season, though the total number of AEA stage managers is much higher. In our survey, 438 of the 478 Equity participants responded that they had received at least a portion of their income from stage management in the past year. While the timespans of the two studies may not align perfectly and some participants might be working on non-theatrical projects or education contract waivers, it is notable that this survey reached approximately half of all active Equity stage managers.

We would also like to thank the Stage Managers' Association (<http://www.stagemanagers.org>), which has supported these surveys since their creation. The 2013 survey recorded responses from 185 SMA members. The SM Network (<http://smnetwork.org>), a forum of both union and non-union stage managers, promoted the survey on its message boards, producing 97 views of the invitation. We are also very grateful to all of the stage managers and other theatre artists who shared this survey with their friends and colleagues. The information gathered in this survey is based entirely on the volunteered time of stage managers who generously shared their views and practices.

The goal of this survey is to identify trends within the field of American stage management. This report does not claim to represent the full view of American stage managers or to espouse any practice or technique over others. Yet we do hope it provides a window into the complex field of stage management.

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## SECTION I: STAGE MANAGER DEMOGRAPHICS

In order to elicit candid responses, complete anonymity was guaranteed for all participants. Survey participants were also not required to answer every question, so percentages are based on the number of responses for that question. The first question of the survey received 1,075 responses, but many participants withdrew from the survey within the initial ten questions. The survey is part of a longitudinal study to identify trends over time, and 35% responded that the 2013 survey was the first time they were participating in this study, so we asked several demographic questions of all participants.

The survey was open to anyone who has stage managed an American theatrical production. When asked to identify their current occupation, 64% indicated stage manager, 26% were assistant stage managers, 13% were students, 7% were teachers, 4% were apprentices or interns, 19% held other positions in the arts, and 9% listed “Other.” It was possible for participants to select more than one occupation, given the trend towards multiple sources of income. Participants were also asked how many weeks they had worked in a stage management role in the previous twelve months:

Figure 1: Weeks Served in a Stage Management Role

	0 Weeks	1-2 Weeks	3-10 Weeks	11-20 Weeks	21-30 Weeks	31-40 Weeks	41-52 Weeks
ASM	29%	5%	19%	17%	15%	7%	8%
SM	17%	7%	21%	20%	15%	9%	11%
PSM	23%	6%	20%	14%	13%	9%	15%

The survey was designed for stage managers working in Theatre, but many stage managers work in multiple arts disciplines. When asked the genre of their most recent project, 80% responded Theatre, 8% responded Opera, 5% responded Dance, 3% responded Industrials, and 4% responded with other categories. Participants were also asked how many different theatres/producers they had worked for in the past year [Figure 2] and how much of their annual income was earned through stage management [Figure 3].

Figure 2: Number of Employers in Previous 12 Months

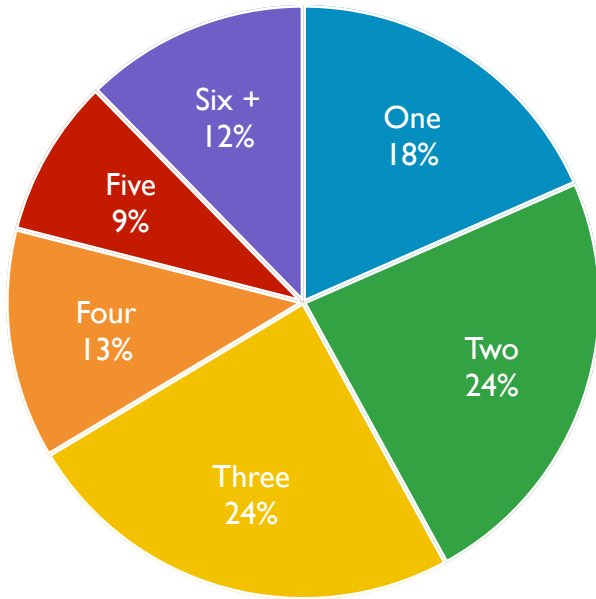
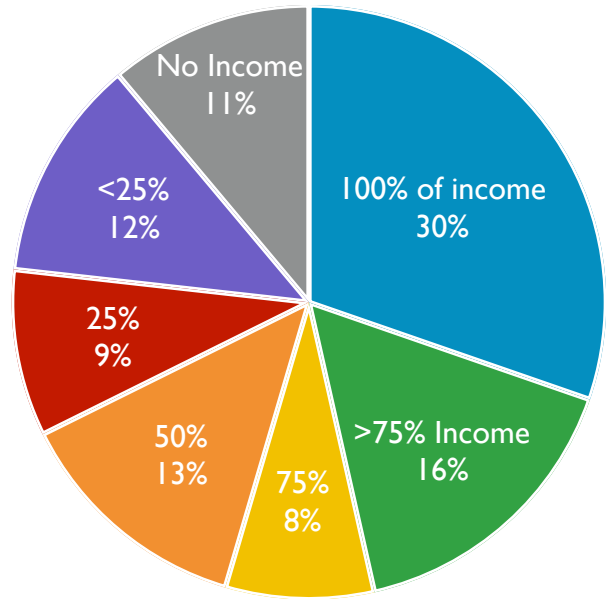
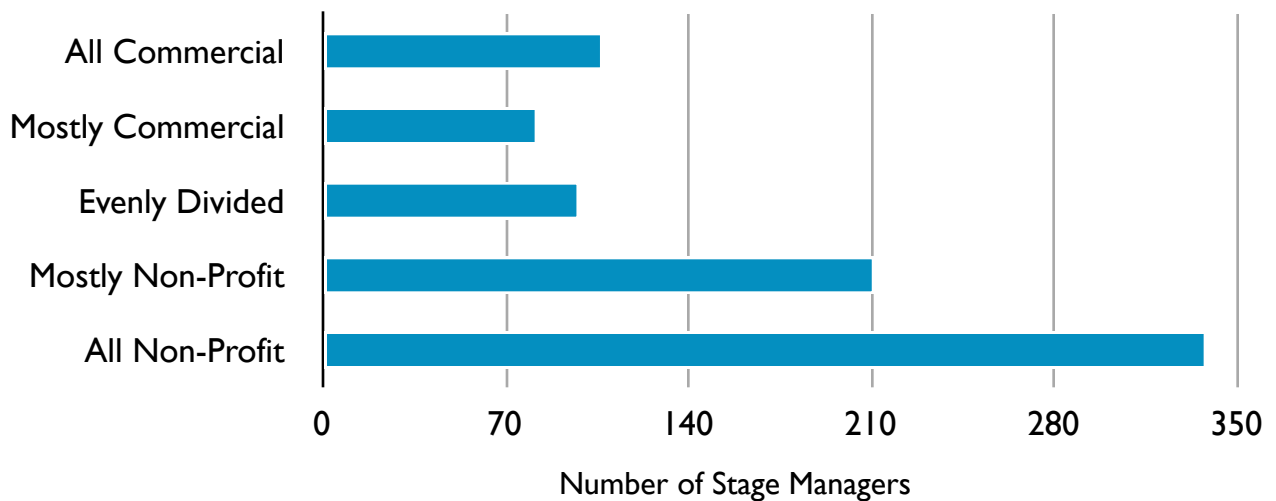


Figure 3: Percentage of Income from Stage Management



A new survey question asked participants whether they worked primarily in commercial or non-profit theatre.

Figure 4: Work in Commercial and Non-Profit Theatre in the Past 12 Months



Survey participants also shared information about the number of years they have worked in stage management [Figure 5] and their ages [Figure 6]. While the largest experience bracket was 1-5 years, 345 participants have worked as stage managers for more than 10 years. Moreover, Figure 7 demonstrates that years of experience and age are not necessarily linked.

Figure 5: Years of Experience

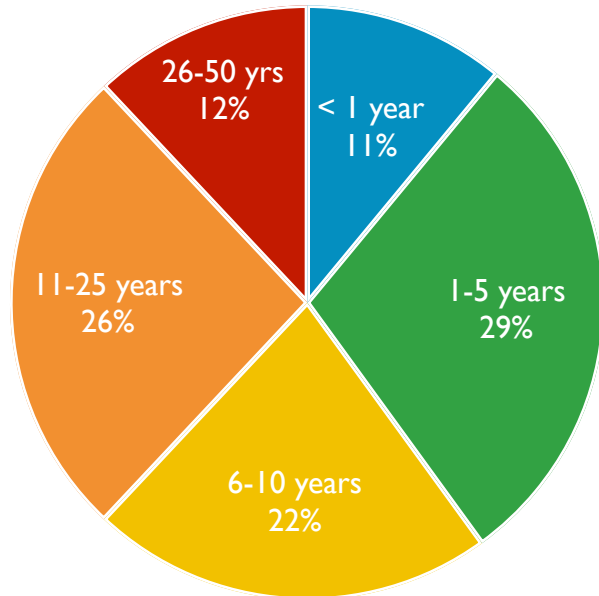


Figure 6: Age

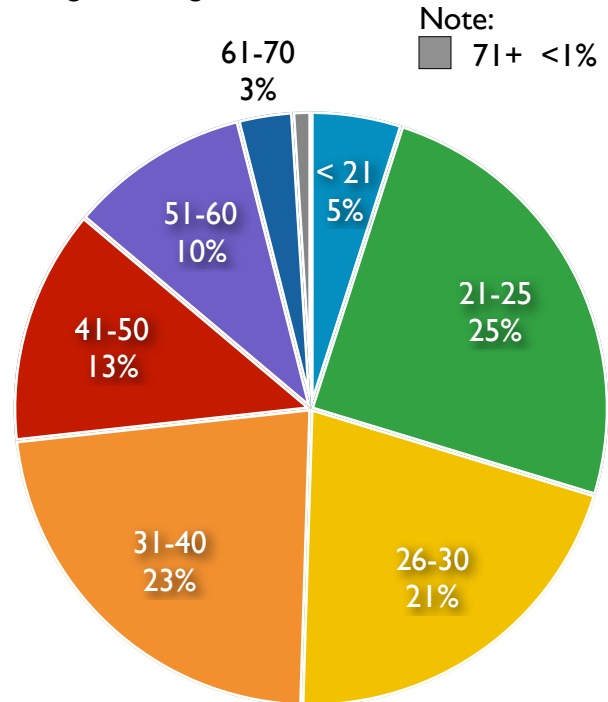


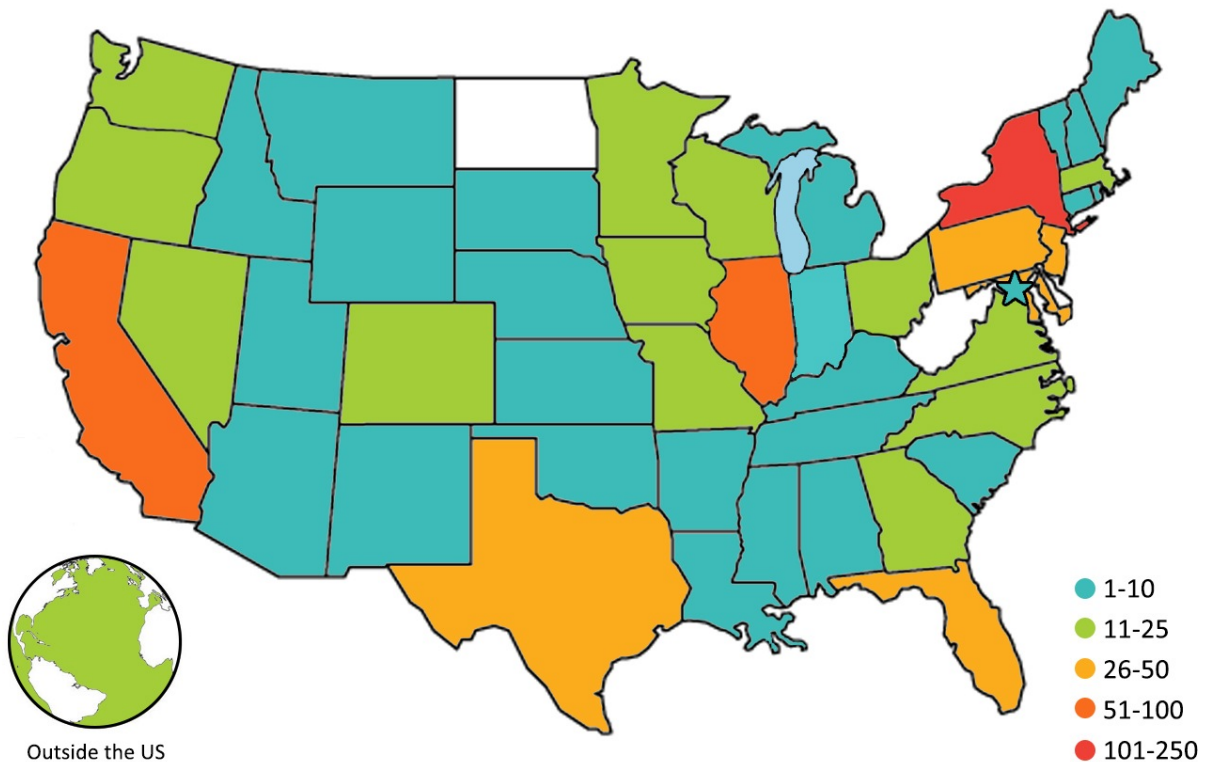
Figure 7: Experience Levels by Age Brackets (Not Including Student Work)

Age	<1 Year Experience	1-5 Years Experience	6-10 Years Experience	11-25 Years Experience	26-50 Years Experience
Under 21	57%	39%	4%	--	--
21-25	28%	64%	7%	1%	--
26-30	2%	42%	49%	7%	--
31-40	--	7%	36%	57%	1%
41-50	--	4%	10%	71%	16%
51-60	1%	--	2%	27%	70%
61-70	--	4%	--	13%	83%
71+	--	--	13%	13%	75%

Participants identified their state of residence [Figure 8], indicating participation from 45 states. As in previous surveys, the state of New York had the strongest representation with 212 responses, followed by California (91), Illinois (79), New Jersey (34), Texas (34), Pennsylvania (33), and Maryland (31). In fact, 373 stage managers -- 43% of survey participants -- have worked on a stage management team in New York City at some point in their careers.

Stage managers remain on the move (or at least the commute): 20% of participants worked outside their state of residence last year and 6% of participants are currently on tour. The majority of those who cross state lines do so to work in New York (34 stage managers) and the District of Columbia (16), but 9 stage managers reported crossing from Missouri into Kansas to work for Kansas City companies.

Figure 8: State of Residence for Survey Participants



Each year we also asked a series of questions about training and education. Figure 9 shows the type of training that stage managers have received. The “Other” training experiences included observations, Canadian Equity apprenticeships, and internships in other performing arts disciplines. Figure 10 lists the levels of formal education in stage management. Ten of the “Other” responses in education were for a BS degree in Theatre, often with a stage management focus.

Figure 9: Stage Management Training (Can Indicate More than One Category)

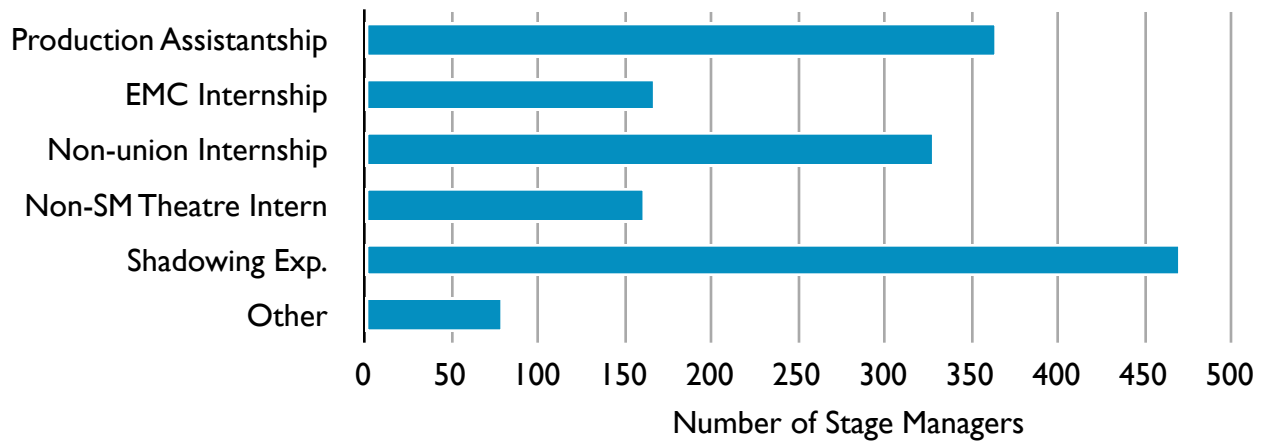
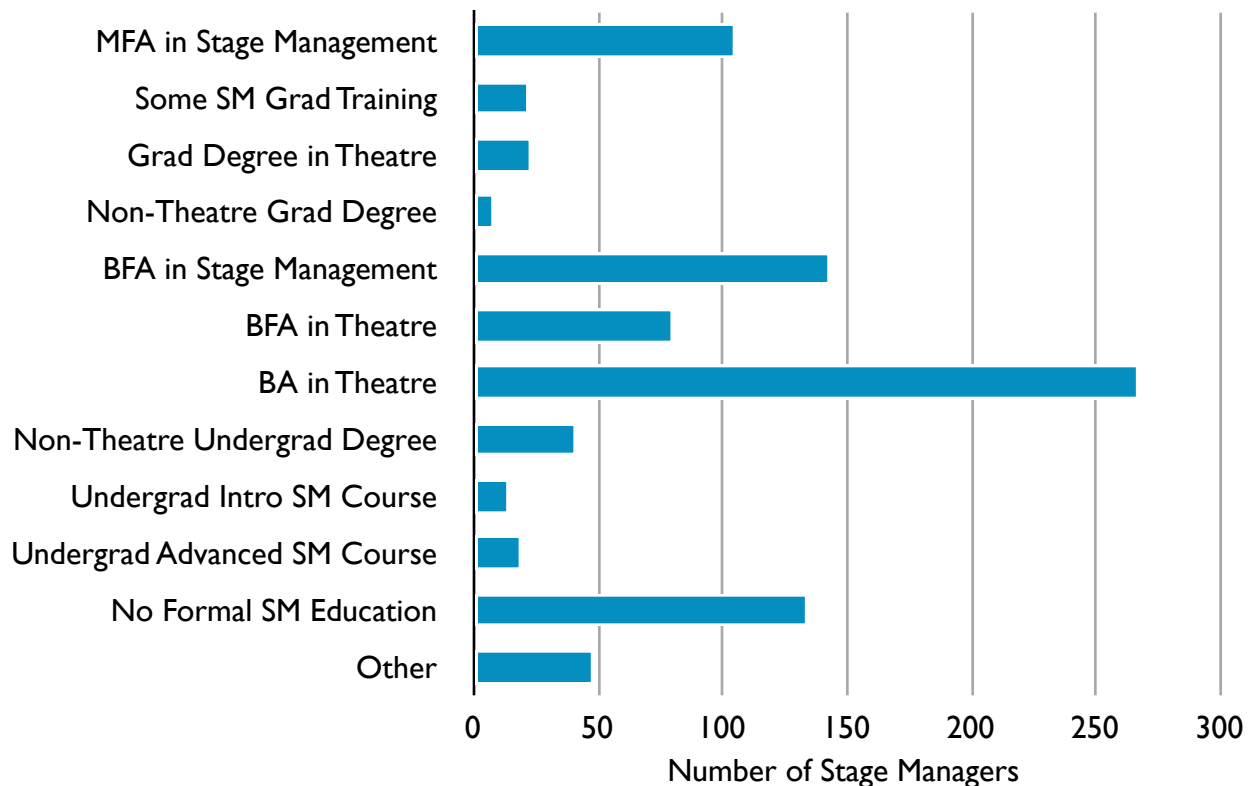
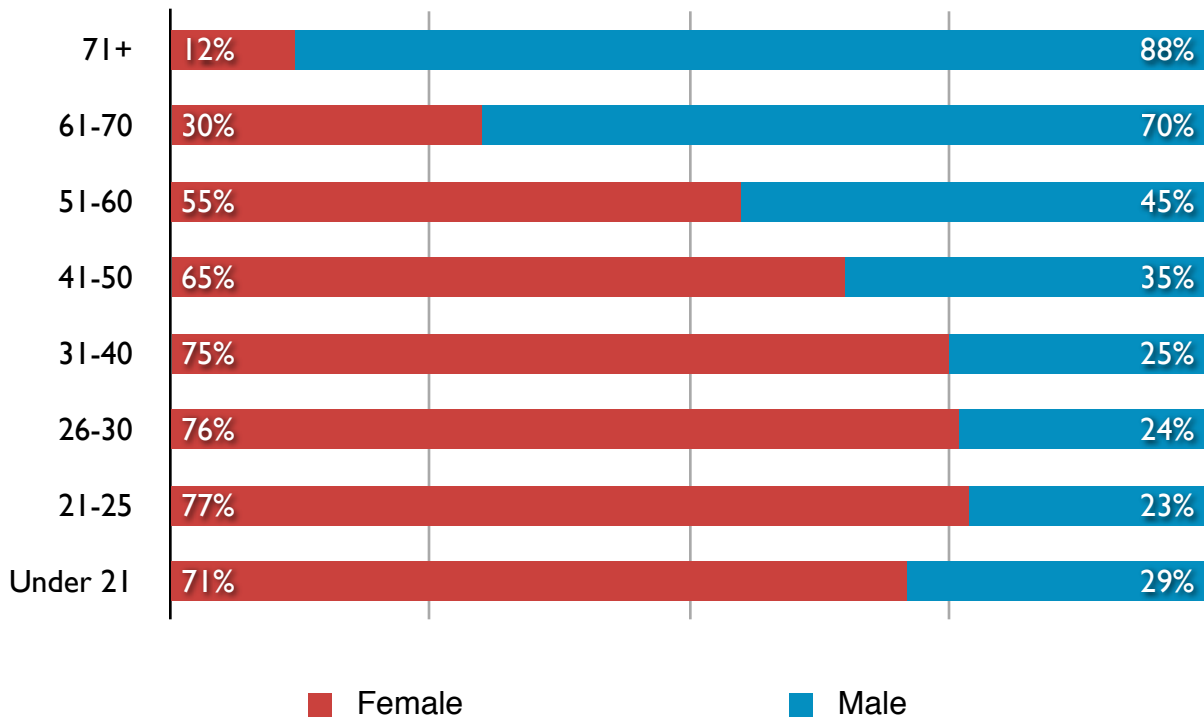


Figure 10: Highest Level of Stage Management Education



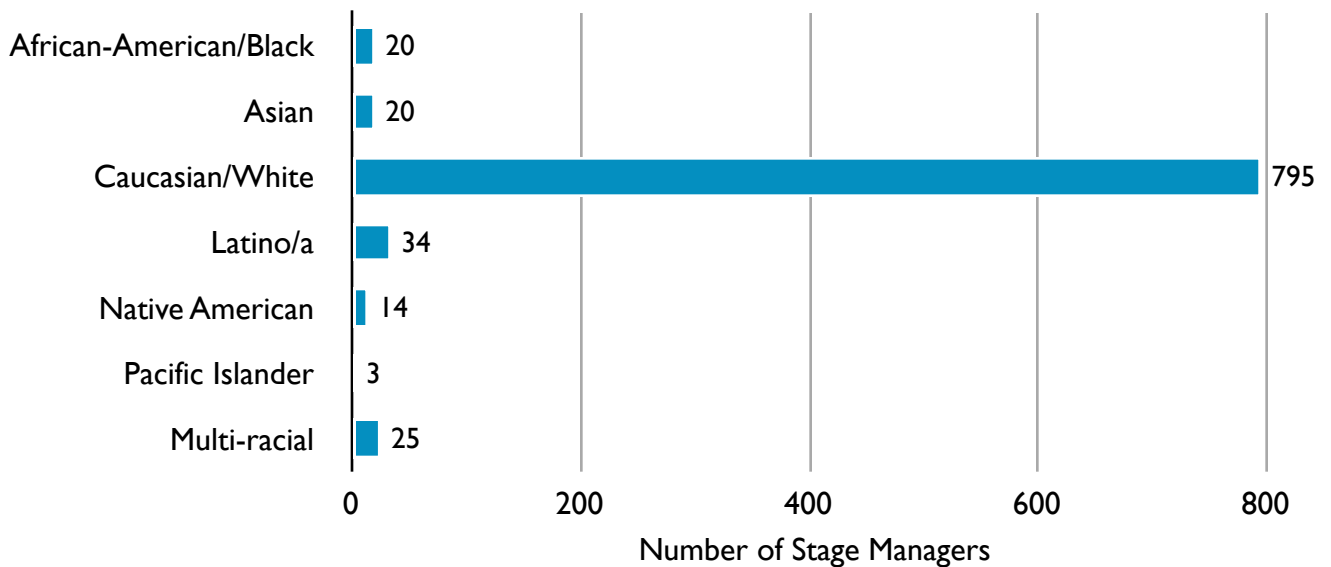
One catalyst for the original 2006 survey was to track the shift in stage management from a male-dominated to a female-dominated profession. In the 2006 survey, 66% of participants were female. In the 2009, 68% of responses were from women. In the 2011 survey, 70% indicated female. The percentage of female responses fell slightly to 69% this year. This was also the first survey to include Transgender (3 responses), Other (0) and Prefer Not to Answer categories (6). The male/female division is even more pronounced when examined by age brackets [Figure 11].

Figure 11: Female/Male Gender Ratios by Age Brackets (Percentage)



The survey also asked participants to identify their race and ethnicity. This question was notably absent in the 2011 survey, especially given recent discussions about racial diversity in stage management. Following standard census formatting, participants were able to select all categories that apply to them.

Figure 12: Race and Ethnicity (Can Indicate More than One Category)





Race/ethnicity did not appear to factor into the gender divide other than Latino/a stage managers, who were relatively less likely to be female (56%). But given the limited number of responses from non-Caucasian stage managers, it may not be prudent to draw conclusions from such a small sample of stage managers.

We also include questions about whether participants identify themselves within the LGBTQ community and, if so, whether they have faced any discrimination based on their sexual orientation. We started including these questions in 2011 based on research in the United Kingdom on discrimination or obstacles that leaders faced in the theatre industry due to sexual orientation. In our survey, 27% of participants identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or queer. This is significantly higher than a 2013 Gallup Poll that identified a LGBTQ population of 3.5% of the American population (<http://www.gallup.com/poll/160517/lgbt-percentage-highest-lowest-north-dakota.aspx>). In fact, when analyzed by gender, 52% of male stage managers in this survey identified themselves as gay while 16% of surveyed female stage managers identified themselves as lesbian. Of 233 responses from stage managers who identified as LGBTQ, a total of 9 participants had “felt unsafe in a theatrical community.” This survey did not provide a definition of the LGBTQ community nor did it investigate any claims of harassment.

We also asked all survey participants whether they believed that discrimination based on gender, race, or sexual orientation negatively affected their career path; 194 respondents (22%) reported some kind of discrimination impacted their careers.

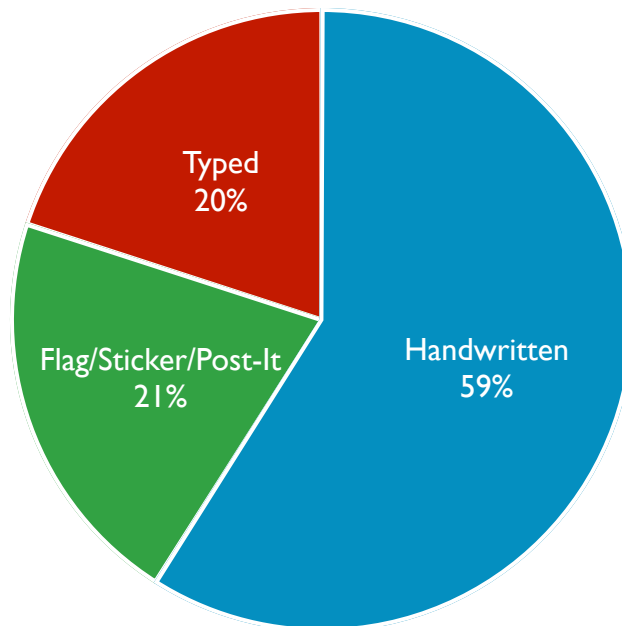
The final set of demographic questions were about relationships and family status. In 2013, 36% of participants listed that they were married or had a long-term partner. This response is very similar to the 2009 (37%) and 2011 (35%) surveys. If the responses of participants under age 21 are removed from the calculations then the response climbs to 38% for married, domestic partner, or civil union. There was no significant difference (<1%) between male and female stage managers in their relationship status. Although the number of married couples has been in decline in recent years, the Census Bureau found in 2010 that 48% of Americans were married. In addition, among participants with spouses or partners, 46% noted that their spouse/partner also worked in theatre, while another 16% reported that their spouse/partner used to work in theatre.

In our survey, 81 stage managers, or 9% of participants, have children or dependents under the age of 18. Of these 81 stage managers with dependents, 85% of them indicated that they were married or had a domestic partner or civil union and another 7% reported that they were divorced. There was less than 1% difference between genders and status as a parent, which was not the case in earlier surveys.

## SECTION II: CALLING TECHNIQUES

The field is still divided on whether to use separate calling and blocking scripts, but the trend is leaning towards two books: 61% reported usually preparing separate blocking and calling scripts in 2013 compared to 58% in 2011, 53% in 2009, and 55% in 2006. The preferred method for recording cues in a calling script also remains divided.

Figure 13: Method for Recording Cues in Most Recent Calling Script

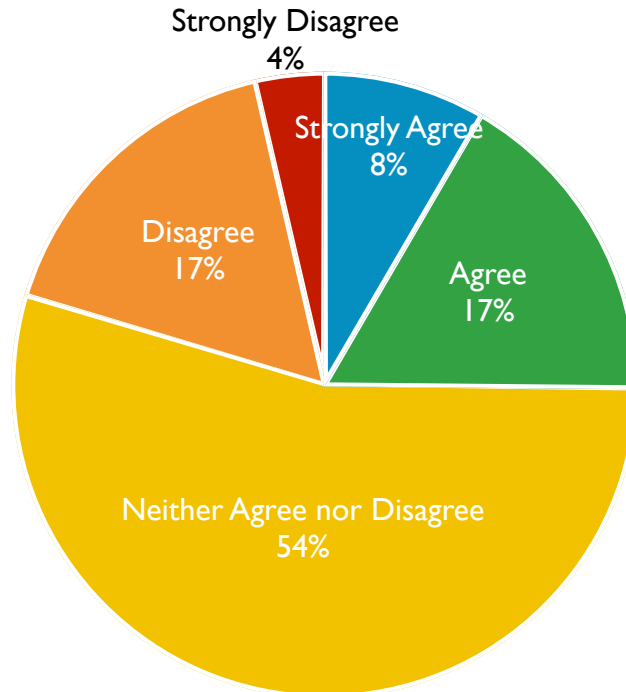


For the past seven years, a small group of survey takers have reported calling at least one show from a laptop or a tablet rather than a physical calling script. This year that number has grown to 179 stage managers or 18% of the survey participants. One participant noted a conceptual change from a text document to a spreadsheet:

*I do mostly 'industrials' or 'corporate theatre' now...I ALWAYS call from a laptop. I make a cue sheet (GRID IN EXCEL) with the show running order and all tech details by department...I also keep a copy of the prompt script and their slide deck (Gfx) in paper...but make all changes in my cue sheet on my laptop. Then I print and hand these updated cue sheets to the crew as we go thru rehearsals.*

On the other hand, when we asked those 179 stage managers whether they would recommend the practice, the responses were mixed:

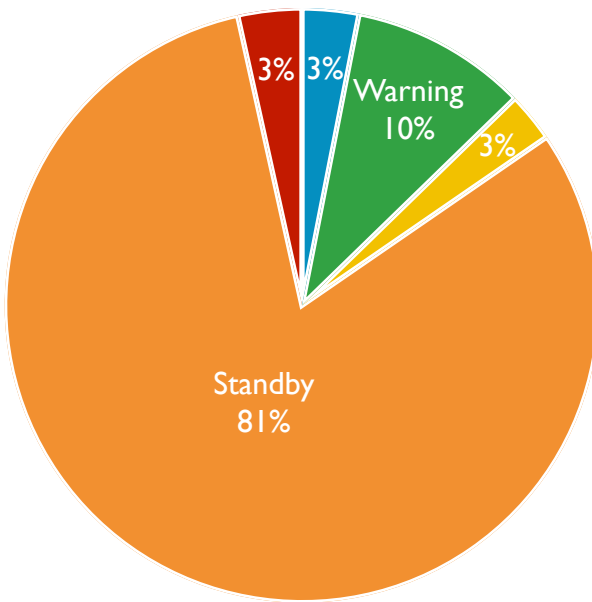
Figure 14: Recommendation to Call a Show from a Laptop/Tablet



It may be that, while some stage managers have found success with calling from a digital script, others experimented with the practice but chose not to adopt the practice for regular use. Some cited the risks such as a computer crash or tablet freeze and many respondents strongly recommended a printed back-up copy. But others noted that they want technology to improve further: they want the ability to save their current spot while previewing a few 'pages' ahead or a method to add notes that was as fast and easy as a pencil.

We also asked several questions about how stage managers notate their cues, regardless of whether the script is printed or digital. We asked about cue terminology and how much information stage managers give themselves about each cue.

Figure 15: Name for the Announcement Prior to a Cue



- No Announcement
- Warning
- Ready
- Standby
- Other

Figure 16: Frequency of Using Both Cue Announcement and Earlier Warning?

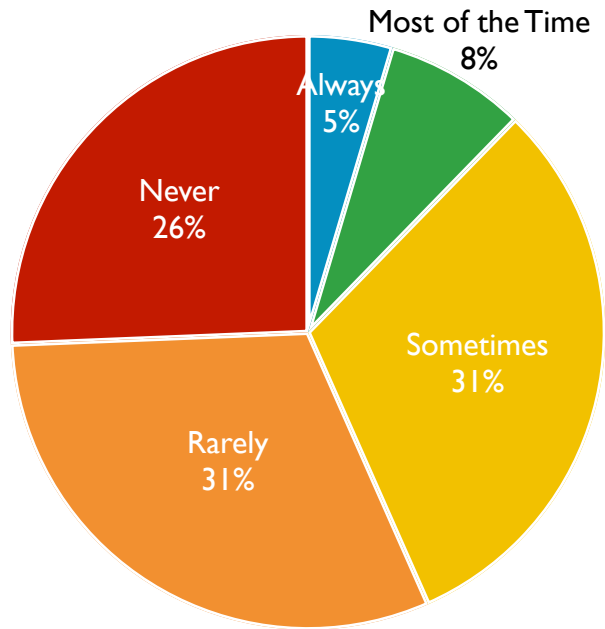


Figure 17: Frequency of Using "Speaking Mark" to Indicate Where to Begin Cues

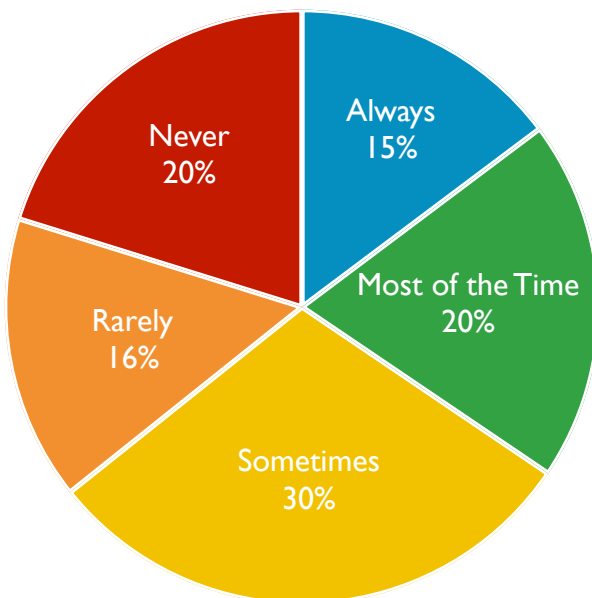
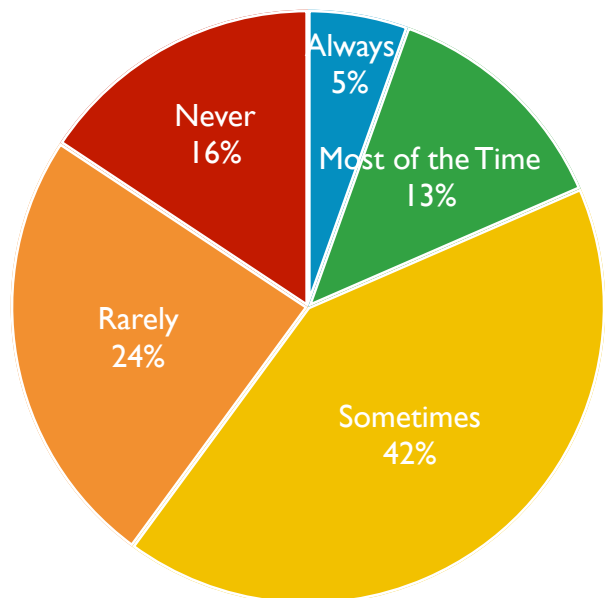
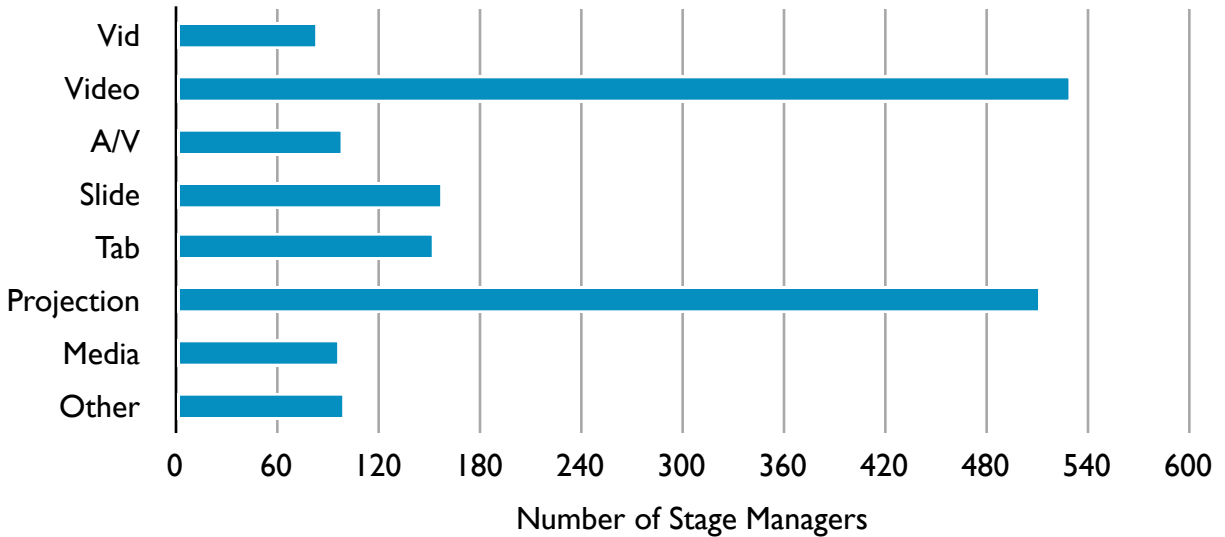


Figure 18: Frequency of Using Cue Counts to Note Length of Cues



As more and more productions utilize video and projections, we also wanted to know the most common names for those cues:

Figure 19: Preferred Name for Projections and/or Video Cues



Other popular cue names included Electrics (especially if triggered through the light board), Proj, and VQ or VFX. The survey then asked about communicating cues with crew members:

Figure 20: Verbal Confirmation of Your Cue Announcement from Crew

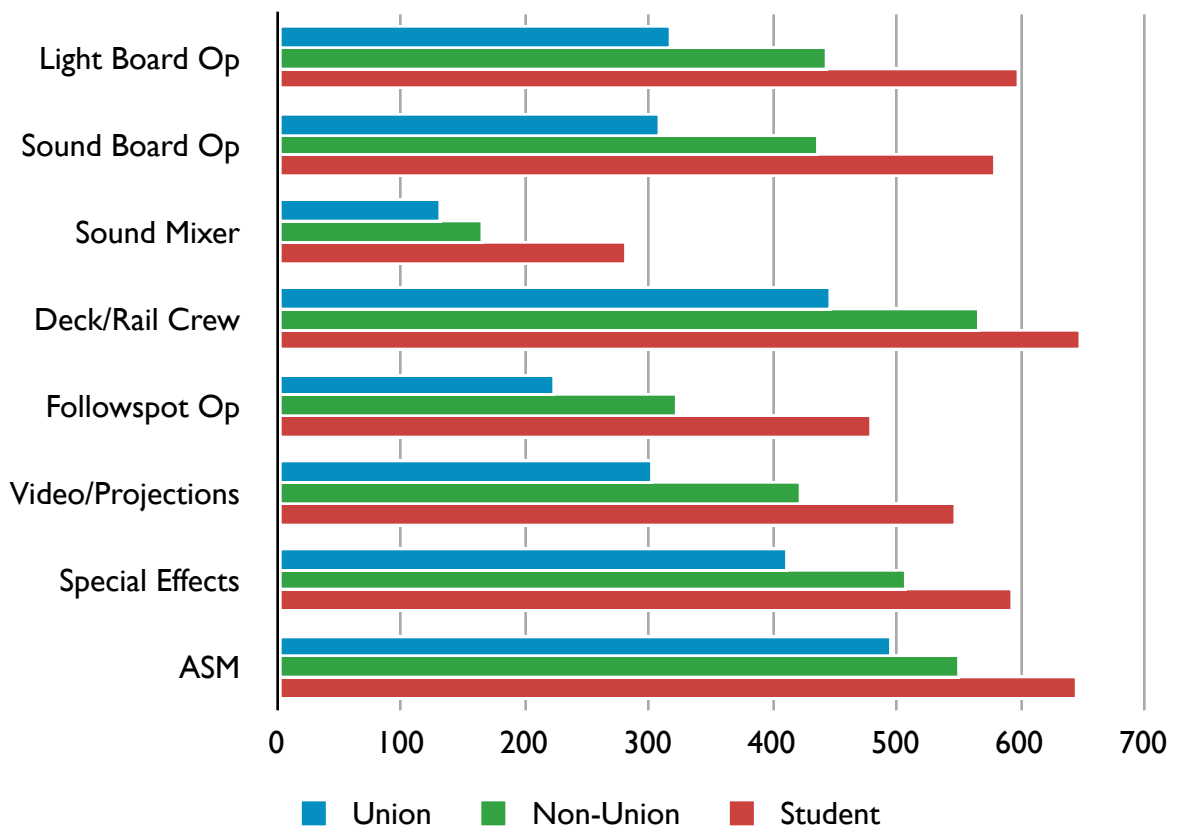
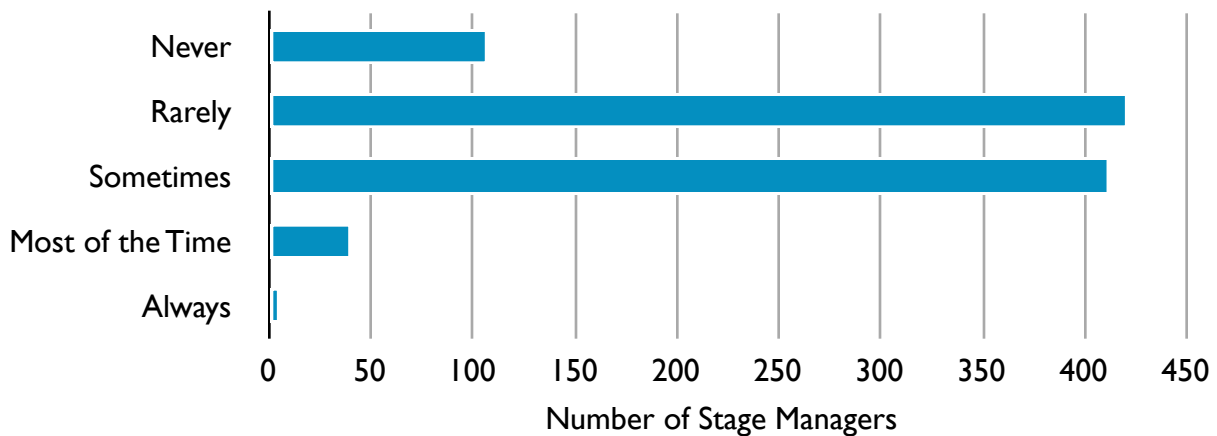


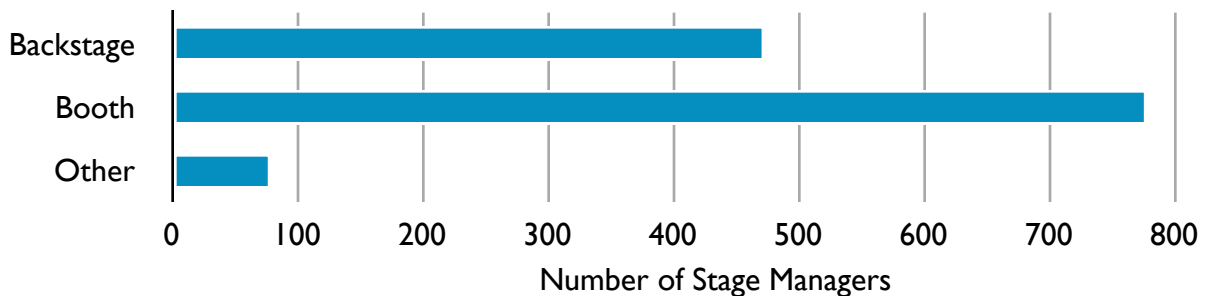
Figure 21: Frequency of Allowing Crew on Headset to Take Their Own Cues



The survey also asked participants about their use of cue lights for crew communication. The survey found that 82% of participants had used cue lights to signal crew members and, of that group of stage managers, 74% did not expect a response from the crew while another 5% used a system that allowed the crew to press a response button rather than give a verbal response. Most stage managers (76%) used “home-made” cue light systems in their theatres and there was no strong leader among the commercial brands of Applied Electronics, Clear Com, Furman, Gam, Global Design Systems Cue System, Leon Audio, Logicue, Masque Sound, Motion Labs, and NuDelta Digital.

Cueing techniques often depend upon the location of the stage manager:

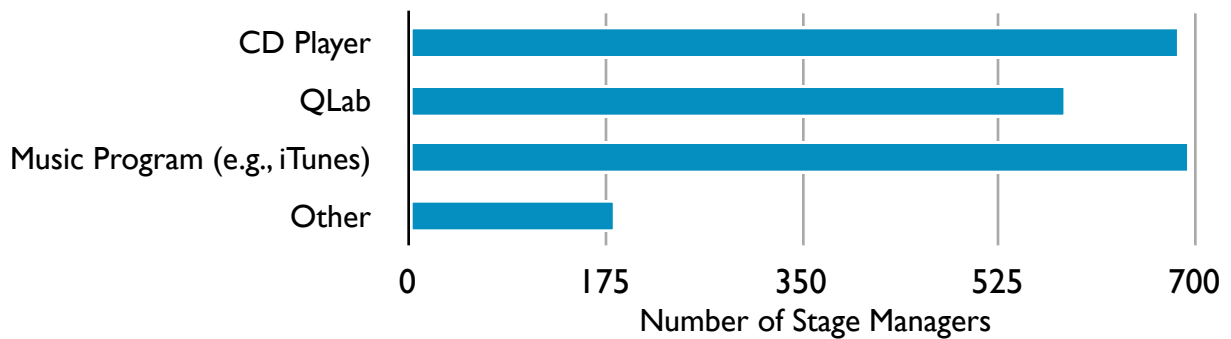
Figure 22: Calling Position in the Past 12 Months (Can Indicate More than One Category)



The most popular other calling location was the back of the house, particularly for stage managers on tour, while others noted a control room. At least one survey participant noted calling a show from the stage management office.

The 2013 survey asked new questions about incorporating sound cues in the rehearsal room. We found that 88% of survey participants have been expected, as the stage manager, to operate sound cues in rehearsal. The technology used has varied:

Figure 23: Playback Systems in Rehearsal



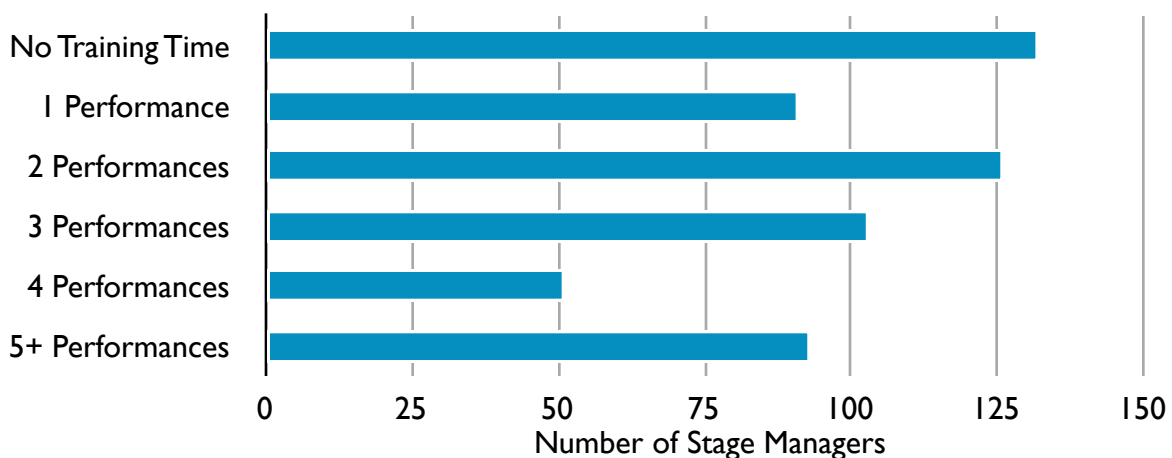
Other playback systems ranged from web-based players such as Spotify to “old school” equipment such as reel to reel. Several stage managers noted that they played instruments themselves during the rehearsal process. When asked about operating sound in rehearsal, feedback included:

- ❖ *Love it! Really gives a feel for what does not work and what does, while in rehearsal!*
- ❖ *I've found it both useful and frustrating at times. The director gets so bogged down in the details of the sound, or wants to adjust things right on the spot that it overpowers the point of the rehearsal.*
- ❖ *It's frustrating being expected to not only take blocking, make technical notes, and feed actors their lines, but we also have to play sound cues. Remember when saying "Ring Ring" was enough for people? Now they expect to hear the actual sound cue on the first rehearsal. Calm down people.*

When asked whether they had used recordings from rehearsal to prepare for tech, 46% responded that they had used video recordings and 28% had used audio recordings (Participants could choose multiple responses; 46% reported no use of recordings to prepare for tech.). We next asked if survey participants had used recordings to learn a show or to practice cue calling: 43% had used video and 38% had used audio recordings, while 41% reported that they had never used recordings to practice calls. Recordings were reported being most used for musicals, operas and dance projects or taking over a long-running show, while many survey participants noted intellectual property concerns and Equity restrictions on recordings serve as deterrents to this practice.

A full 60% of survey participants have taken over cue calling responsibilities for a production that they did not tech. The amount of training time that they received varied.

Figure 24: Training Time for Taking Over Cue-Calling an Existing Production



Lastly, the team conducting the survey sought advice for replicating a complex set in the rehearsal room. Survey participants offered the following tips in addition to the standard use of colored spike tape:

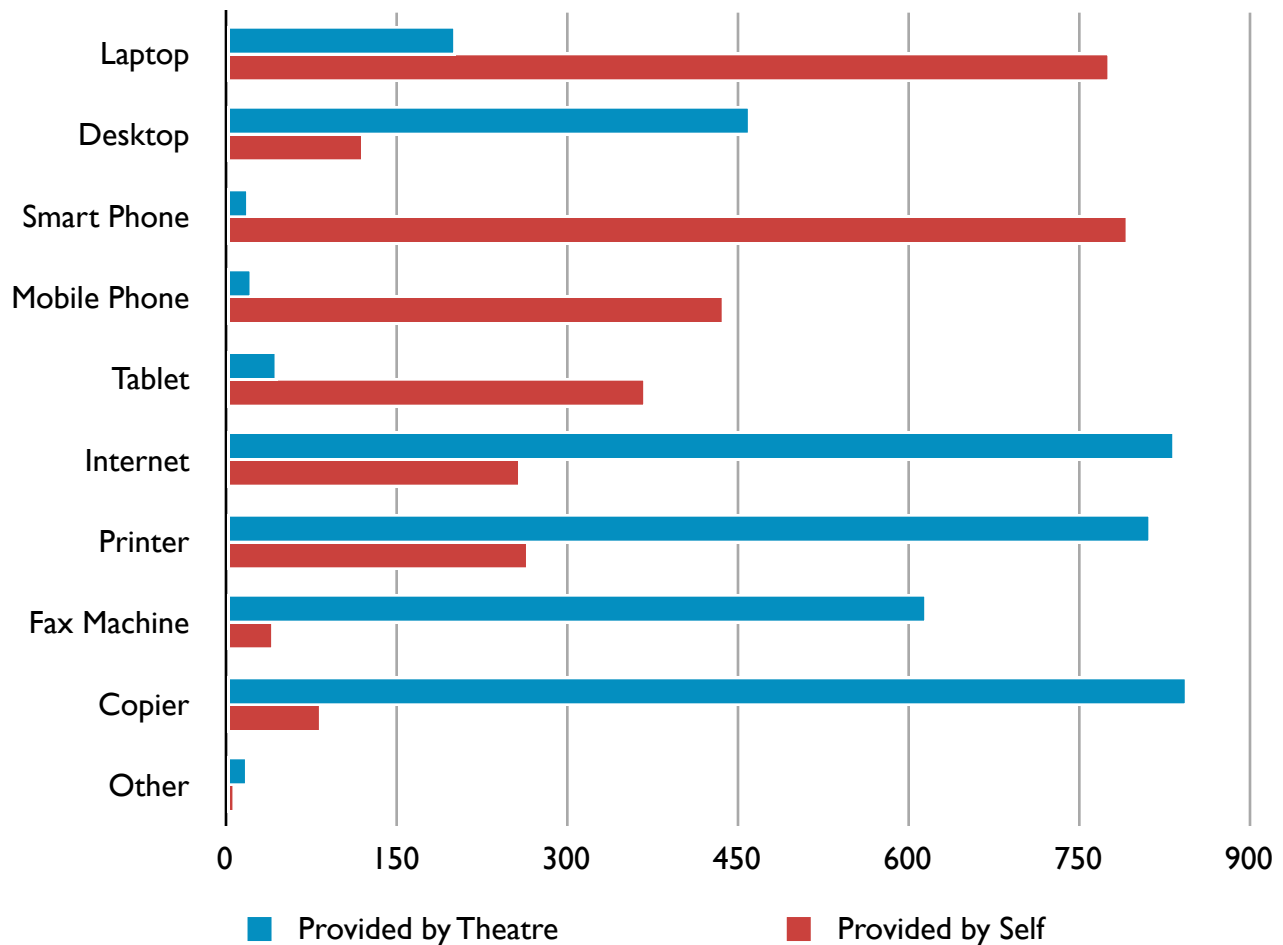
- ❖ *Using cardboard cut outs for walls that had to be moved, using platforms - even if not up to actual height, standalone doors, etc.*
- ❖ *2' tall stud walls to show a two-scene turntable.*
- ❖ *Mock revolve with masonite*
- ❖ *Platforms with locking wheels. Rolling flats to use for flying drops, etc.*
- ❖ *Had a turntable for SHE LOVES ME. Rather than confusing the world with a different tape color for each position, I bought a large piece of thin linoleum and cut it to the shape of the "music box" set. Got permission to nail it into the deck at the center. Then "spun" it to the correct position for each scene.*
- ❖ *Foam core wall, wooden platforms with wheels*
- ❖ *Music stands to define the space; ground cloths/tarps that can be added and removed for different scenes; luan cut-outs of rotating pieces; physically moving the production table and piano/Mo. podium to different sides of the room.*
- ❖ *Rolling costume racks are really versatile - throw a piece of duv over it, it's a wall! Rolls across the room to be a slider wall, or any tracking piece. Use them to represent some set piece that members of the ensemble will eventually have to move and set on spike - even though its a fake version, during run-throughs, it helps the cast learn the arc of their individual show and learn the traffic pattern of a transition*
- ❖ *I have used scaffolding for a multi-level set.*
- ❖ *Half walls out of cardboard or 1/4" sheet stick on gliders to indicate set walls. /*
- ❖ *I have painted out a set in a place I was unable to tape. For 8 sets of swinging gates, we used ribbons of gaff tape wrapped around music stands.*
- ❖ *Platforms with locking castors for automation. Or simply using cloth sheet cut out or large brown paper cut out to denote large moving objects that actors need to avoid, but not necessarily interact with.*
- ❖ *I once worked on a show with 10 wagons that moved throughout the show. They had a large footprint and I felt taping each one out of the floor and their many formations would prove to be confusing for all involved so I cut their footprints out of large cardboard boxes that I found and taped together. This ways the cast had a more realistic view of what the space around them was and could practice scene changes with something tangible.*
- ❖ *In rehearsal we cut out 15' circle of Linoleum and taped three separate sets on it. We could then do a run thru by just spinning the linoleum to the correct scene*
- ❖ *Chalk, caution tape, pedestrian barriers, trash cans and sometimes assistants acting the parts of scenery we didn't have yet.*



### SECTION III: TECHNOLOGY FOR STAGE MANAGERS

As expectations of communication with the theatre company throughout the rehearsal day continue to grow, we asked which communication technologies are being provided by theatres versus which tools the stage managers are expected to provide for themselves.

Figure 25: Sources of Communication Technology



“Other” communication technologies included video cameras, scanners, remote desktop access, land line telephones, and headsets. When asked about computer operating systems, a majority of stage managers had Macs for personal use (68%), for professional work (72%) and 63% preferred Mac overall.

The survey asked when and what kinds of communication technology stage managers were using.

Figure 26: Technology Use in Rehearsals

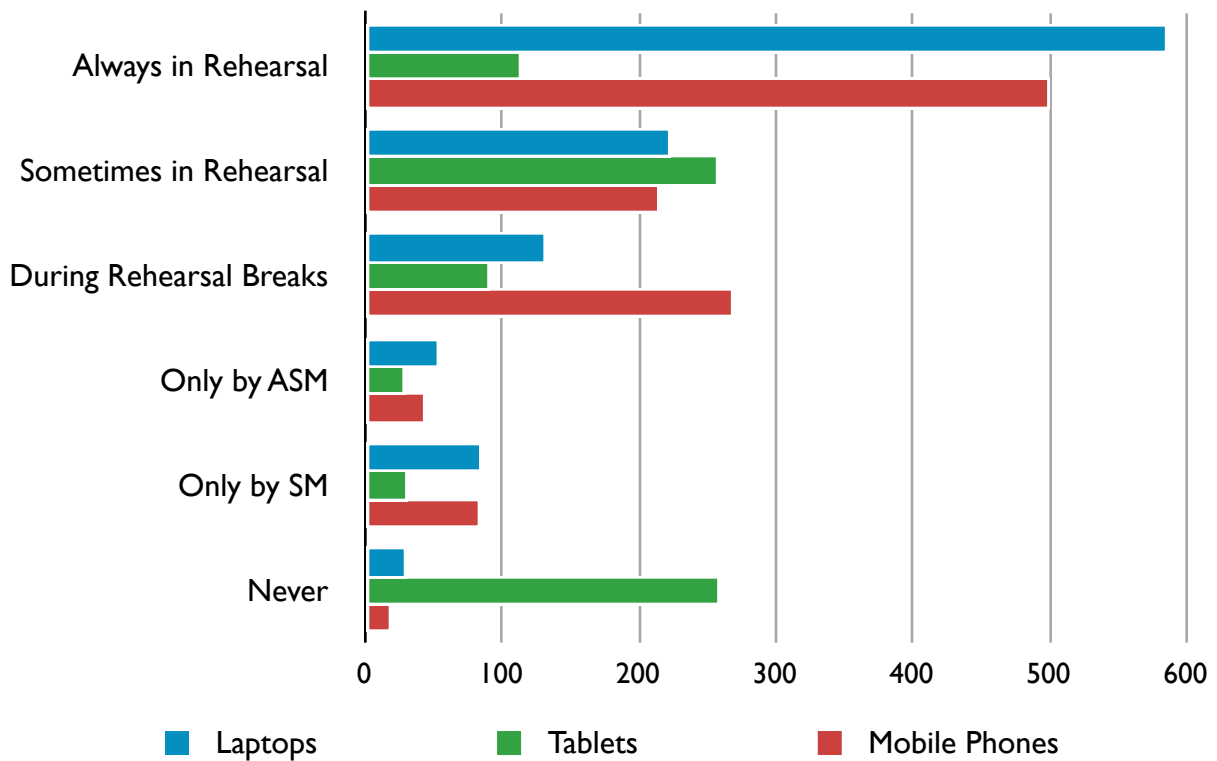


Figure 27: Technology Use in Performances

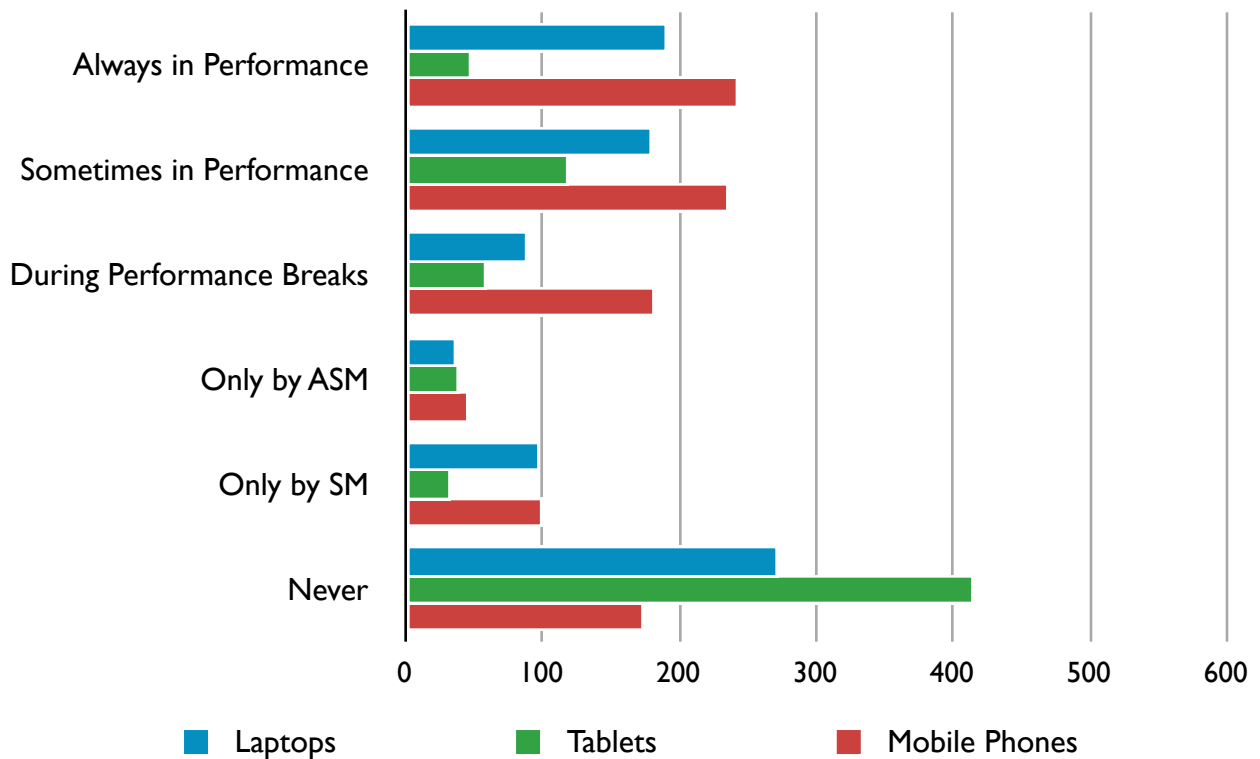
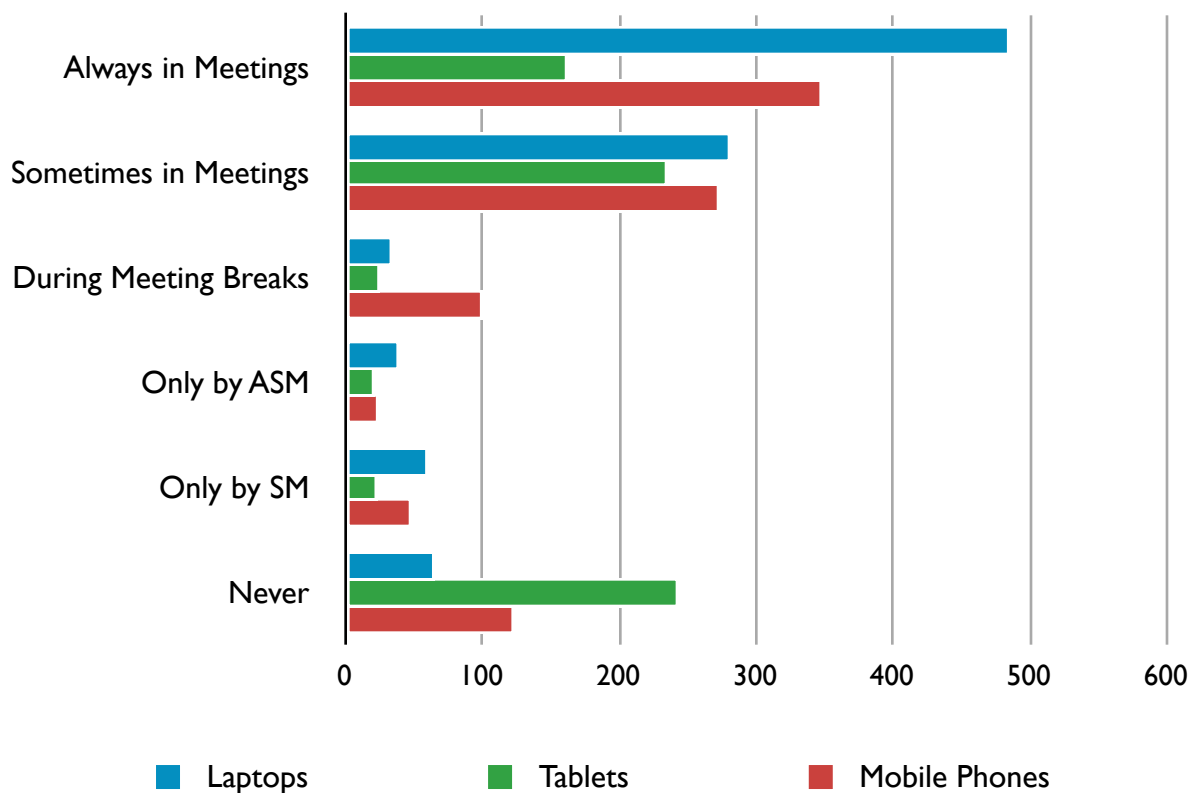


Figure 28: Technology Use in Meetings

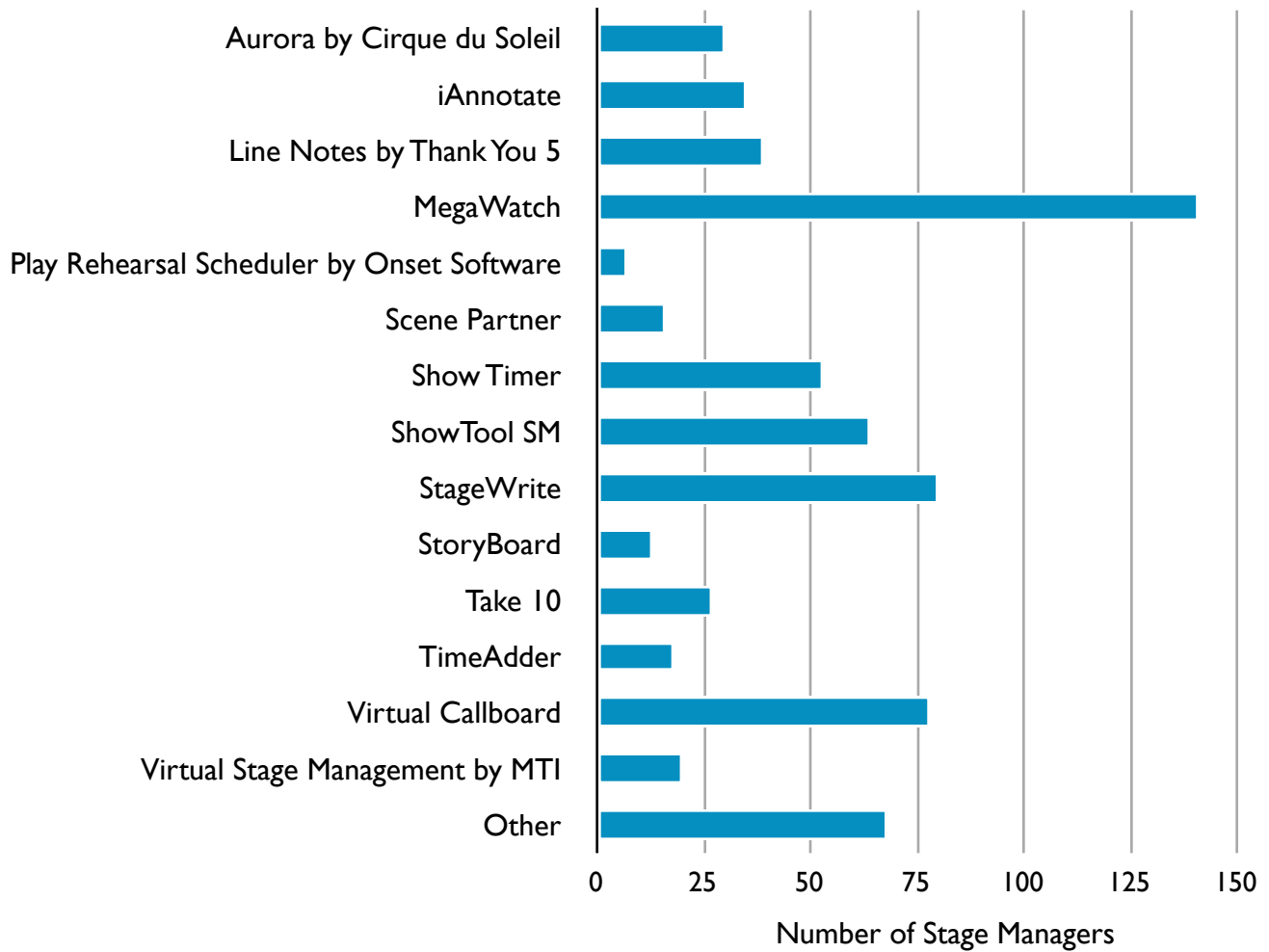


Survey participants gave a wide variety of reasons for including or eliminating technology in these settings:

- ❖ *I feel that technology should be used where appropriate. It should be used to make things easier and more efficient, however, it's important to me that it doesn't distract. When technology distracts, it begins to wear on the creative process.*
- ❖ *I just bought an iPad a few months ago and it's great for rehearsals and meetings. All I need it for is to check email, send email, look at my calendar, look stuff up on the internet. Then when I go home I use my laptop for building all the paperwork and the more complicated things. I live in nyc so carrying my laptop is a pain ... love the option of the iPad. Makes my bag less heavy!*
- ❖ *I prefer pen/pencil and note pad/prompt book. Occasionally in meetings I have found a laptop useful, but as I type this response, I am reminded why I find them usually unacceptable.... too much noise and too distracting.*
- ❖ *Hate hate hate the over-use of laptops and phones in a rehearsal room. As a member of stage management, I am a firm believer in being present in the rehearsal room. As such, I keep my computer closed as much as possible during active blocking / staging rehearsals. I am not likely to update my run sheets as we go. During a music or purely choreographic rehearsal, I will work on such paperwork.*
- ❖ *If one is locked into paper these days, you are outdated. This is a 66 year old, 40 year AEA SM speaking!*

As was the case in 2011, there does not appear to be any commonly-adopted software among stage managers. Even the most popular application, MegaWatch (developed by Will Pickens), has been used by only a third of survey participants.

Figure 29: Stage Management Software/Applications



“Other software” that received votes included Chronology, Doodle Scheduler, Dropbox, Filemaker, For Score, Mercut.io, Show Pro, Time Calculator, Yapp, and self-designed digital callboards and wiki systems. One participant noted, “What?! I was never told of these!!!” Another participant wondered if the Stage Managers’ Association could present demo sessions from software developers.

We asked survey participants how likely they were to try a new stage management application [Figure 30], what they wanted in new stage management software [Figure 32], and how much they would be willing to pay [Figure 31].

Figure 30: Likelihood of Trying a New SM Application for a Laptop or Tablet

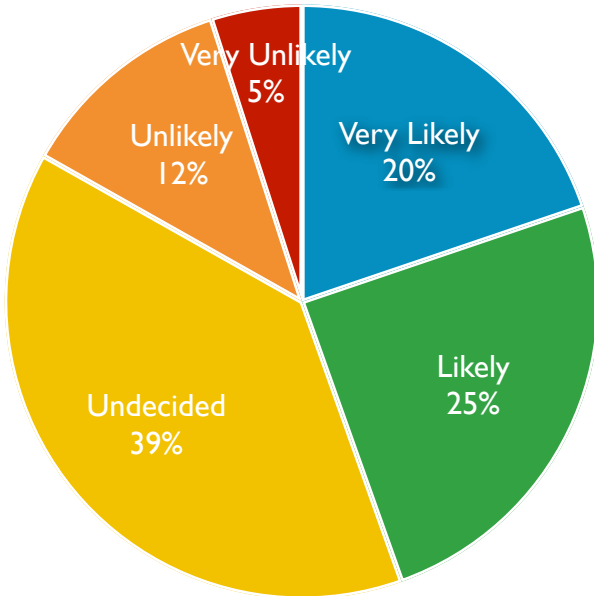
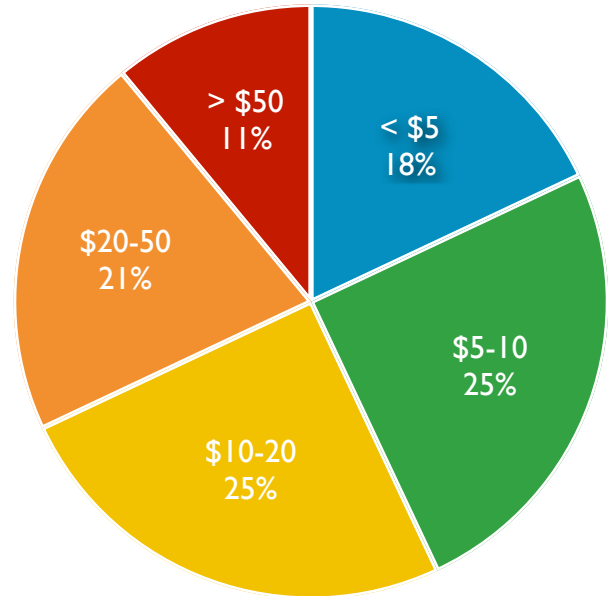
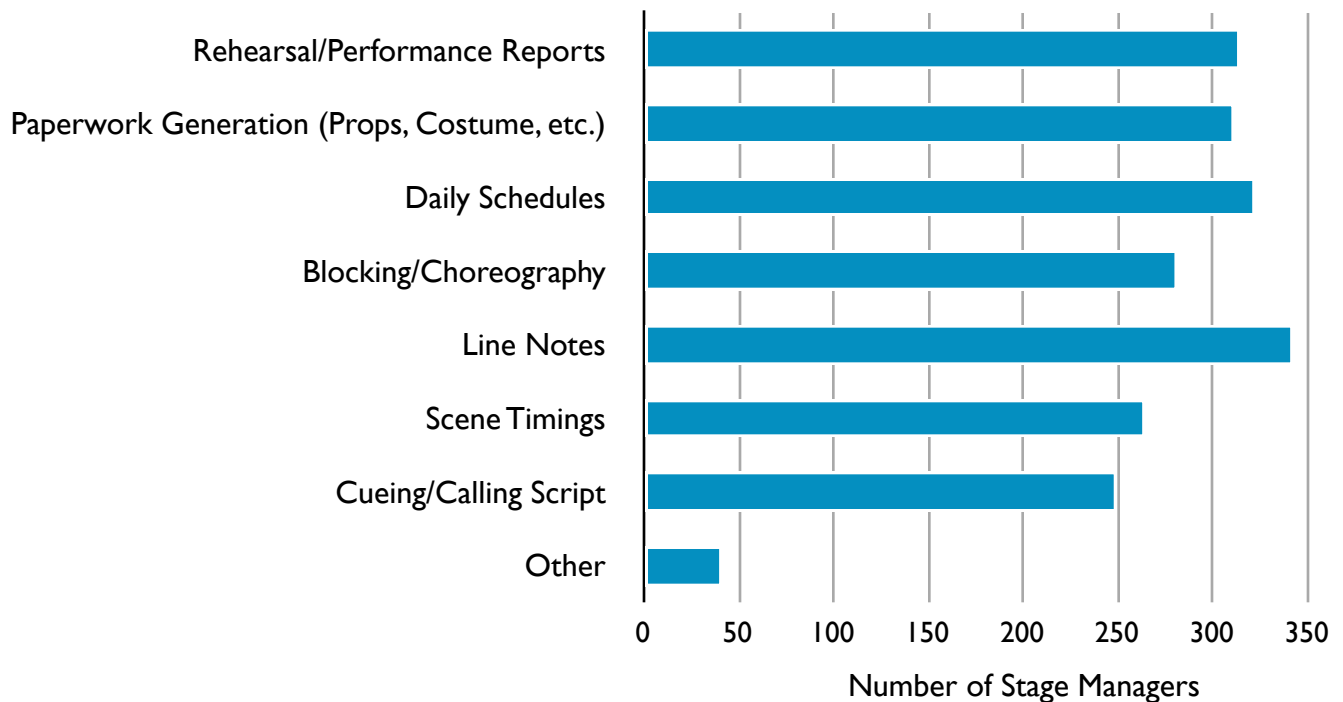


Figure 31: Maximum Preferred Price for a SM Application for a Laptop or Tablet



Reoccurring comments were that many apps did not offer enough customization or were “too expensive for me to try before knowing if it would be useful to me.”

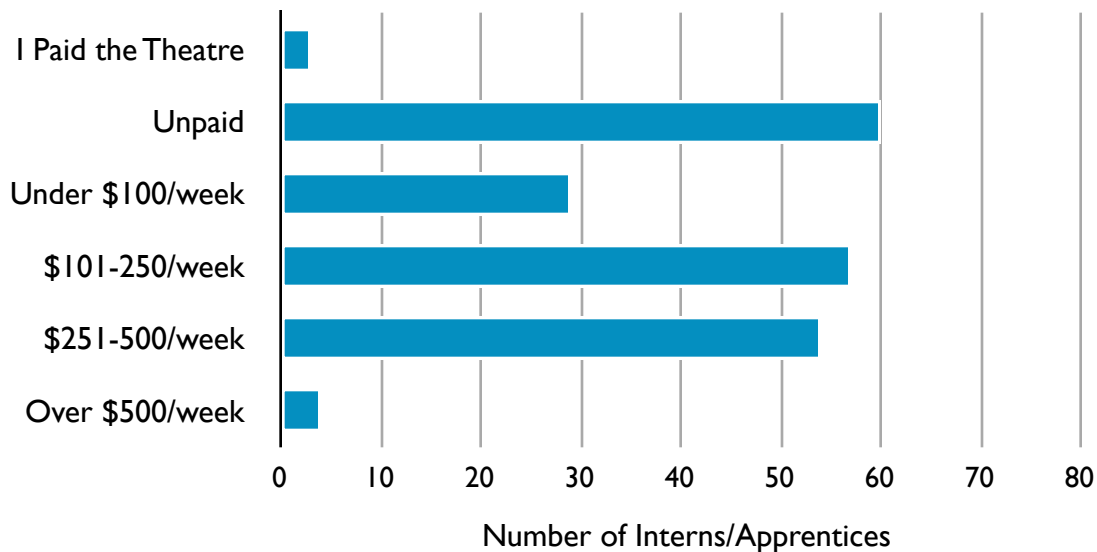
Figure 32: Desired Features for a New SM Application for a Laptop or Tablet



## SECTION IV: EMPLOYMENT

The 2013 survey asked questions about finding work for yourself and hiring other stage managers. Nearly a quarter of survey participants (24%) reported collecting Unemployment in the past year, indicating that many stage managers do not have continual employment throughout the year. We also sought more information about internships. Two hundred and seven survey participants had served as an apprentice or intern within the past three years. Compensation for those positions varied:

Figure 33: Pay for Internships and Apprenticeships



Note: 13% of these interns and apprentices reported receiving overtime pay.

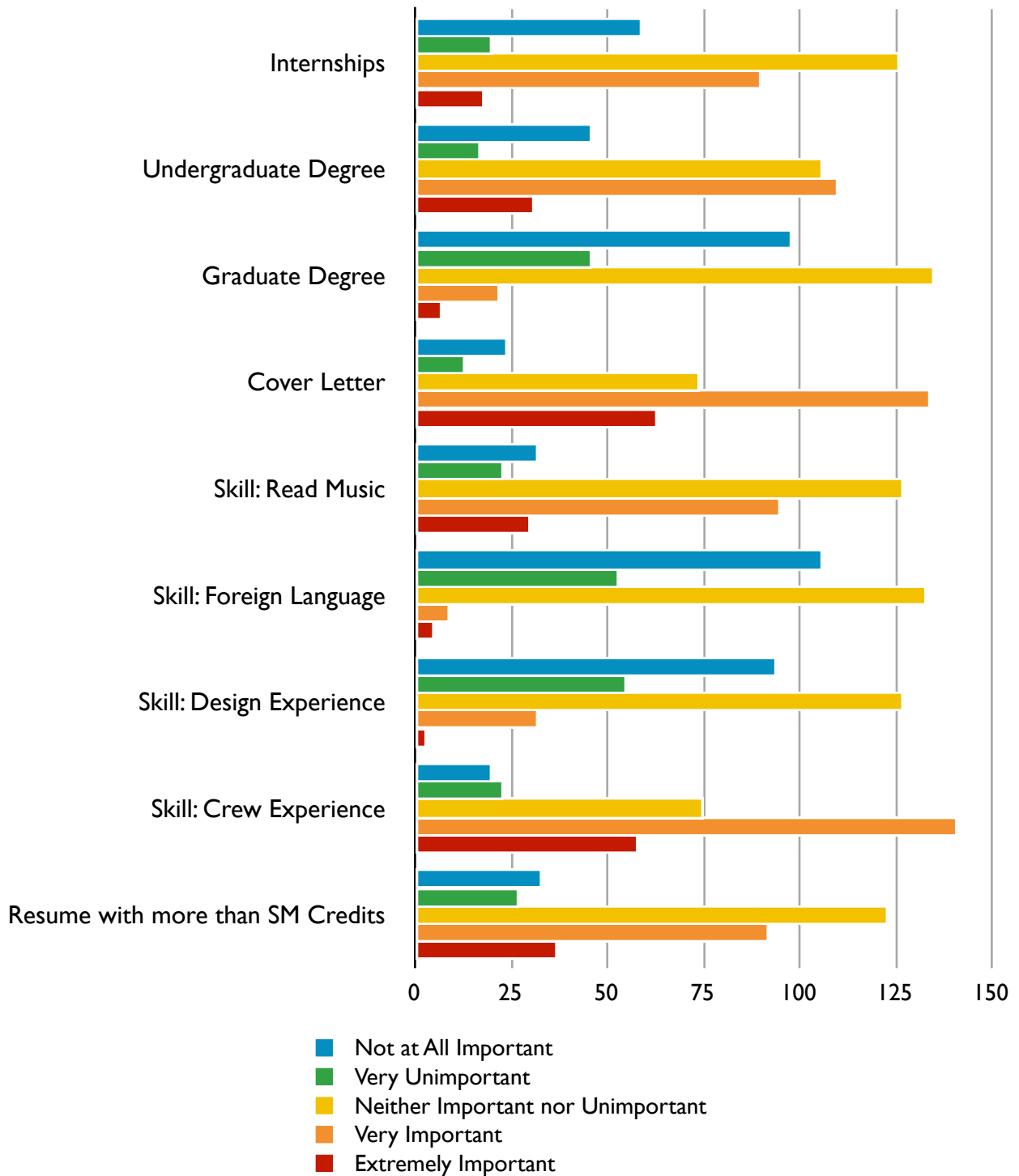
The Production Assistant position continues to grow in popularity and is often filled by someone with considerably more experience than an apprentice. Over 300 survey participants (34%) reported taking a PA position in order to enter a new market, even though they already had professional stage management experience. Many noted advantages such as connecting with established stage managers and gaining confidence in their work. As one stage manager explained:

*A PA position is a great way to network and to get to see how SMs work in a forum in which one does not have much experience. It is occasionally a stepping stone to an ASM position, but - especially in the Broadway community - it is often VERY difficult for PAs to move into ASM positions.*

But others noted overuse or misuse of the position: "PA positions are wildly abused by producers trying to get something for nothing. And they are hiring extremely qualified people for PA positions instead of utilizing them as entry level learning opportunities." Others noted that only stage managers with the financial means or family support are able to afford to hold a low-pay or unpaid position for long, which could restrict stage management as a career to only wealthier individuals.

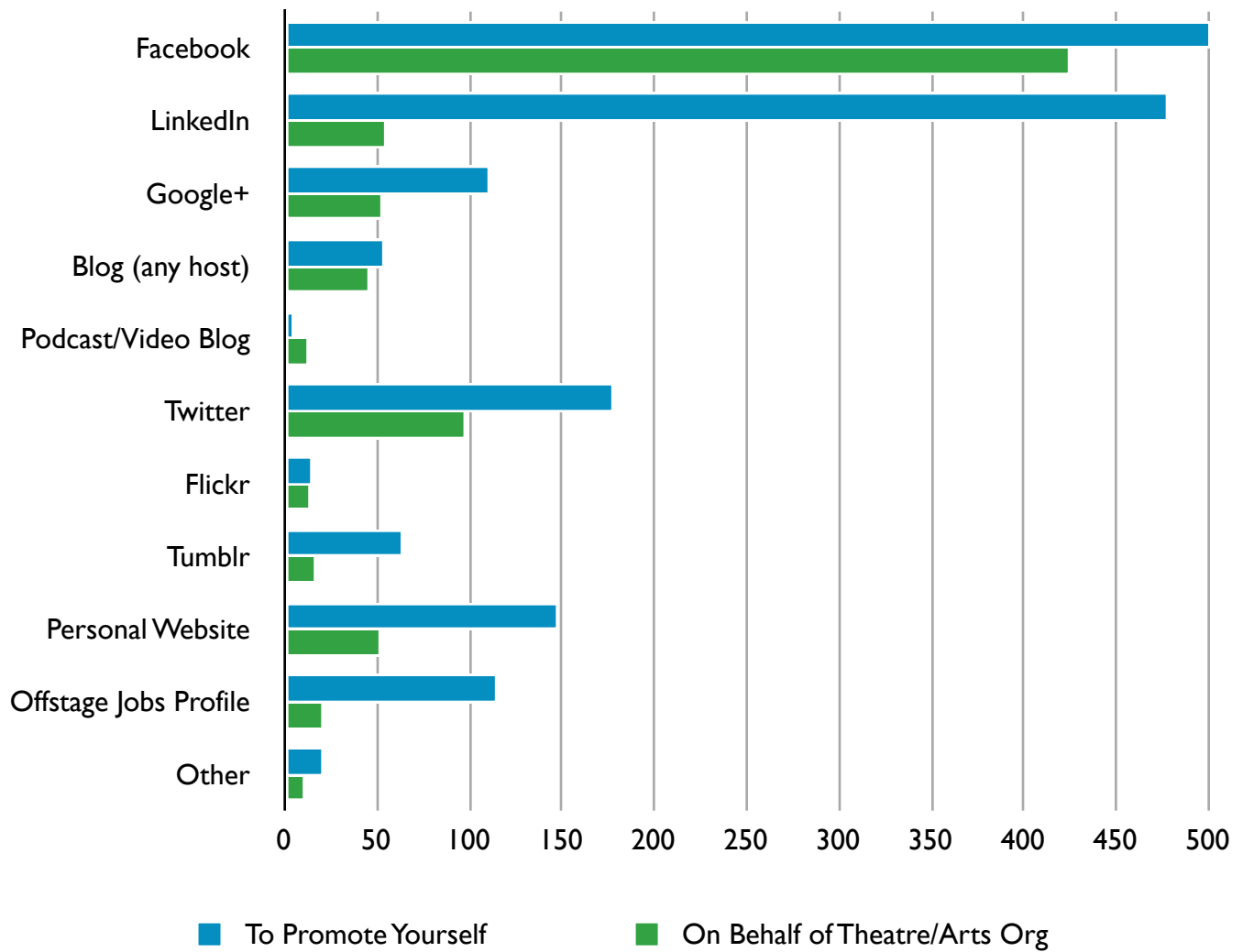
Among survey participants, 38% hire their own stage management teams. Over half of those responders noted receiving an average of ten or fewer applications for an advertised stage management position. Only 17% of the participants who hire stage managers reported receiving, on average, more than 25 applications. We asked what mattered most when comparing stage management resumes.

Figure 34: Importance of Application Elements in Comparing Stage Management Candidates



The survey also asked participants whether they used social networking sites in their stage management work.

Figure 35: Social Media Usage to Promote Yourself or Promote Your Theatre/Arts Org

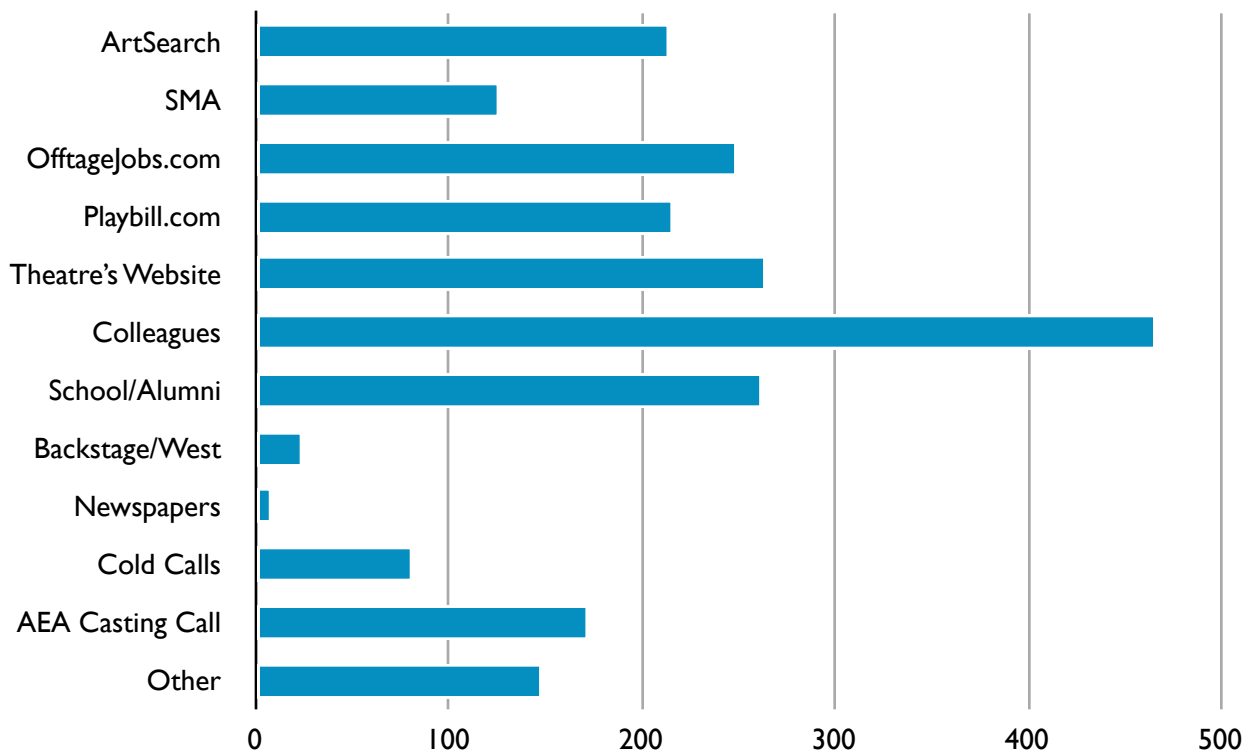


For Figure 35, the most common “Other” category was Instagram with 11 responses. Social media for self-promotion is paying off for some stage managers: 331 stage managers have been contacted for an interview or a job offer through Facebook and 133 have been contacted for work via LinkedIn. Personal websites have led to work for 56 surveyed stage managers and the Offstage Job Profiles have proven useful to 58 survey participants.

The 2013 survey participants also identified the best sources for finding new jobs:



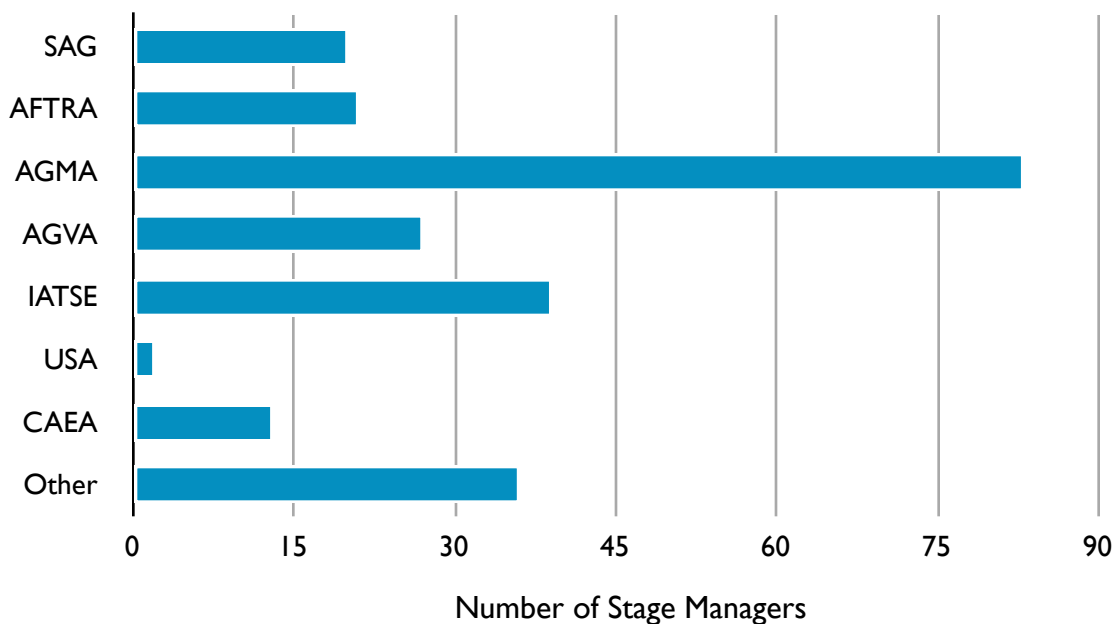
Figure 36: Sources Used to Find Stage Management Work



The most common “Other” sources were the Facebook Group Stage Management Jobs in Opera, the Canadian Equity Big List, regional theatre job postings, and conferences such as SETC.

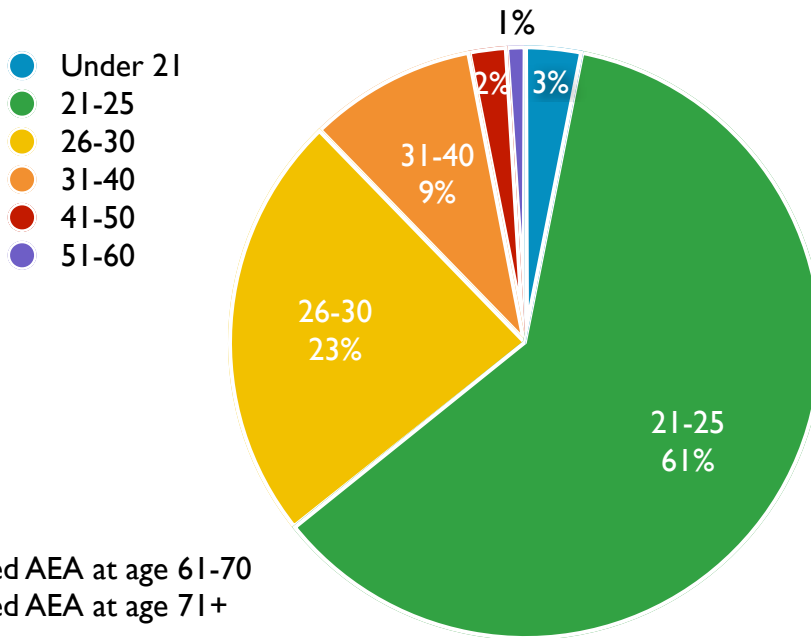
As noted in the introduction of this report, 478 members of Actors’s Equity Association participated in this survey. Other unions and groups represented among the survey-takers include:

Figure 37: Union Membership



Among the 478 members of Equity, 55% joined the union on a stage manager contract and another 39% joined on an ASM contract. Only 6% joined AEA on an Actor or an Actor/ASM contract. Among the survey participants who are not Equity members, 36% plan to join the union at some point in their careers. The majority of current AEA members joined in their twenties:

Figure 38: Age of Stage Manager When Joining Actor’s Equity Association

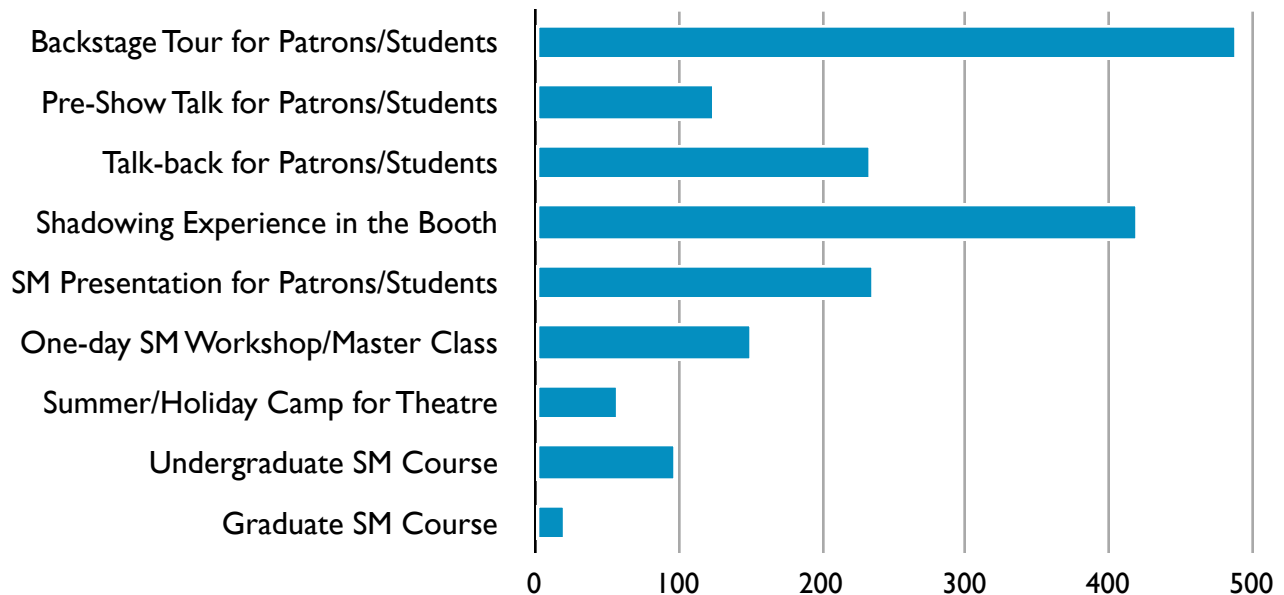


Note:

One participant joined AEA at age 61-70  
 One participant joined AEA at age 71+

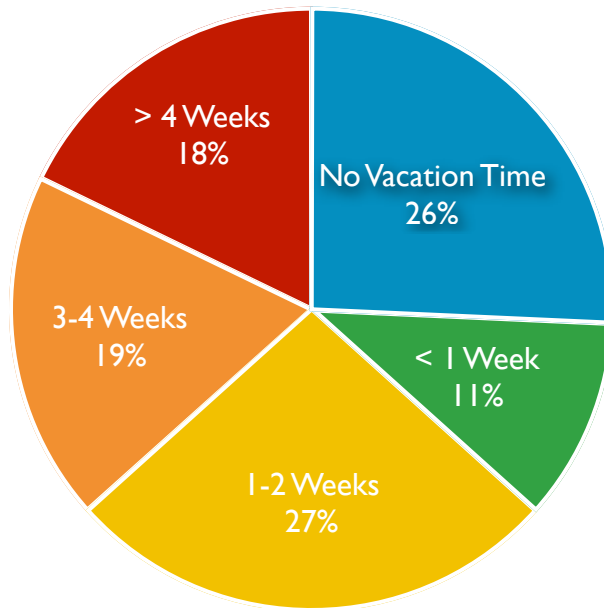
Another trend that we want to begin tracking is how many stage managers are leading backstage tours, workshops, and courses.

Figure 39: Have Taught or Led a Group in the Past 12 Months



For the first time, this survey tracked vacation time:

Figure 40: Amount Vacation Time in the Past 12 Months



We also started a line of questions about commuting to work and health practices.

Figure 41: Transportation Method for Most Recent SM Assignment

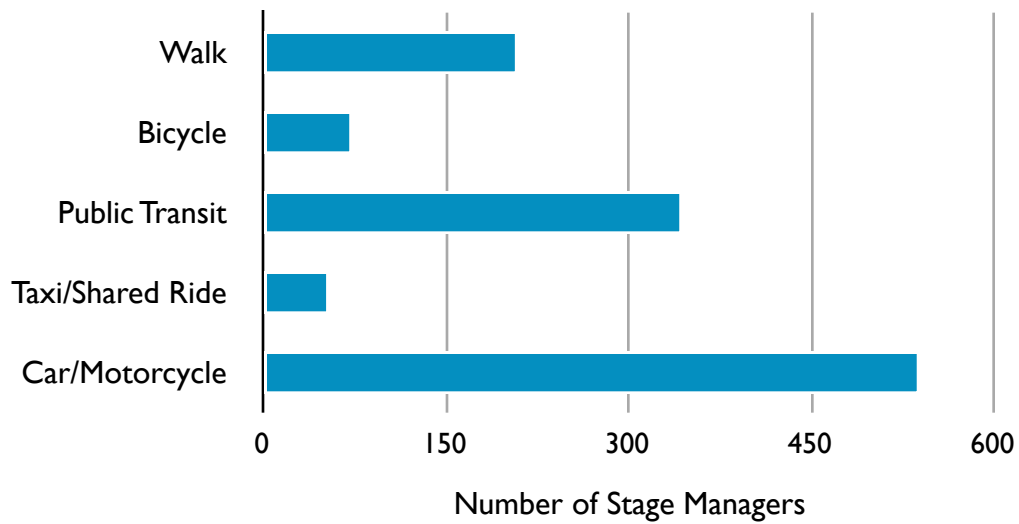
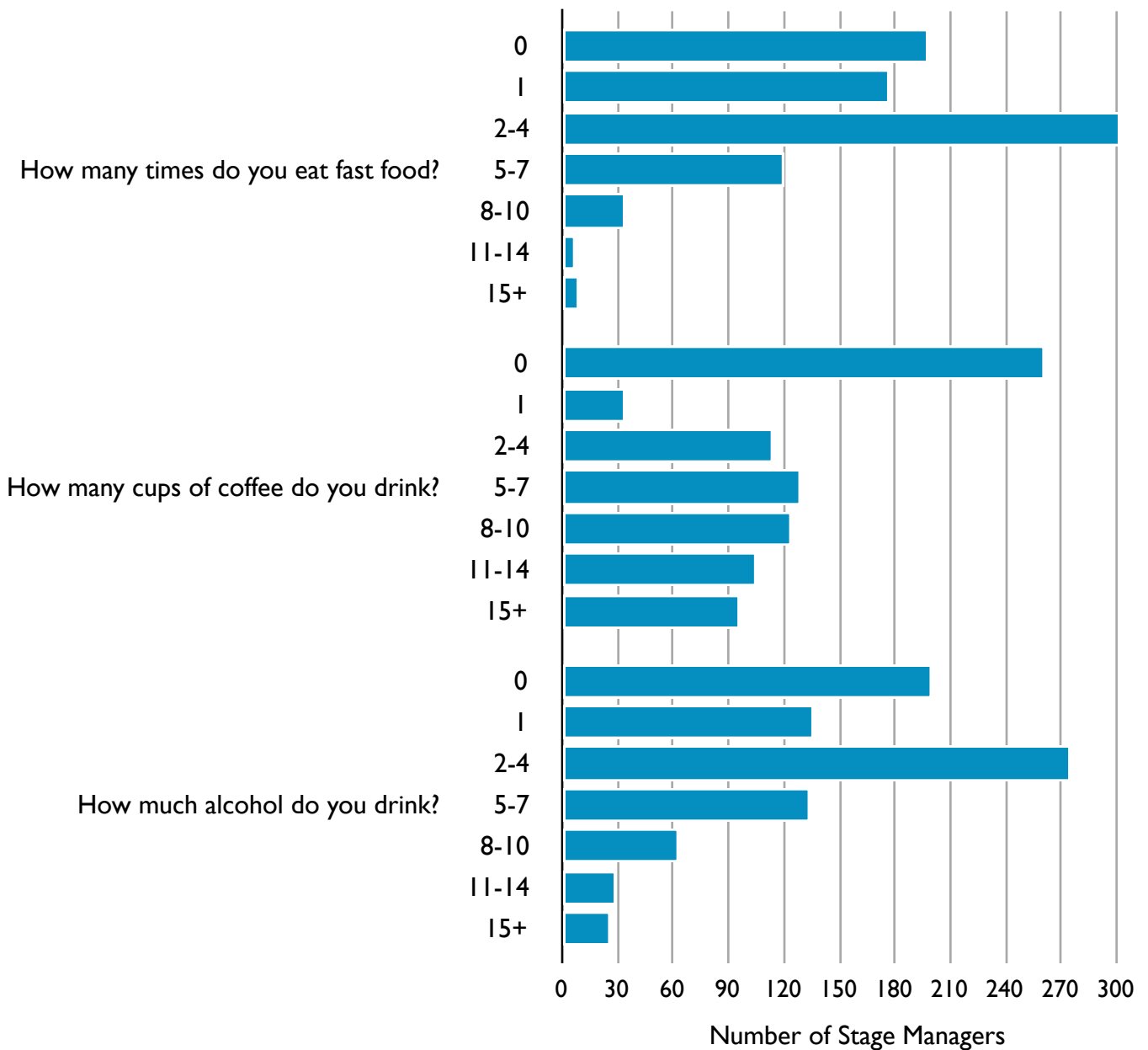
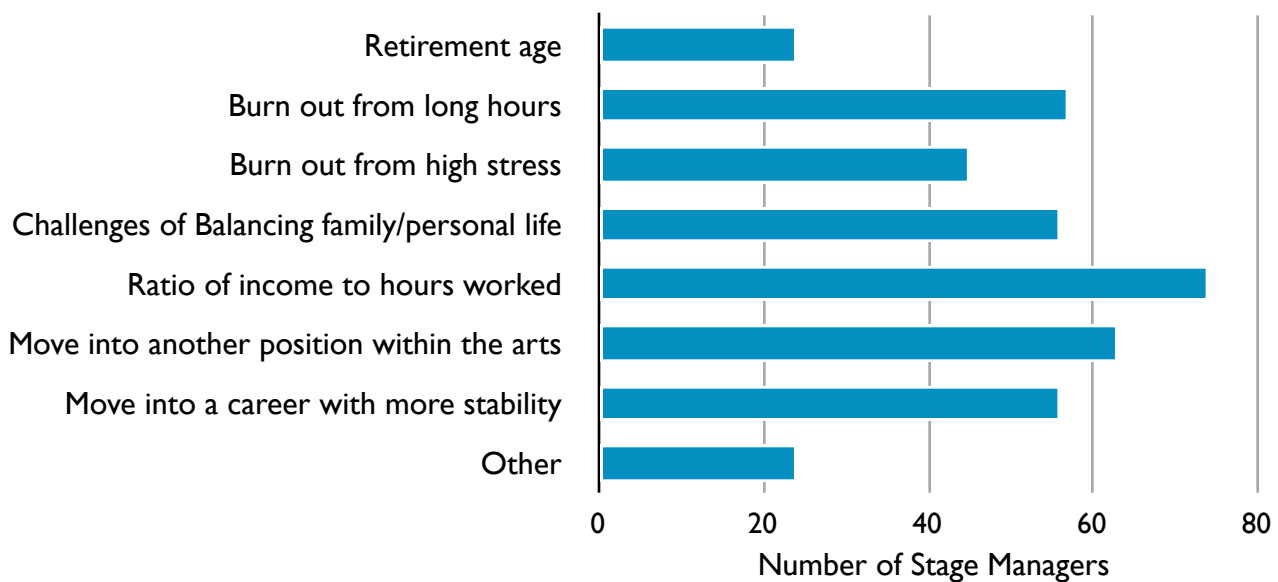


Figure 42: Fast Food/Coffee/Alcohol Consumption in a Typical Rehearsal Week



Our final group of questions were about job satisfaction and likelihood of leaving the field. When asked how likely a participant was to leave stage management in the next five years: 9% were very likely and another 7% thought it was likely that they would exit the field in this timeframe. Figure 43 shows the primary reasons for leaving stage management. The majority of “Other” reasons were based on the difficulties of finding stage management work, a desire for other creative outlets, or changes to the job and/or industry.

Figure 43: Contributing Factors in Decision to Leave Stage Management



One participant gave this reason for leaving the profession: “Once reaching the pinnacle of SM career, where do you go from there? Try again with another show or get out on top and let the wheel of life circle around.”

Those who choose to remain in stage management are generally very happy to do so. Over 75% of the survey participants listed that they were very satisfied (30%) or satisfied (49%) with their careers. It should be noted, however, that a stage manager who was unhappy with the career choice was less likely to take a 15-20 minute survey about their field. We received 473 responses about factors contributing to job satisfaction, including:

- ❖ *I enjoy the work and organization. Especially, the process of bringing together many different people to create one, unique product.*
- ❖ *Stage management gives a very satisfying feeling. There is nothing quite like calling the house to half and watching the audience get quiet in anticipation.*
- ❖ *I'm doing exactly what I set out to do when I started as a Stage Manager. I make my living from Stage Management in a place that I love living at theaters that I love working at who repeat their employees. I haven't had to supplement my income with other jobs. I have health coverage, fully vested in a pension plan, and a 401K. I count myself lucky.*
- ❖ *It never, ever feels like a job. I love the people, the adventures and the inconsistency.*
- ❖ *Have been able to stay in a career & raise family & work for many years w/ primarily good people in a generally collaborative company*
- ❖ *I have worked steadily for almost 40 years, have done over 25 Broadway productions, have seen the world, have worked with some geniuses, have been exposed to the greatest literature ever written and have had a great love life - all because of the theatre.*
- ❖ *It's a perfect job for me. It combines my organizational skills with my interpersonal and creative interests.*

## CONCLUSION

The 2013 survey was our most extensive survey to date. While some participants commented on its length, many also noted the abundance of useful questions for our field. Even though we reduced the number of short-answer essay questions, the 2013 study resulted in a 1,512-page spreadsheet of raw data.

If you have any questions about the data or would like a cross-tabulation (e.g., the percentage of stage managers who have worked for over ten years who use laptops in rehearsal), or would like to recommend a question for a future survey, please e-mail [info@sm-sim.com](mailto:info@sm-sim.com) with "Survey" in the subject line. We also appreciate constructive criticism and suggestions on how to improve the survey process. If you would like to be notified about future surveys, please sign up at <http://smsurvey.info>. The next survey will be conducted in November 2015.

Several stage managers have expressed interest in expanding the survey beyond the United States (14 participants in the 2013 survey have worked on American shows but reside in other countries.). Due to some of the specific terminology (SM vs. Deputy SM, etc.) and union practices, we think it works best to limit this study to American theatrical stage management. The graduate stage management program at the University of Iowa would be very interested in partnering with other groups to conduct stage management surveys in other performing art genres or in other countries. We would be happy to provide guidance and we could potentially help develop and host the survey. In this decentralized field, there is much that we all can learn from each other.

One of our stage management graduate students will be conducting a 2014 survey to research the role personality plays in the development of the relationship between directors and stage managers, and how the relationship affects the overall success of a production. If you are interested in receiving more information about this survey and have not yet signed up via the 2013 SM Survey please visit <http://smsurvey.info> to sign up to receive updates.

We would like to thank again the hundreds of stage managers who volunteered their time to help create a comprehensive examination of our occupation and our art.

*Leigh'Ann Andrews*  
*Adriana Fernandez*  
*Kathleen Hains*  
*Amber K. Lewandowski*  
*David J. McGraw, Head of Stage Management*  
Stage Management Special Topics course, University of Iowa

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