



# CASE STUDY

## Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Lights. Camera.  
(Fundraising.) Action!

*Communicator Award Winner &  
2 Time MAXI Award Winner*



## BACKGROUND

Movie enthusiasts around the world will soon be able to celebrate as the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences opens the much-anticipated Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Almost 100 years in the making, the world-class museum will celebrate the rich history of filmmaking, both in Hollywood and internationally, in a showstopping building designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano.



Academy  
Museum  
of Motion  
Pictures



*Academy Museum of Motion Pictures Interior Rendering, Lobby ©Renzo Piano Building Workshop/©Academy Museum Foundation/Image from Cristiano Zaccaria*

Based in Los Angeles in the heart of the Miracle Mile, the Academy Museum will span two buildings: the historic Saban Building—previously named the Wilshire May Company—and connected via glass bridge, the new glass and concrete Sphere Building. The Saban Building will house six floors of exhibition, education, and special events spaces as well as a conservation studio, movie theater, café, and museum store. The Sphere Building will be home to the 1,000-seat David Geffen Theater and Dolby Family Terrace, an open-air promenade offering picture-perfect views of Hollywood Hills and the iconic Hollywood sign.

But before opening its doors and welcoming visitors, the Academy Museum needed

to raise funds to both complete the magnificent building and develop a deep bench of excited members and visitors.

In preparation of its official opening, the Academy Museum recruited The Lukens Company (TLC) to assist with developing and launching an integrated direct response program that encompassed fundraising, membership acquisition, and membership consultation.

## CHALLENGES

The Academy Museum was facing a couple of key challenges that TLC needed to address right away.

The first was fundraising on such a large and international scale. The Academy Museum needed to generate a significant amount of funds to ensure the building's completion by its planned grand opening.

The second and trickier challenge was building a robust membership base before the opening. It was important to have a solid base of members who would be excitedly anticipating visiting the museum and exploring its inaugural exhibits and screenings.

The Academy Museum required a dynamic solution to meet its fundraising requirements and install a lasting membership program that would continue to grow.

## OBJECTIVE

**TLC dove in to achieve two goals: develop a highly creative fundraising program aimed at funding the completion of the Academy Museum's construction and build an engaging membership program that would drum up excitement prior to the grand opening.**

## TLC SOLUTIONS

TLC took a multilayered approach beginning with deep research. This was followed by developing and implementing a profitable fundraising program and influential membership acquisition program.

### RESEARCH & MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM CONSULTATION

TLC began by conducting a data discovery and audit analysis to determine key metrics such as historical trends and giving patterns. We then paired our research with a survey conducted by Morey Group, our market research division, to gain a better understanding of member and visitor behaviors within the regional market.



Based on our findings, we developed both a fundraising program and membership acquisition program that was catered to ideal donor and member demographics and behaviors while still reflecting the Academy Museum's mission and brand. Additionally, we embedded our survey findings and comprehensive research into comparative membership programs to consult on the development of the Academy Museum's membership benefits and levels.

TLC's approach to this was two-fold. First, we deployed the Founding Supporters Fundraising Acquisition and Reengagement Program, which was laser focused on acquiring and reengaging donors to help fund the completion of the Academy Museum's construction. Next, we initiated the Charter Membership Acquisition Program to build a base of raving fans and supporters who would be eager and ready to visit the Academy Museum upon its opening.

### FUNDRAISING ACQUISITION AND REENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The initial priority was the Founding Supporters Fundraising Acquisition and Reengagement Program to help ensure that the Academy Museum raised enough funds to complete the showstopping building. TLC created three Founding

Supporter appeals that featured eye-catching creative from the beloved films *Toy Story* and *Jaws*. Each package included an engaging and brightly colored insert, donation form, return envelope, and persuasive letter signed by Hollywood icons, including Tom Hanks, Annette Bening, and Steven Spielberg.



## MEMBERSHIP ACQUISITION PROGRAM

With fundraising underway and performing at award-winning levels, we shifted our focus to developing the Academy Museum's flagship Charter Membership Acquisition Program.



While the Founding Supporters language highlighted the Academy Museum's historical significance and worldwide impact on film, the Charter Membership campaigns took a more visitor-focused approach. Each appeal highlighted the many exhibitions, galleries, and programs that the Academy Museum will offer as well as the exclusive perks available to Charter Members, including complimentary general admission, invitations to exclusive screenings, and priority admission and early access. Each package displayed a full color rendering of the Academy Museum, tri-fold brochure outlining membership levels and benefits, membership sign-up form, return envelope, and personalized letter.

# RESULTS

TLC's integrated direct response programs for the Academy Museum were a resounding success.



Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Interior Rendering, David Geffen Theater ©Renzo Piano Building Workshop/©Academy Museum Foundation/Image from Cristiano Zaccaria



The Wizard of Oz gallery in Stories of Cinema, ©Academy Museum Foundation/Image by why architecture

The Founding Supporters Fundraising Acquisition and Reengagement Program exceeded all expectations and fundraising goals, achieving a whopping \$6.42 ROI. Meanwhile, the Charter Membership Acquisition Program performed exceptionally well, resulting in thousands of members prior to the Academy Museum opening. To date, the campaigns have grossed a \$2.11 ROI. And to top it off, both programs received multiple awards, including Communicator Awards and MAXI Awards.



**3 Awards**



**\$2.11 ROI**



Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Exterior Rendering ©Renzo Piano Building Workshop/©A.M.P.A.S./ Image from L'Autre Image

## **Are you ready to grow your membership, raise more funds, and increase your impact?**

Whether you're refreshing your membership program, ramping up fundraising, or generating support for a new exhibit, we can provide you with dynamic strategies that champion your cause.

Get in touch with our team of experts to begin crafting data-driven, creative, and cost-effective communications that are finely tuned to your audience.

[www.thelukenscompany.com](http://www.thelukenscompany.com)  
[info@thelukenscompany.com](mailto:info@thelukenscompany.com)

