

Orchestras Canada
Comparative Report - 2018-19 Season: Guide to Summaries

Each year, Orchestras Canada collects and collates financial and audience information from member orchestras and produces a detailed Comparative Report. The Report is shared among participating orchestras, and used for advocacy and ongoing research. The 2018/19 Comparative Report contains information from 71 orchestras, including all member orchestras with budgets over \$1.5 million, and almost all orchestras with budgets over \$50,000.

Summaries are created from the detailed information in the Comparative Report. These Summaries provide business snapshots of the Canadian orchestra industry in overview for the 2018-19 season. Information from all participating orchestras is consolidated in two ways: by budget size and by regions.

Percentages are calculated in two ways: 1) percentages based on the aggregate totals, and 2) “averages-of-percentages” using the individually calculated percentages for each of the 71 participating orchestras.

The “average-of-percentages” approach is useful when considering relatively small samples of organizations of disparate size and scope, especially in the Summary by Regions. Percentages based on the aggregate totals are useful when considering larger samplings. We do not make a judgment as to which approach is more valid. Indeed, we find both sets of percentages useful.

In the Summary by Regions, Ontario – with 37 responding orchestras – warrants sub-categorization. This is provided as supplemental information on page 3/3a, after the National Totals column.

We use “Cost per audience contact” (CPAC) calculations in the Summaries, at the bottom of each column. We commend this calculation tool to participants who may wish to do additional comparative research on their own. CPAC is a simple calculation: total expenses divided by total audience. This tool is useful for making a quick determination of an organization’s overall business efficiency relative to its budgetary neighbours. Like golf: lower is better.

Compared to 2017-18, 2018-19 was another good season financially, with one important qualification. While budgets and performance numbers grew, the year-to-year audience number slipped by almost 70,000. As a consequence the Cost per Audience Contact rose by almost \$5.00.

	2017-18 (71 orchestras)	2018-19 (71 orchestras)	Change year-to-year
Total revenue	\$ 210,365,000	\$ 218,333,000	3.8%
Total expenses	\$ 206,393,000	\$ 214,971,000	4.2%
Surplus/(Deficit) on season	\$ 3,712,000	\$ 3,362,000	
Net Assets at Year End	(\$ 1,959,000)	\$ 1,035,000	*NB (below)
Total performances	3,620	3,798	4.9%
Total audiences	2,848,578	2,778,744	- 2.5%
Cost per audience contact\$	72.45	\$ 77.36	6.8% slippage

*NB Net Assets at Year End (formerly known as Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit)): For the first time in our collective memory, this is not a negative number; something to smile about across the whole orchestral community.

Every effort has been made to produce these Summaries using straightforward, factual information and commonly accepted definitions, avoiding subjective judgments as much as possible. The accuracy of the Summaries is dependent primarily on the accuracy of information provided by the 71 participating orchestras, followed by our accurate transfer of information to the master spreadsheets. If significant errors in these Summaries are noticed, we would appreciate knowing.

Respectfully submitted
 C. Stephen Smith (Statistician, Orchestras Canada)
 22 January 2018