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## Arts reaching out to young crowds

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Arts organizations want to attract young audiences and are looking for ways to reach them.

The Next Audiences Summit at the Conrad Hotel on Friday and Saturday was a big step in finding those ways. This first-time event attracted about 180 people from 14 states.

National speakers included Attach Design founder Steve Tyink, Starbucks brand strategy and global insights director Steve Seto and Next Generation Consulting CEO Rebecca Ryan.

Ryan first teamed up with the Indianapolis Arts Council in 2005 for a \$125,000 research initiative to help local arts organizations pinpoint ways to appeal to people younger than 40. In February 2006, Next Generation Consulting produced a 41-page report.

A panel of six Indianapolis arts community representatives shared techniques they've implemented since then.

Josh Ligenfelter, electronic media manager for Clowes Hall, discussed how Clowes is using MySpace to connect with younger patrons. Meg Liffick, communications manager for the Indianapolis Museum of Arts, spoke of the IMA's new YouTube channel.

Molly Foley, Next Generation's lead consultant for young professional services, and Molly Chavers, executive director of the local young professional organizations Indy Hub, also addressed the audience, discussing the benefits of partnerships between arts organizations and young professional groups.

Chavers was impressed by the summit, particularly the contributions of local participants.

"It shows that Indianapolis has a dynamic arts community that I think a lot of people take for granted," she said. "We have a tendency as Hoosiers to be a little humble, but we are drawing people from across the country here to learn how we have taken the steps to do things better."

Laura Brooks Bright, a 27-year-old marketing and public relations manager for Birmingham Botanical Gardens in Alabama, was among those attending from out of state.

"The summit has exceeded my expectations exponentially," she said. "Just look at my 27 pages of notes. There are things here I can immediately implement."

Tamara Winfrey Harris, director of communications and marketing for the Eiteljorg Museum, enjoyed hearing from leaders from international companies.

"The Eiteljorg is certainly not Starbucks," she said. "But it's great to take these big ideas from a multinational company and bring it down to a micro level for our organization."

Harris added that the summit is an indication of Indianapolis' emergence as a city on the cutting edge of arts marketing.

"We are being held up as an example," she said. "I think that's important for Indianapolis. People are recognizing how big we are becoming as an arts location."