The Other 65 Percent:
How to Engage Next Audiences in the Five Phases of the Patron Experience

April 7, 2009

Next Generation Consulting

Prepared for the Arts Council of Indianapolis by Morti and Rebecca Ryan
April 7, 2009

Dear Greg Charleston and the Arts Council of Indianapolis:

Thank you for the continued support and privilege to work with the arts community in Indianapolis. Since our work together began in 2005, we have enjoyed the opportunity to build relationships with our clients, the arts organizations’ and Arts Council’s staff and board members, and their patrons. None of this would be possible without the continued support of our funders, the Lilly Endowment.

The following report includes Phase three research and continues to build upon previous research in Indianapolis.

Phase one research findings provided the three drivers of engagement for next audiences – Learning – Sensing – Connecting.

Phase two of the research demonstrated that when considering a paid arts and culture event or experience in its entirety, only about 35 percent is spent enjoying the artistic experience itself. The majority of patrons’ time is spent at four other phases of the patron experience: gathering information; committing to attend; getting to the venue; and exiting and aftershow. These four phases – or “touch points” – are often invisible to arts organizations’ boards of directors, leaders, and creatives, yet each phase provides valuable opportunities to offer next generation patrons additional experiences that are proven to engage them: learning, connecting and sensing.

This report summarizes four workshops facilitated by Marti and Rebecca Ryan at the Arts Council of Indianapolis on May 8–9 and August 21–22, 2008, and one workshop facilitated by Sarah Robbins that focused on Web 2.0 and Social Networking on January 20, 2009.

The workshops focused on each of the touch points of the patron experience, and provided forums to discuss and share best practices to engage patrons of all ages throughout the entire five-phase process.

Respectfully yours,

Rebecca Ryan
Next Generation Consulting

Marti
Next Generation Consulting
CONTENTS

Why we need to develop next audiences ................................................................. 4  
   Demographics in Indianapolis ............................................................................. 4  
   US Demographics ............................................................................................. 5  

How the Five Phases were identified and measured ............................................ 6  

Phase 1: Gathering Information ............................................................................. 8  
   Overview .................................................................................................................. 8  
   Best Practices ......................................................................................................... 8  
   Q&A .......................................................................................................................... 8  
   Resources ............................................................................................................... 9  

Phase 2: Committing to Attend ............................................................................. 10  
   Overview ................................................................................................................ 10  
   Best Practices ....................................................................................................... 10  
   Q&A ........................................................................................................................ 10  
   Resources .............................................................................................................. 12  

Phase 3: Getting to the Venue .............................................................................. 13  
   Overview ................................................................................................................ 13  
   Best Practices ....................................................................................................... 13  

Phase 4: The Art Experience Itself ...................................................................... 14  
   Overview ................................................................................................................ 14  
   Best Practices ....................................................................................................... 15  
   Q&A ........................................................................................................................ 15  
   Resources .............................................................................................................. 16  

Phase 5: Exit and Aftershow .............................................................................. 17  
   Overview ................................................................................................................. 17  
   Best Practices ....................................................................................................... 17  
   Q&A ........................................................................................................................ 18  
   Resources .............................................................................................................. 19  

The Future ............................................................................................................. 20  

About Next Generation Consulting ..................................................................... 22
Why We Need to Develop Next Generation Patrons

Demographics of Indianapolis

In 2006, the Indianapolis arts community recognized that its audiences were aging, and joined together to address the issue of developing new and younger audiences. In Indianapolis - and throughout the United States, Canada and Europe - arts audiences are aging. According to some estimates, the average age of an arts patron in the U.S. is 52 years old, and inching higher.

Further, while the average arts patron in Indianapolis is aging, the region continues to grow and its demographic profile is shifting as follows:

- Between 2003 and 2007, the overall growth rate of the Indianapolis region was 5.9%, making it one of the few United States metro regions with a positive growth rate. From 1990-2000, ninety percent of US metros with populations over 100,000 shrank, while Indianapolis has grown. This indicates a growth in the number of potential patrons arts organizations may develop.

- Indianapolis has had a significant inflow of both domestic (8,592) and international (2,758) migration from 2006 to 2007. As new residents - especially those in knowledge professions who expect diverse and stimulating creative experiences - move to Indianapolis, it's important to expose them to the areas' diverse arts and cultural offerings. Ensuring that creative workers have a strong first impression of a community is one way to retain them to the region.

- Indianapolis' overall diversity is increasing. From 2000 - 2006, every ethnic group measured by the U.S. census has increased in size. (See Table 1 below.)

- The region's median age continues to creep up. In 2000, the region's median age was 34.6; in 2006 it was 35.1, indicating that Baby Boomers probably outnumber Gen X-ers and Millennials.
Table 1: Indianapolis MSA shifts 2000 to 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indianapolis Metro Area 2006</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Change from 2000</th>
<th>% Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Races</td>
<td>1,665,032</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,365,565</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>244,920</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>28,952</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>4,635</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian &amp; Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>20,106</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>72,879</td>
<td>72.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>1,593,153</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

US Demographics

According to US Census data the median age in the US was 35.3 yrs old in 2000, the (estimated) median age was 35.9 yrs old in 2002, and the (estimated) median age was 36.4 yrs old in 2006. The median age has been increasing, but not at the same rate as the median age of arts audiences.

Sunil Iyengar, the National Endowment for the Arts' Director of Research, reports that in 1982, the average age of those attending a classical music performance was 40; in 2002, it was 49. "True," Iyengar adds, "the median age of the general population is creeping up as well: It was 40 in 1982 and had reached 45 by 2002." Still, that average is not increasing as fast as the age of the performing arts audience. "You are not seeing a 1-to-1 ratio," Iyengar says. "Even in jazz, that typically has the lowest median audience age of all the art forms -- in 1982, the median age was 29, and in 2002 it was 43."

According to the 2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts by the NEA, opera audiences are among the oldest with one-third at 55 years or older. The core audience for live classical music is 44 to 54 years of age. People ages 35 to 44 are more likely to see live jazz than any other age group. And, the core audience for musical plays is 35 to 64 years of age.

"The median age of persons attending an opera over the past two decades dropped from 45 to 44 years of age, the only arts audience to have a decline in median age, while also experiencing an increase in audience size." Bioarsky, Carolyn. This is Not Our Fathers' Generation: Web Pages, the Chicago Lyric Opera, and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

To learn more about demographic shifts in arts audiences:

2002 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts
http://www.nea.gov/research/ResearchReports_chrono.html

The Ageless Audience:
How the Five Phases were Identified and Measured

This report builds on three years of research in Indianapolis studying patronage patterns and preferences of next generation audiences, those aged 20-40.

In 2006, NGC studied the patronage preferences and trends of 20-40 year olds in Indianapolis and learned that the next generation is attracted by more than the art itself. The next generation prefers arts and cultural experiences that also include one or more of the following three drivers of engagement: Learning, Connecting, and Sensing.

In 2007, NGC extended its research to include Patron Audits, in which a team of local 20-40 year-old volunteers were trained to use NGC's *Patron Experience Audit Tool* and asked to attend their choice of arts or cultural events at 14 participating organizations. The audits measured the patron experience at all five phases (shown below), indicated the organizations’ “promotability,” and revealed key areas of improvement for the 14 volunteer organizations.

The five phases of the entire patron experience as identified in Phase 2 research are as follows: 1. Information Gathering: Before the Purchasing Decision is Made, 2. Committing to Attend: Purchasing Tickets and Scheduling, 3. Getting to the Event/Venue: Approaching the Building/Venue and Interior Space, 4. Venue Arts Experience: The Art Itself, 5. The Exit and What Happens Afterwards.

Table 2: Patron Experience by % of Total Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I: Information Gathering</th>
<th>Phase II: Committing</th>
<th>Phase III: Arriving</th>
<th>Phase IV: Venue and Art Experience</th>
<th>Phase V: Post Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Read more about “Promotability” on page 17, “Net Promoter Score.”
In Table 2, the pie graph shows that Phase 4 equals about 35% of the experience, while the remaining 65% of the experience represents the phases that are often overlooked. The other 65 percent of the experience offers some unique opportunities for arts organizations and their venues to offer enhancements and added value.

To Learn More:

Sources for more information on Indianapolis demographics

http://www.stats.indiana.edu/profiles/prmetro26900.html
http://factfinder.census.gov/
http://www.bea.gov/
http://www.census.gov/
Phase I: Information Gathering

Overview

When an arts patron begins to gather information about your organization, their experience begins. During this phase, the goal is to provide an engaging, user-friendly, and transparent experience that efficiently provides enough information to entice the customer to commit the date, time, and any costs to the event, exhibit, performance, or venue. The goal of this phase is to move a guest from "interest" to commitment.

Best Practices

Clowes Hall is using Google Analytics to track website visitors, advertising efforts, and the timing of each promotion as it relates to web traffic and ticket sales. Clowes Hall has recently started using Google Audio (Radio) Ads to both promote and track audio placements in a more timely and efficient manner than traditional audio spots. According to Clowes Hall ticket sales over the last 10 years, ticket sales reached an all-time high in the 2007-2008 season and the trend line is up for 2009.

Q & A

Q: What promotional activities, including cross-selling, are working?

A: There are several effective promotional activities. Some organizations reported using early-bird subscriptions and cross-selling collaborative events. Using co-branding generates more new users and a greater experience for which people are willing to pay more money. Another option is to solicit feedback from members. For example, The Children's Museum asked members for feedback about specific challenges, and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra randomly selected subscribers to respond online to questions.

Q: How are your patrons finding out about you?

A: A variety of sources such as: Indy Star-editorial, Indy.com, Indyarts.org, indymom.com, direct mail, newsletter, ICVA, Indy Star, Go-Fri, TV & radio, using distribution channels such as super markets, NUVO-Hard copy insert and online, GEO Targeting-iVillage, IBJ-Arts and Entertainment Weekly online and news, word of mouth-Google blog and alerts, MySpace, Facebook, radio Disney, Indyhub, YouTube video, podcasting, billboards, banners, yard signs, and the following print publications: Urban Times, The Word, The Recorder, Indy Woman, Indy Mother.

Q: What effective marketing efforts have you tried to engage a more diverse audience?

A: A variety of arts organization have tried cross marketing, more authentic programming, different messaging, where applicable added additional experiences such as, served tea as a
collaboration with TeasMe, the IRT has added Read The Play Group as an event specifically designed to make patrons feel comfortable, the ISO has added a Pit Party, and in general groups are offering exhibits more accessible to general public or low-impact users, site specific "pieces", ticket giveaways/comps, variable pricing, education programs, pay what you can or sliding scale, student quick tix: ½ price one hour before show

Q: How are you tracking your marketing efforts?

A: We track efforts daily, once a week, once a month or even less frequently by monitoring media. We also conduct audience surveys to measure historical comps by segment. We track box office vs. online sales, and we send web surveys via e-mail.

Q: What advice would you give to an arts/culture organization just starting out to be successful?

A: Provide video-show sneak peeks and demos. Tap into the resources of Indy Hub. Do community outreach and access community resources. Know the media contacts. Don’t take the product too seriously (more humor). Differentiate your organization; be innovative and unique. Make yourself accessible and invite the community. Know who you are, think about the market, and don’t be afraid to ask questions.

To Learn More

http://www.google.com/adwords/audioads/
Phase II: Committing to Attend

Overview

If Phase 1 is successful, patrons make a commitment to attend your event/venue. In Phase 2, patrons commit to buying tickets, and make a series of other arrangements (e.g. childcare, dining, and transportation) that facilitate their attendance.

Best Practices

The Indianapolis Repertory Theatre leverages their phone-based customer service representatives by providing adaptability to subscribers and group sales. They accommodate scheduling needs by allowing patrons to change dates/times of tickets as patrons’ schedules and plans change. They also make outbound calls to their subscription base for last-minute remaining tickets, offering the perception of high touch, high quality customer service.

Clowes Hall provides convenient PDA calendar syncing that helps patrons with their calendaring by easily updating their devices with new information.

Q & A

Q: How are tickets being sold other than phone and box office?

A: Some examples are Ticketmaster, Kroger, and E-Tapestry (now Blackbaud).

Q: How are you communicating added fees to your patrons? What’s working and what’s not?

A: Roll the fee into the ticket, and tell patrons “no fees.” Try to negotiate Ticketmaster fees for deals, determine if/when fees need to be explicit, explain to patrons how to avoid fees by purchasing at the box office, and/or offer a print-at-home option for $1.25 fee.

Q: What percent of your tickets are originating from phone/box office vs. web?

A: For most organizations it varies from show to show, but the following provide guidelines: Clowes 50/50 with concerts at 80% via web; IRT 50/50; Civic 60/40; and the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis just added web ticketing, which is at 25% and increasing. Overall arts organizations are experiencing more web based ticket sales.

Q: What are the trend lines for each and why?

A: The perceived value and flexibility of offering subscribers the ability to switch times for another show will continue to support phone/box office sales at the IRT. High levels of
customer service, such as proactive calls to subscribers if there are tickets left, will also continue to support phone/box office sales. The IMA is seeing an increase in web sales due to spikes for big shows, increases in online shopping, and adding online renewal of memberships. Ticketmaster allows pick-up at any Ticketmaster ticket center, which adds a level of convenience for web sales using Ticketmaster. Theater Manager system links box office and web ticketing, which offers the best available seating; this is also supporting an increase in ticket sales. Using the web to put “on sale” dates and times for big names can create urgency and provide calls to action for web sales.

Q: What are some examples of collaborations of audience development initiatives that are working?

A: Collaborations focus on single ticket buyers primarily. Here’s a list of examples that were shared that include both those focused on younger audiences and new audiences of all ages:

- DK-IRT have a shared venue and box office, and together have used signage to increase downtown presence, extend the season, and adjust staff salaries.
- Butler provides offices to several organizations.
- The ISO/DK/Clowes conducted a collaborative marketing and performance.
- ISO+10 offered a subscription bonus at Clowes,
- ISO+ Live Nation and video games live;
- White River State Park has a created a marketing pool between Eiteljorg and Kroger;
- Passport ticket brought 5 organizations together with Indyhub;
- The Children’s Museum and the Zoo collaborate with local hotels;
- Civic and Marion College,
- IMA and several music organizations do regional marketing buys,
- Free Night of Theater,
- IMA and History Center, Music Crossroads, and ongoing outreach in the schools.

Understanding Web Analytics

The focus of using web analytics is to make data driven business decisions. Web analytics are not simply click-stream, rather another means to listen to website visitors. Using analytics we can find out why visitors do the things they do and what their motivation is for engaging with our website. The purpose of creating goals based on a conversion funnel is to move your visitors through 4 stages - awareness, interest, consideration, and purchase.

The following 4 Steps provide guidance for creating successful web analytics:

1. Defining Business Metrics or Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s)
2. Reporting - Who needs the data? How can they leverage it? How often do they need it? In what form should it be delivered?
3. Analysis - understand why people are behaving the way they are on your website
4. Optimization and Action - take action based on the analysis

The marketing team at your organization needs to add time to spend on web analytics and might think about dividing time among the following areas:

- Reporting 20%
- Analysis 20%
- Understanding on-site customer experience 20%
- Staying plugged into current happenings 20%
- Exploring new strategic options 10% - experimentation

Top 5 Questions to ask of your site search data:

1. How frequently do visitors use my search box and what are they looking for?
2. Where do people begin searches and what do they find?
3. Are visitors satisfied with what they find?
4. How do different groups of visitors search my site?
5. What business outcomes result from visitors searching my site?

**To Learn More**

Google analytics is a free tool that many organizations are using – see the following for more information [http://www.google.com/analytics/](http://www.google.com/analytics/)

To learn more about web analytics, the following books are highly recommended:

*Web Analytics: An Hour a Day* by Avinash Kaushik
*Actionable Web Analytics* by Jason Burby and Shane Atchison
Phase 3: Getting to the Event/Venue

Overview

Getting to the Event/Venue – How can we improve the patron experience, as people are making their way to our event using all types of transportation? Poor directions, road construction, lack of parking, public transportation challenges, and illegible – or no – signage can make for misery before your patrons even get to you.

Best Practices

Here are a few examples of websites that clearly outline directions, maps, and transportation options:

The Portland Art Museum offers a travel planner and several public transit options: http://www.portlandartmuseum.org/visit/travel/

Best practices for accessibility address the following list of challenges some patrons may be presented with during their visit: elevators, parking, building accessibility, maps of the building including where restrooms and handicap accessible restrooms are located, sign language options, magnifying glasses, childcare, amplified headsets, and use of guide and service dogs.

Accessibility best practices:
http://www.ateneum.fi/default.asp?docid=11937
http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/visit_access_detail.asp?accessID=1
http://www.getty.edu/visit/access.html
Phase 4: The Art Experience Itself

Overview

The art itself is a major part of the experience but so too are the surroundings, the ambiance of the space, other patrons, customer service representatives, and concessions. How can we provide patrons with a positive, memorable experience that keeps them coming back?

A significant piece of research was just published by the Heinz Endowments titled: Arts Project Brief: Arts Experiences Initiative and was shared and discussed with workshop participants.

Summary of the Arts Experience Initiative:

The report focuses on how to engage patrons in the arts experience and suggests that "the audience member must possess two qualities: the authority to participate in the process of co-authoring meaning and the tools to do so effectively. They want the opportunity to participate, in an intelligent and responsible way, in telling the meaning of an arts event."

Some think that sometime during the 20th century the "high" arts lost touch with popular audiences. The Arts Experience Initiative argues that the "arts experience" has changed and is what has caused people to stop coming to arts events.

What today's potential arts audiences most want from an arts event is to be able to co-author meaning.

Before the 20th century, an art event was often experienced as a community and audiences of all economic classes were expected to participate before, during, and after the performance. This is because the function of interpretation was seen as a duty.

Historians think the passivity of 20th century audiences happened in part because of the invention of the incandescent lamp. This allowed for the attention to always be on the stage and not the audience. As audiences moved into the dark, they then became quiet observers instead of talking and discussing the art. As the fine arts became more removed from popular culture, orchestras, fine arts museums, and opera houses led the way in instilling the view that the fine arts needed to be enjoyed with awe, respect, and silence.

The Arts Experience Initiative is a laboratory where grantees evaluate their programs on a regular basis, and seek advice from their audiences. Audiences crave experiences, not an event. They want to create and think during the experience. The AEI thinks that the most important part of the arts experience is before and after the show where audiences are invited to formulate and express an opinion in a public context.

Practices that are particularly effective in stimulating audience participation in the arts:
• The Value of the Shared Experience: audience centered programming committed to the notion of co-authorship; adults, not just children want to learn through the arts
• The Importance of Talking: people like events where they get to speak (blogs, q & a)
• The Necessity of Effective Mediation/Facilitation
• The Impact of the Programming Environment (small vs. big groups, backstage looks, etc.)
• The Importance of Layered Enrichment (Enrichment appealing to all 5 senses)

Best Practices from the AEI Report

The Pittsburgh Symphony uses a screen mounted on the side of the proscenium to display “factoids” of information about the music, conductor, composer, the hall, and upcoming events. They also send text messages between pieces, during intermissions and before the concert, but not while the music is playing. The orchestra staff sought audience feedback consistently during the two-year experiment, and the surprising result was that it was most appreciated by older, more established patrons.

The Quantum Theater board members invite subscribers and single-ticket buyers to their homes for a circle of discussion about the company’s work. A surprising finding of this experiment has been that board members appreciate these opportunities to share their own impressions, both positive and negative, just as much as the guests do. This AEI project puts board members in a position of responsibility in terms of facilitating meaningful conversation, which in turn empowers them as audience members and organizational leaders.

The Society for Contemporary Craft had visitors use their cell phones to call a number and access a series of recorded messages relating to the exhibit, from a traditional audio guide of the show to messages from the artists. Visitors can also share their reactions by recording messages to curators and artists. In ways such as this, the AEI project invites contemporary communication technology into the museum space, thus opening up new possibilities for a style of co-authoring that is more comfortable and accessible to younger audiences.

Q & A

This report contains several insights into engaging audiences using the Learning, Sensing, and Connecting drivers of engagement and provides twelve examples that brought a lively discussion of new ideas for the workshop participants. From our discussion came the following ideas that may be worth exploring further:

• Use street level windows for performances to gain awareness and interest
• Ask for input/feedback via email, phone, text messaging, and live chats to create relationships

Prepared for the Arts Council of Indianapolis
- Photo kiosks/booths to take photos and email to friends
- Post performance talk backs in the same space to prevent losing people while moving to another location
- Video screens used to enhance the experience by providing close-ups

To Learn More
Phase 5: Exit and Aftershow.

Overview

When the curtain falls or patrons leave your space there’s still time to extend the experience. Simply holding the doors and thanking patrons for attending is an often overlooked touch. Providing talk-backs and suggested questions for discussions can extend the experience only if they are well crafted.

Most arts organizations never really know what patrons think about the exhibit, performance or venue and struggle with survey questions and soliciting feedback in various formats.

Best Practices

NGC highly recommends that arts/culture organizations begin using the Net Promoter Score to solicit feedback from patrons using either a web based survey, a hard copy survey or wristband, or random phone surveys to determine their scores.

Research by Fred Reichheld, author of The Ultimate Question shows that organizations with high loyalty and high NPS scores have sustained, long-term profits. The Net Promoter Score concept is based on one single question: “How likely is it that you would recommend this event/organization to a friend or colleague?” (scale of 0 to 10)

The score is calculated based on the % of Promoters - % of Detractors. Organizations with high loyalty and profit have NPS scores between 50 – 100%.

To take the concept of promoters one step further we examined the differences between promoters, detractors, initiators and responders based on Alan Brown’s research, Initiators & Responders: Leveraging Social Context to Build Audiences by Alan Brown; http://www.wolfbrown.com/index.php?page=resources

Promoters (score 9-10) are loyal enthusiasts who will keep buying and refer others, fueling growth.

Passives (score 7-8) are satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are vulnerable to competitive offerings.

Detractors (score 0-6) are unhappy customers who can damage your brand and impede growth through negative word-of-mouth.

Initiators are hopefully promoters who invite others to your event. Being able to identify initiators to make them promoters should be a focus of most arts organizations marketing staff. A responder is most likely the one who awaits an invitation and can be either a promoter or detractor.
Here's some ways to increase your NPS scores:

- Design a complete patron experience that offers learning, sensing, and connecting
- Deliver the experience from beginning to end
- Renew and reinvent the experience over time
- Prevent negative word of mouth
- Let your promoters do your advertising for you
- Hold focus groups with patrons
- Use surveys for feedback loop w/ 3rd party collection

Q & A

Q: How do you prevent negative word of mouth?

A: Turn around negative situations into positives in a timely manner; think through potentially negatively perceived situations and provide solutions and/or fix the problems as they arise; empower CSR’s to problem solve with genuine/real empathy and concern; make sure that the problems are resolved before the experience ends; listen, restate the problem and apologize so they know you understand and that they have been understood

Q: Who are the initiators? Where might you find them?

A: Those who forward emails to others, donors, a person buying large blocks of tickets, board members, if you merged email lists with several organizations the overlap might provide a list of initiators, staff, volunteers, patrons who attend special events, corporate sponsors professional organizations – i.e. Indy Hub, the artists themselves, media

Tools to help the initiators be promoters:

- Forward to a friend/invite more friends and links to services
- PDA syncing capabilities
- Clear communications to them asking for their help and/or next actions
- Special treatment – back stage pass, receptions, script before performance, meet the artist, rehearsal invites
- Editable PDF’s to create their own invites/e-cards
- Point of purchase links to services and ability to invite others
- Merchant item purchases pre-show – i.e. sell t-shirts at ticket purchase to promote the show and where to the show
- Subscriber referral program – dinner at Puck’s
- Reserve a large block of tickets w/o financial responsibility – i.e. hotel room blocks
- Pit party in the pit – name of the event is accessible
- Be flexible and address the roadblocks
- Provide a great first time experience like restaurants are doing
o Special occasion identification – birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
o Follow-up via email, phone or text
o Phone survey using phone keys or voice mail messages

Another post event activity that arts/culture organizations should consider is an after action review to reflect on the learning. This should be incorporated in your project planning process after all of the data is available and within 4 weeks of the event to capitalize on the learning and allow flexibility to make changes appropriately the next time.

NGC proposes the following questions as a place to begin in creating a review process.

1. What are our intended results and measures?
2. What challenges can we anticipate?
3. What can we do to overcome or eliminate potential challenges?
4. What have we or others learned from similar situations?
5. What will make us more successful next time?

To Learn More:

For more information on NPS:

How to calculate your NPS score: http://www.netpromoter.com/site/np/calculate.jsp

NPS Article link:
http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/content/sep2006/db20060925_265221.htm

Together we created a survey as an example of soliciting patrons feedback and providing initiators with the tools they want/need to be promoters. To preview the survey:
Workshop #5: The Future

For the fifth workshop we brought in an expert, Sarah "Intellagirl" Robbins. Robbins is a PhD candidate, consultant, blogger, and pink-haired uber-geek! Over the last few years, Sarah has helped dozens of schools and businesses learn to wrangle with what social media and virtual worlds have to offer. Her work has been featured in The New York Times, USA Today, and the Chronicle of Higher Education. She is the coauthor of Second Life for Dummies and dozens of articles.

Here's the Intella-Report:

Q: What is Web 2.0?

A: The big difference between 2.0 and its predecessor is that 2.0 is interactive, a two-way conversation rather than a one-way monologue. Web 2.0 includes "Push" technology, "Pull" technology, and "Connect" technology.

Here are ideas to use each.

"Push" technology - as its name implies - pushes your message out to the world. You dictate what gets said to the web-world, how it's said and when it's said. Your website, your blog, and your email campaigns are Push technology. If you're still not in control of when things show up on your website, Robbins warns you're a half-step behind. Any website can be developed using CMS (Content Management System) technology, which puts the ability to change, delete, or update your website in your hands. For starters, free blogging sites like Wordpress and Blogger use CMS and give users a healthy stable of web publishing and editing tools. SMS (Short Messaging Service, whose most popular form is text messaging) also allows you to "push" your information to patrons. The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra is using this currently SMS for promotion. Robbins likes SMS because it's personal; it delivers your message right to the pocket of the person you want to reach. She warns that SMS technology has a short shelf life; text messages will go away as more people buy smart phones. Mark Newman, Vice President of Marketing at the ISO suggests that all arts organizations make their website WAP (Wireless Application Protocol) enabled, so that patrons can buy tickets from your website using any device. Other push technologies include Flickr for images, YouTube for videos and Google Sites.

Intellagirl suggested that blogging is the best way for you to optimize your search terms, because search engines only review your website when there’s new content. The more frequently you blog using your key words, the more frequently the search engines will index your pages, and deliver the key word search terms you’re targeting.

“Pull” technology is used by patrons to gather the information they want, when they want, in the channels they want. Examples include RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feeds like those offered by most blogs.

“Connect” technology allows your patrons and guests to share their voice, with you and
each other. Blogs that allow reader comments are a simple example. This is where Web 2.0 gets interesting; people who aren’t on your payroll can talk with each other about your organization and its offerings. Intellagirl also recommends these technologies, and their uses:

- Use Delicious to keep all your bookmarks online (rather than on your personal computer), and to see how your organization is tagged. Great if you want to find out how others are describing your organization online.
- Use Ning to create your own social network. Great when you want a “closed” group to collaborate or connect, e.g. “30th Anniversary Planning Committee.” Not so great when you want to attract the most eyeballs; Facebook may still be better for this.
- Use Facebook to find groups closely aligned with yours, or create a Facebook group to create an online community for your organization. Important to post to these groups for the technology to be effective for you.
- Use Poll Everywhere like American Idol to gather votes through SMS technology. Embed your poll into a PowerPoint presentation, your blog or your website.
- Use Google Docs to collaborate on documents in real time on the web, and stop the madness of emailing a document back and forth.
- Use Twitter to leave short messages for those interested in what you’re doing. Great to drive interest and participation around an event or organization.
- Use PBWiki to collaborate in real time online.
- Sarah’s slides.

I asked Sarah at the end of her presentation, “How can an arts organization make the best use of these technologies?” She offered a three-point plan:

1. What demographic are you trying to reach, and which technologies are they already using?
2. What’s the conversion you’re aiming for, e.g. ticket sales, getting their mobile number, etc.?
3. What’s your timeline? Social networks like Facebook are best when used early in the process; Twitter and SMS technology are used well in urgent, or just-in-time situations.
About Next Generation Consulting

Next Generation Consulting (NGC) is dedicated to developing and engaging next generation patrons, aged 20–40. NGC has worked intensely with the Indianapolis arts community since 2006 to discover how to attract and engage next-gen patrons. NGC and the Arts Council of Indianapolis – with generous support from the Lilly Endowment – hosts the bi-annual Next Audiences Summit, the only forum dedicated to the subject of engaging next generation patrons.

For more information, please visit www.nextgenerationconsulting.com.