

REPORT

1st GO Group Workshop for Sustainable Festivals & Events on Energy and Audience Communication Amsterdam, 23-24 May 2011

The first GO Group workshop for **Sustainable Festivals & Events** took place on 23-24 May 2011 in Amsterdam with 35 participants representing festival and event promoters and further stakeholders from all over Europe. The discussions focussed on **energy** related issues on day 1 and effective **audience communication** on day 2. Find the **report** on the next pages.

23 May 2011, ID&T and ArenA Amsterdam

Chairs: Teresa Moore, Bucks University and Jacob Bilabel, Green Music Initiative

Introduction Session and Session on Energy Efficiency

The chairs Jacob and Teresa welcomed the participants, introduced the GO Group and presented the agenda, followed by a mutual introduction of the participants. Jacob made an input statement on the role of the music/entertainment industry in environmental protection. Carlijn Lindemulder from ID&T presented its extensive sustainability programme and Lucile Barras from GMI the Green Club Index, a project to promote energy efficiency in clubs. Finally, Linnéa Svensson from Oya festival presented Oya's experience with improving energy efficiency.

Session: Connecting to the grid I

Emma Barfod from Hafslund presented its experience of connecting the Oya festival to the grid: by connecting to the local electricity grid, they reached an 80% reduction of carbon emissions. Close cooperation with the municipality was at the centre stage. The security issue arose in the discussion: Security sinks drastically when a power cut happens: a crowd easily panics in the dark and stealing rises. The risk of focusing on only one source (one power line) instead of many generators was discussed. If there is a problem, who is responsible: the engineer or the promoter? The Oya festival's city location provides a secure enough grid where no backup is needed. In the countryside, however, the risk of blackouts raises and makes it necessary to have backup generators available. Depending on the available grid, countryside grids can be an option or not. The other risks remaining come mainly from wet cables on the site on rainy days, especially those feeding the shops. The shop managers and other electricity users need to respect the specific nature of electric current. Regarding the financial aspects, Oya had to invest in a new fixed transformation centre and new cables, and split costs with the municipality (the landowner). 200'000 EUR were spent in total, and should pay off in 5 years because of the resulting much lower energy bill. The electricity company Hafslund became the biggest sponsor for Oya. The project had a positive effect on the motivation of Hafslund employees.

Session: Greener generators I

Artur Mendes and Alfredo Vasconcelos from Boom festival presented their project "Your oil is music": 45000 l used vegetal oil resulted in 117.000 kg less carbon emissions. The project was conducted together with the municipality. A second hand biodiesel generator was adapted in order to run on with used vegetable oil from local suppliers. This is a very cheap, very useful, and highly interactive solution, widely used in Brazil for boats, cars etc. The solution is provided by Aggreko in Norway. Such social technologies are funded by the bank of Brazil, and were imported to Europe. 80% recycling of garbage by Egyptians instead of 20% by Portugal. Boom

Kindly co-hosted by

festival has the idea in mind to ask visitors to bring their old oil in 2012.

Session: Greener generators II

Rob Hutchinson from Innovation Power encouraged the participants to look beyond the stage, beyond the festival site. It is better to source generators locally instead of bringing them from far away: a small transport footprint can have a stronger effect than a slightly better technology. Older, mechanic generators (without injection system) can be transformed to bio-diesel generators. Here, there is a temperature issue and the filter needs to be changed. Rob thinks bio-diesel generators are useful especially where a lot of fuel is needed, but less useful for camping sites. A disadvantage to take note of is the smell of French fries.

In the discussion, several issues arouse:

On the cost side, national differences exist: bio-diesel in the Netherlands costs 1 EUR more than normal diesel. In UK, it sits in the middle between white and red diesel. In Norway, it is allowed to have only 50% biodiesel. The carbon footprint of bio-diesel from used oil is much better than the one of fresh nor fossil fuel.

An issue discussed was how to deal with the necessity of running a generator at a base load. Running them up and down is not possible and very risky. Rob's recommendation to keep on the site lightening to use the base load of generators (to avoid them punching in the air) was criticized by other participants as the wrong message to the visitors: the visibility of measures is of utmost importance for sensibilising the public.

New low-energy festival light bulbs will be tested this year in UK. LED flood lights are available, but still very expensive, but who else should drive the development of LED than live event promoters? At the Roskilde festival, generators are used for the stages, but not for lights on the camp site, which are running on the grid.

Session: Festivals unplugged: renewable energies on site

Julia Gudzent from the Melt! festival presented the solar roof project. The festival site Ferropolis acts as a playground for innovative renewable energies. There were a few challenges in achieving the installation of a roof covered with solar panels: 1. Getting the credit. The credit was finally provided by an environmental bank. 2. Getting the regional solar panel provider on board: Q-cells is a typical renewable energy company not used to sponsoring. It is thus generally speaking important to have a good concept and be open to the ideas of the partner. 3. Lack of availability of storage solutions for concentrated availability of the generated electricity during the peak loads of the festival. Peaks are used as base for calculating the price, thus a reduction of the peak is very important. Solar roof with an equity return of 5-8% in Germany can allow the promoter to make good money. Festivals are major electricity customers and can influence energy providers and help to turn them greener at the same time.

Session: Connecting to the grid II

Eric van Eerdenburg presented the Lowlands Event Power Galaxy: it is based on two star gates (energy transformers) and many stars (load points) in a circle of an underground HVDC (high voltage direct current) cable. Two backup generators are maintained for security reasons. It is an investment with a long-term view, possible thanks to the switch from a 3 years-lease of the festival grounds to a 10 years-lease. The cables are not expensive, but the licensing and the mobile transformers are. 103 generators are used today, generating 75ct/kWh power. The power from the grid costs 8ct/kWh.

- The greener the festival field, the harder it gets to green it. -

Kindly co-hosted by

24 May 2011, ArenA Amsterdam

Chairs: Linnéa Svensson, Oya Festival and Holger Jan Schmidt, Rheinkultur Festival

Introduction Session on Audience Communication

Holger and Linnéa started the programme of day 2 by sharing the Oya and Rheinkultur audience communication experience with the participants: Both festivals have set up a programme to systematically over-think environmental aspects of their activities.

The following discussion was structured around the media communication model by Harold Dwight Lasswell: we say **what (1) through which channel (2)** to the audience to catch attention/interest/decision/action with what **effect (3)**? The bold components were discussed as follows:

1) What: When formulating a message, it is important to form very clear messages, with a positive formulation instead of confusing, forbidding and pointing to dangers. Ex: "don't worry, this line moves very quickly" "clean up, kids are playing here".

The participants collected issues to be communicated to the audience:

- act responsible - behave like a human, just think - respect yourself and your surrounding - keep your festival clean - use public transport, don't bring your car, car pool - don't litter - drink tap water, don't waste water - minimize packaging - take your tent home - don't throw cigarette butts on the ground - eat organic, fair trade, local - don't bring your dog - recycle - save energy - don't piss in the stream/bushes, don't pollute the lake - let's all create an awesome experience together.

The issues were identified as: > mostly negative messages, which make sense for the organizer. But the messages need to be transformed to positive ones. > mostly messages needed on the festival site, but not very useful for changing their lifestyle: messages before the festival, during and after.

2) Channels: Multiple channels are available and can be used according to message: Ex: Online competition on audience communication of environmental issues (ex. of Rheinkultur). Internet, Mobile, Mail, Radio, PR, Ticketing...

3) Effect: The key question is how to avoid communication to be considered as greenwashing. Oya recommended to emphasize that it is a work in progress, that you do your best, and to be sure of the information sources. The usage of common brand signals was discussed, ex: Green'n clean from Yourope, Sound for Nature... Roskilde's experience is that such labels don't really matter for audience and sponsors. Boom doesn't put labels at forefront, rather transparency on the activities and the labels in the background. To guarantee the effect, it is more effective to communicate by example, by staying coherent. This however can be difficult with sponsors. Finally, the proposal was made that GO Group collect good practices of the visitors by an open source system and make a movie with best practice together.

Session on different countries, different systems, different people?

Different festivals attract different audiences. Ex: older generations have less a litter issue and mainly a transport choice issue, while younger generations rather come by public transport but generate a lot of litter.

Ideas were collected and discussed on how to communicate different issues: Generally speaking, it works better to inspire and make the message funny, create a story, make an emotional message, make people play: paint, play, touch, experience. Target the belly before the message goes to ones mind from inside rather than directly to the mind which is often less effective.

People are saturated by media: timing and credibility thus get very important. Create a strong

Kindly co-hosted by

wow! effect, do it in an attractive, beautiful way. For some participants, creating a wow-effect is not enough. The deep message must go through. Germans f. ex. are not very funny and creative, but they like efficiency. It's rather necessary to tell people how than why: show them better alternatives, and what's in for them. The campaign should never be more important than the effect. Here, some participants disagreed: it's sometimes very important to also raise awareness of the actions themselves to create an effect beyond the festival itself: create a better world, not just a better festival. Responsibility was also an issue discussed: CSR was criticized as an issue on which everybody is talking and playing with terms more than acting. The festival promoter should also be careful when trying to make the audience cooperate. The audience might react negatively and think "you polluted the last 40 years, now you want us to act responsibly??" It is thus better to first take the lead and improve the festival itself before inviting the audience to follow with own actions.

Workshop Session I - Communication before the event

At the workshops, the participants joined small discussion groups to allow even more interaction. Each group presented its results to the plenary at the end of each session.

Results:

- train people when building the site
- make a competition
- difficulty to reach the fans on ecological issues on Facebook: idea: connect several festivals and use the artist to communicate and attract the attention of fans
- make an application on Facebook on contribution ideas from the fans
- online questionnaire on environmental footprint guesses with price (ex: free breakfast)
- educational before the festival, practical during
- find volunteers for trash heroes before the festival
- timing: start with environmental issues before communicating the program
- questionnaire with dwarf accessories filled by 60'000 people

Workshop Session I - Communication during the event

Results:

- interactive activity plus informative board next
- involve not only audience, but also stakeholders and the artists
- visualize and translate the effect of measures, ex. transparent recycling bins
- use green technologies
- make solutions very easy to use
- use screens as best multipliers (in concurrence with security and sponsors)
- moderators between the shows talk on these issues
- use humor, positive emotions
- Glastonbury potatoe tent picks: didn't work, but rose the awareness of the problem
- performance around the toilets
- pee trees: urinoirs on trees
- green/fair trade breakfast
- raise donations for your projects
- artsy flashcards on internet
- recyclomat: like a pinball machine for recycling
- offer a funny target for throwing away your trash
- trash slogan competition with small prizes

Kindly co-hosted by

Session on Roskilde's Green Footsteps

Marie Rogvi from the Roskilde festival presented their environmental strategy. Its target is to achieve a min. 25% CO2 reduction until 2020 compared to 2008. This means 314 t CO2 in 2008 from scope 1&2, and a larger amount from scope 3 activities. Key motto: visibility, simplicity, fun. Strategy: involve locals, keep relevant and relatable.

Workshop Session I - Communication after the event

Results:

- how to keep the message in the heads of the people?
- green activities: to be separate from the rest or mixed up?
- integrate green questions in the audience surveys
- videos, competitions etc. after the festival
- iconic, bright, cool green
- green spots between the bands
- difficulty to measure the success of a measure
- publish documentation of garbage and of audience doing green actions
- create a virtual community
- statistics and summary in the press on the website
- donations to charities
- party for crew

Extra Session

Jacob showed the short movie of crazy people dancing on a hill. The movie shows how a single crazy guy can start a trend by taking the lead (make a whole crowd dance on a hill). The audience of the GO group participants comprehends 3 million people. If each one teaches one, we can reach 6 million people and then even more.

Feedback round

The 1st GO Group workshop was closed with a feedback round. Beyond general satisfaction with the workshop, following special comments were made:

- French-Spanish meeting taking place next week
- GO Group should go to Brazil to live sustainable event experience and visit that school
- Invitation to have another GO Group take place in Portugal
- Wish to get to know other participants earlier by receiving infos on each other earlier
- Invitation of the participants to the Green Melt! Dinner
- Input from external participants (not representing festival and event promoters) were very valuable
- Following the workshop, the challenge remains of how to pick up the inspiring ideas from the other festivals
- Challenges faced by clubs are similar to those of festivals

- Music makes people do things they wouldn't otherwise do -

Report written by Lucile Barras, Green Music Initiative.

Contact: barras@thema1.de or +49 30 779 0 779 14.