

REPORT

2nd GO Group Workshop on Festival and Event Sustainability

Sziget Festival office

Budapest, 23-24 April 2012

The second GO Group workshop on **Festival and Event Sustainability** took place on 23 – 24 April 2012 in Budapest with 31 participants representing festival and event promoters and further stakeholders from all over Europe. The sessions focussed on communication, green catering solutions, economic impact of mayor events, green international standards and case studies. Working groups on Basics (Teresa Moore) and Stakeholder Involvement (Holger Schmidt) completed the conference on day 2.

Program

Day 1, 23 April 2012

Welcome & First round up, introduction, collection of topics of interest

[Great examples & good practise](#) | Holger Schmidt & Jacob Bilabel

[Case study: Sziget Festival](#) | Fruzsina Szep

[Case study: Roskilde “Green Footsteps”](#) | Marie A. Rogvi

[Communication & case study: RhEINKULTUR “GreenRocks”](#) | Holger Jan Schmidt

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[Green international standards \(ISO 20121 et al.\)](#) | Lucile Barras

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[Green catering solutions](#) | Lucile Barras

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Group Workshop 1: **Basics** | Theresa Moore

Group Workshop 2: **Stakeholder Involvement** | Holger Schmidt

Day 1, 23 April 2012

Chairs: Teresa Moore, Bucks University, UK, Holger Jan Schmidt, GreenEvents Europe Conference, DE & Yourone

Introductory session by Holger Schmidt

Welcome & First round up, introduction, collection of topics of interest etc.

The chairs Holger and Teresa welcomed the participants, as did Fruzsina Szép for the organizers. Holger then introduced the GO Group and presented the agenda. A mutual introduction of the participants followed who were newcomers from all over Europe but also experts in the field. They were expecting creative new ideas, inputs and good discussions of best and worst practice on e.g. management of offsite transport, waste, water, and energy, on green catering solutions, communication between festivals and venues as well as on contract, legal and budget related issues. A common concern was how to get festival visitors and sponsors engaged in green ideas. Many of these topics were actually discussed in Budapest either in the sessions or during the two working groups on day 2 on Basics and Stakeholder Involvement Some other topics will be the subject of future GO group workshops.

Session: “Great examples & good practise” by Holger Schmidt

Holger presented different approaches to deal with the problems of waste, energy, mobility, camping, resource management, and communication. He pointed to innovative ideas that were backed up by participants’ own experiences.

Open Air St. Gallen, Switzerland:

To 'upgrade' the waste people on their festival they invented "Trash heroes" a joint project with the sponsor MIGROS.

Øya, Oslo, Norway:

Øya to the grid. The good cooperation with the city of Oslo and sponsors in media coverage, energy and water supply resulted in the city of Oslo, e.g., investing 150,000€ into power supply of Øya.

Pure Festival Energy: <http://vimeo.com/20055528>

Melt!, Germany:

As mobility accounted for 40% of CO2 emissions at Melt!, the festival organizers rented a hotel/night train from Cologne to the festival site Dessau/Ferropolis where a station is available. They also apply discriminative parking fees according to the number of people in the car.

Roskilde, Denmark:

RK organizes 40km bike tours where about 200 people participate to experience how cosy transportation can be. Cyclists can also have their bikes fixed during the tour at portable repair shops.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZ2nvuvlOwE>

Love-your-tent, UK:

left behind tents are a europe wide problem for festival organizers. The numbers are increasing and the audience establish a habit that causes problems, waste and costs. The UK-based Love-your-tent initiative raises awareness for the issue and offers a nice incentive for people taking their stuff home.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oydOg97mHaM> AFG clip

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Px6qfsRXv2w> AFG and SfN-clip (german subtitles)

vimeo.com/36763390 LYT-animated clip

Glastonbury tent pegs, UK:

The 16,000 tents at Glastonbury festival provide a big waste problem as a huge number of them are left behind after the festival. Moreover, the metal pegs are a problem not only for the farmers who use the land during the year but also for animals.

BOOM festival, Portugal:

BOOM is a Lab for innovative resource management by using used vegetable oil for producing energy. Your oil is music.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bjubF37jEU>

Tollwood festival, Germany:

95% of all food served on the festival is organic (35 tons). In the beginning much time and effort was spent on the organization, but things go smoother now.

Mysteryland, The Netherlands:

Volunteer Day: People can work during the volunteer day on re-cultivation. By working there they get connected to the venue and are more likely to be aware of environmental issues.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=91MT1Gx7b9E

Sounds For Nature & NaturWatt, Germany

... initiated the GREEN SPOTS video competition. The best 3 videos will be awarded up to 1,000 Euro.

Holger also pointed to the 3rd GO group workshop that will last for 2 days at the Boom Festival (28.7. - 4.8.2012). Here practical on-site information on Water Treatment, Transports, Sanitation (Compostable Toilets and composting food), Energy, Bio-Construction and Permaculture and Waste management will be given. (Unfortunately it was not possible to fix the workshop due to the festival's workload. There will be a southern european GO group workshop hosted by Boom asap)

Moreover, the 3rd GreenEvents Europe Conference – the International Conference for Sustainability in the Live Music and Event Industry – will take place on 5 & 6 Nov 2012, in Bonn, Germany

Session: case study: Sziget Festival by Fruzsina Szép

Fruzsina reported on Sziget Festival which is one of the biggest open-air festivals in Europe. It is a multicultural event with more than 385.000 visitors in 2011. Sziget received „The Green Festival” award by the Hungarian Ministry of Environment and Water in 2009. This is due to Sziget’s remarkable efforts on creating awareness for environmental issues, waste management, (e.g. garbage toll, waste bags, selective and immediate waste collection, compostable pots at some places at the site), conscious usage of materials (e.g. LED-lights, steam-cooling), security, nature protection (e.g. penalty whenever someone – also sponsors – is violating the festival’s green rules; task force for handling dangerous situations in case of contamination/pollution by oil, gasoline, chemical materials), transport (CITYPASS, festival train from Amsterdam), water management (recycling of grey water).

Sziget aims at assisting other Hungarian festivals to develop consciousness for environmental issues and to show a good example to young Hungarians. Involving their commercial partners and sponsors into the environmental developments is a “mission impossible” at the moment.

Session: case study: Roskilde “Green Footsteps” by Marie A. Rogvi

Mari reported on Roskilde Festival (RF) which is a non-profit organization where 30,000 volunteers and 40 employees are involved in the festival organization and production. RF seeks to create awareness not only of environmental issues but also of the existence of green solutions. They provide opportunities for young people to create solutions. In 1996 RF got their own train station that is only used during RF. People can step out directly at the camping area which reduces transportation problems and CO2 emissions substantially.

Each year RF promotes well-sloganed activities which moves the audience because they are different from what the audience normally does. Activities involve GREEN FOOTSTEPS – SMALL STEPS, BIG IMPACT (people can charge e.g. their mobile on it the bikes being rebuilt from old city bikes), Green Bootcamp (people can stay in an area provided with twice as many garbage cans as everywhere else and free carbon neutral showers when taking at least 3 green footsteps before the festival like green actions, making a vegetarian meal, changing to a green power-company, throw a carbon neutral party, make a cool design for a GoCard with the green message), green catering (food stands provide at least one vegetarian meal), have people do something together instead of doing something alone (waste lottery, tennis camp).

RF starts implementing their green ideas in an experimental testing area (the Sustainable Stage) to find out how they can be spread to the rest of the festival system. Examples involve more eco and vegetarian food, small windmills, installations of trash, LED-lights (the Sustainable Stage uses 100% uses LED-lights now and is the first rock stage in Denmark with 100 % LED). RF even funded the development of front lights in LED as none existed at that time. Thus, RF saved 70% of energy compared to 2008. The profit from RF is used to support charitable projects. Next festival’s focus will be on Urban gardening, Waste (composite toilets) and Transport.

Session: communication & case study: RhEINKULTUR “GreenRocks” by Holger Jan Schmidt

Holger stressed that festivals are brands themselves that serve as major identification for fans and visitors. If festival makers feel responsible they have a great setting to approach their followers and promote environmental ideas. Holger suggested several steps to achieve the goal:

IMPLEMENT the sustainability thought and the festival's vision in your company.

RAISE consciousness within your team, crew, partners, suppliers, sponsors, artists, caterers, audience etc.

GO AHEAD step by step and only as far as you are able to step at a time; do not communicate more than you really do.

COMMUNICATE your green ideas before, during, and after the festival.

GIVE DETAILED INFO on how your festival deals with the different environmental problems.

Festival organizers should be aware that the festival audience might change (Facebook audience) which might have an impact on measures to be taken (security, entrance fees) to ensure the festival’s survival.

Session: Green'N'Clean Festival of the year: Melt! Festival by Lucile Barras

Lucile reported on how the organizers of Melt! Festival, the Green'N'Clean Festival of the year

dealt with the various environmental challenges.

MOBILITY: Hotel train to Melt! (sleeper train for 99,- Euro/3 days); Bike tour (a week long adventurous travel to the festival site); Special train ticket prices by Deutsche Bahn; Car pooling; Bus travel from Germany, the UK and the Netherlands; Sustainable driving lessons for artist shuttle drivers.

ENERGY: Solar Panels; LED Lights (used as walls behind the stage); Bike disco (stage power provided by people riding bikes)

GENERAL MEASURES: Garbage deposit (returned against a full garbage bag); sustainable catering (13 regional, organic and/or vegetarian food stands); fair trade merchandise (goal: 100% fair trade merch in 2012); regional engagement (donating left-over pre-packaged food to charities)

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: Green Melt! Dinner (great networking opportunity); green press conference; green tour of the festival site (artist interviews); green festival performance; festival participants involvement through bike disco; NGOs on site (Greenpeace, Viva con Agua, CO2 Online); guide to a greener festival for artists and festival goers; festival newspaper / programme; press releases and newsletters

HOW TO COMMUNICATE: Keep it simple! Make it fun! Give incentives! Challenge: Avoid over-, under-, and miscommunication, green washing! Stick to the facts, don't exaggerate! Do something before you speak about it!

OVERALL FEEDBACK: Festivalgoers like the changes that improve their festival experience (Melt! train, festival food offers). Car travel decreased tremendously through festival mobility measures. People need to start acting green to make Melt! green. BUT: Still a lot of garbage, leftover camping gear etc.

Session: INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS for EVENT MANAGEMENT by Lucile Barras

Lucille emphasized the challenge of reducing the high carbon emissions at festivals. One important tool are international standards & schemes for green events. Lucille focuses on ISO 20121, the International Standard for Event Sustainability Management, which is an event specific framework for implementing sustainability and is meant for venues, organisers & suppliers. The British Standards Institute created a national standard to apply to the event industry after London was awarded the 2012 summer Olympics. Its international attention led the International Organization of Standards to work out a framework for the event industry worldwide. The ISO 20121's launch is expected for June 2012. In the first one or two years after the standard is launched an event's compliance with the standard will most likely be verified by the stakeholders themselves. Later, third party certification will be in place by accredited auditing organizations that independently assess and certify compliance with the standard. The standard is not mandatory, but is likely to become minimum accepted practice. For that reason, festival staff will need a good understanding of sustainable development. It is not clear 'whether government will regulate the standard.

Day 1 ended by the **GO Group networking dinner** supported by YOUROPE.

Day 2, 24 April 2012

Chairs: Teresa Moore, Bucks University, UK, Holger Jan Schmidt, GreenEvents Europe Conference, DE & Yourope

Session: Green catering solutions by Lucile Barras

Lucille stressed the problems of mass food production, environmental and health aspects, as well the issue of organic, seasonal and regional products. She also elaborated on the impact food production has on the climate; e.g. has meat a three to seven times higher carbon footprint than organic and locally produced vegetables. Food waste makes up for one third of global food production. Yet, awareness of the food impact on health, environment and karma is growing and food is becoming a strong identity and communication factor. The festival and event industry is contributing to this positive development as some events provide almost 100% organic food (e.g. Tollwood Festival, Munich) or visitors can get at least some organic/vegetarian meals (e.g. Roskilde).

Session: case study: Exit Festival by Vladimir Vodalov (Exit, SER)

Vladimir reported on EXIT Festival's GREEN GUERRILLA initiative, a movement through which EXIT intends to motivate young people to get involved in resolving environmental issues and supporting sustainable development. By affirmative actions the organizers motivate young people to join the "guerilla" actions, which require little effort, but produce great impact, thus achieving an increase in the level of consciousness on environmental issues. EXIT GREEN GUERRILLA is active independent of the festival. It is a platform that allows young guerilla members to communicate and stay in touch.

The GREEN GUERRILLA TOOLS are effective, interesting, cool, and attractive such that young people want to use them and the action will in this way spread fast and achieve great impact. The tools are the EXIT SACK (made from recycled biodegradable plastic suitable for clubbing, school, shopping), EXIT GREEN GUERRILLA TOOLKIT (equipment for a green guerilla members including eco manifesto, booklet, posters, stickers, letter to the president); ZELENERILIA.ORG (an archive of all instruments, like blog, mailing list, Clean Serbia action with the Ministry of Environment Protection, volunteers at EXIT, eco playground, NGO stage, eco work)

Session: Economic Impact of Events and Festivals on local regions by Teresa Moore

Teresa stressed that economic issues are particularly important for festivals. In particular, it is central to focus on sustainability as being of economic benefit. Studies have shown that festivals have a tremendous economic impact by generating new output, income and jobs in the region but also worldwide (e.g. the Edinburgh Festivals, Glastonbury Festival). The talk recommends a '360 degree' approach to assess not only the economic impact (spend, employment) but also social, cultural, environmental and media aspects. Teresa reports on measures supportive to make your festival and its impact widely known.

IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS: e.g. suppliers, performers and participants, workforce and volunteers, sponsors, local authorities and organisations, interest groups and associations.

UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE: Where do they come from? How do they get to your event? What do they spend their money on and where do they buy? Why do they come and what do they like? Do they go to other festivals, how many and which?

MEDIA AWARENESS: Press (international, national, local), TV, Radio, social media and the face book audience

COMMUNICATE THE BENEFITS OF THE FESTIVAL: create an awareness of and an interest in the event's role in the community; provide positive relationships, including media relations; identify local partners and supporters; communicate the event as a player in the local economy and in the community as a whole.

Determining and publishing your festival's economic impact can be a critical factor in the community's awareness of an event's programme and operations. It can also serve as a means to express pride and appreciation of being part of the community. A prominent example is T in the Park whose economic and media impact to Scotland in 2011 was estimated at over £40 million, compared to the last assessed figure of £18 million in 2005.

Workshop: Group Workshop - best and worst practise exchange

The organizers distributed questionnaires to learn about participants' most preferred topics. Based on this feedback two working groups were formed: one for those who are newcomers and wanted to learn and discuss basic requirements; the other for more advanced participants interested in stakeholder involvement.

Group 1: Basics (Teresa Moore)

The most important problem turned out to be waste management and waste reduction. In particular, it is necessary to better understand what waste comprises. To get the audience to separate waste, a benchmark would be important for festivals to assess savings against the total volume of waste. It was suggested that festivals adopt one strategy. For instance, YOUROPE could lead on designating one particular area or strategy that would be adopted by all members of YOUROPE. The idea of reusable water bottles was rejected. One other important topic was waste

reduction by using more sustainable material like cotton, by reusing material, and by cleaning water with biological enzymes.

Group 2. Stakeholder involvement (Holger Jan Schmidt)

Another subject of wide interest was how to get sponsors interested and involved in green and sustainable actions. Suggestions to deal with the problem included motivating sponsors to see the problem from the festival's view; setting up rules and searching the market for other possibilities; looking how other festivals on the YOUROPE market do it; searching especially for green sponsors (like e.g. beer and tobacco companies, green power suppliers); uploading pictures of festivals on facebook and on websites to show sponsor-environmental activities; cooperating with media to announce green sponsors but also green-washing companies. The group concluded that cooperation between festivals is extremely important – also what experience with sponsors is concerned. “We are stronger together!”

Useful Presslinks:

Your Oil Is Music: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bjuBF37jEU>

Pure Festival Energy: <http://vimeo.com/20055528>

Mysteryland: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=91MT1Gx7b9E