



New Media: How to use new tools to reach untapped audiences

SPEAKERS: Marcus Vlaar, Hans Wessels, Katja van der Sandt from Hootchie Cootchie Mediacollectief (The Netherlands)
Created in 1999, Hootchie Cootchie produces multi-media, internet and art productions. In 03, it received the Waarderingsprijs from the Province of Zuid-Holland and the Kunstgebouw Foundation. With this prize, it funded the Codex Kodanski project described below. Hootchie Cootchie is a partner company of Ra.nj, a digital entertainment company also based in The Netherlands.

<http://www.codexkodanski.com/>

CHAIR: Joëlle Marty, President, Association Museum Industries (France)

Joëlle Marty has a strong knowledge of the museum world in France and abroad as well as wide experience in the fashion and textile industries and in international business. She created Museum Expressions in 1996, the professional trade fair for cultural gifts and museum objects, for which she acted as a consultant for 10 years.

<http://www.museum-industries.com>



CASE STUDY NOTES:

The Codex Kodanski project is an *arts* project, an initiative of the company, Hootchie Cootchie Mediacollectief. They approached the Museum Het Schielandshuis, Rotterdam's historical museum, proposing 'an exciting four-dimensional interactive audio play' that takes visitors through the centre of Rotterdam. Walking through the city, the listener hears the voice of a paranoid main character, Kodanski, while high-tech navigation equipment (PDA, GPS) gives access to city history and statistical data (drawn from the resources of the museum). This factual information is mingled with fictional content, humour, music and sound effects, which together create an exciting story about, and in, the city.

The content is both audio (through headphones) and visual (text and video on screen) and it is structured in 'layers' so that visitors hear and see different combinations of content, even if they are standing in the same place. So, two people doing the tour together will each have a different experience. Or the same person can do the tour more than once, without too much repetition of content. Or one person can stand longer at any of the sites to experience more of the layers of content.

The project is on-going with opportunities to experience the tour/play in Nov 06 – for more information, see:

<http://www.deaf04.nl/deaf04/program/events/item.shtml?uri=urn:v2:deaf04:rss:events.rss:040930150018-codexcodanski>

The successes:

- The Museum Het Schielandshuis has been able to refresh its image to attract younger audiences. There has been a lot of interest in the project from the media, particularly targeting younger people. The project has also benefited from word of mouth promotion – one of the most effective forms of marketing!
- Audience numbers have increased and the majority of the new-comers to the museum have been younger people, interested in the concept and the technology. There were 1200 participants in 9 weeks. Interestingly, the museum has found that older people also appreciate the new approach and are not put off by the technology.

The issues:

- Some people enjoyed the tour so much that they took longer than anticipated, choosing to listen to more of the layers of content. This meant that the equipment was out for longer and could not be used by other visitors
- Using technology of any kind means that you have to be prepared to deal with technical problems. This has resource implications, including planning enough *time* to brief and train staff.
- Controversial from the museum's point of view, was that factual and fictional content are mixed. This links to it being an 'arts' event, rather than a museum initiative.
- The funding for Codex Kodanski has been as a 'unique' project, which means that a lot of effort has gone into a short-term initiative.