

## Report Seminar #4- Lighthouses

### Ticketing

**Ghent, Glimps Festival. 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

#### Summary of the project

LIGHTHOUSES is a professional training programme carried by seven organisations (Live DMA, ACCES, Court Circuit, Clubcircuit, Dansk Live, FEDELIMA, and VNPF). The aim of the project is to have a prospective vision of: what will be our venues and our occupations in 5 years? What is our future, how our business models have to evolve, and how we have to deal with the evolution of our sector? This project aims to identify the skills and abilities needed in artistic professions on the European scale; through international workshops and exchange of good practices and experiences. In order to identify the scope of employability on a European level, at the end of the project we will produce job descriptions and focus on the skills and abilities needed by these professions. This work will be done by professionals in the cultural field, and it will end with the creation of a “quality label”.

#### Purpose of Seminar #4

This seminar was focused on ticketing systems and the strategies concerning the relationship with the audience regarding tickets sells. 30 professionals and coordinators joined this seminar. It was organised by the Flemish organisation Club Circuit and took place in Ghent, a medium-sized city in Flanders, during [Glimps Festival](#). Glimps Festival is a show case festival that encourages emerging bands and takes place in music venues and cafes in Ghent’s center town. This partnership with Glimps enabled a good cohesion between participants outside the working sessions. Glimps suits perfectly Live DMA objectives when we organise this kind of seminars. First, it is important to organise our seminars in parallel of great music shows because most of our participants are venue bookers or managers: it is a big plus for them if they also have access to concerts, even more if they would have not come to the festival otherwise. In this sense, it is also positive for many bands who

played in Glimps and for the festival itself because it becomes a meeting point between artists and bookers.

Several expert speakers have led the training sessions, giving to the participants another point of view about their practises, and presenting innovating tools with a different impact on the audience. Besides the seminar, two of the partner's organisations in Lighthouses, Club Circuit and Court Circuit, from Flanders and Wallonia in Belgium, did a press conference about their new common project Be For Music. This partnership is an interesting sign of cooperation which has been made possible thanks to European exchanges.

## Summary of workshops and conferences:

### Day 1:

#### Ticketing in our concert venues

#### How do music venues sell tickets?

#### Short overview from each participant based on the questions list below

1. What is the capacity of your venue?
2. How many tickets do you sell on a yearly basis?
3. What is the average ticket price?
4. Through which channels do you sell your tickets (shop, online, counter, ...)?
5. What is the share of the different channels (in percentage)?
6. What is the relation presales - door sales?
7. How long do you work with e-tickets already?
8. How is your ticket price built up? (actual price, reservation fee, transaction fee, ...)
9. Is the fee included in the ticket price you announce in your communication?
10. Which information do you put on the the ticket?
11. Which options do you have to customize the information on the ticket?
12. What are the possibilities for data reporting?
13. With which system do you work? Own developed system or a package?
14. Do you work with mobile ticketing?
15. How do you handle guest and press demands? With ticketing software of other solution?
16. Can you call upon a helpdesk for ticketing problems?
17. How do you organise the scanning of tickets?
18. How do you organise the refunds in case of cancellation of a show?

- **Evolution of ticketing in Europe**

Tickets sales are very important in the event process. Ticket systems are in perpetual evolution because they follow the audiences' and working teams' practises.

The system is changing to a paper-free system. From paper tickets and stamps, evolutions led to printed tickets with softwares, in partnership with retailers. Now tickets can also be sold online, and the audience can print the ticket at home or have it on their mobiles. E-tickets brought a lot of changes because people don't need to enter a shop anymore to buy tickets for a show, it means that they are less enticed to buy more goods.

But the main issue about ticketing now concerns the data property ( = informations about the consumer when he buys a ticket) and how we use it. The data inform us about the consumers habits and can help marketters to target them. This is one of the reason why some venues or network develop their own system.

- **What is the balance between office/online sells ?**

It really depends on the venues, their program and their relationship with their audience.

First, there is a gap between the ones who encourage online sells for the data collect and because it is quite autonomous, and the ones who encourage shop and office tickets because it gives input to local shops and upkeep the venues life and visits during the day.

It is difficult to say if venues have most sales with online tickets or with office tickets, it really depends on the venues. But the tendency would affirm that online tickets concerns bigger venues because some small venues still don't have online systems and sell most of tickets ondoor (just before the show). In addition, mobile tickets are not used in all venues yet.

- **What are the venues specificities ?**

Even if situations can be different from a venue to another, we can draw some trends from our participants answers.

First, all the tickets prices have an average between 8€ and 18€. It is very cheap if we consider the rest of the music live business.

Many venues still have most of their tickets sales ondoors. The more unknown the band is, the more ondoors ticket sales increase. If doors tickets are more expensive at the last moment, online tickets also have fees.

In general, refunding is not an easy process. Most of the ticket systems are not well adapted for that, and many venues have to refund one by one each ticket for a cancelled show.

- **Change the relationship buyer / seller to a community- strategy**

Tickets sales are linked to a more or less developped communication strategy. The objectives are to innovate to sell tickets and have a confident and conniving relationship with the audience.

All the venues have different season tickets but some of them develop more complex strategies, especially thanks to social networks. For example, booking a famous artist in the small concert room of the venue leads to the fact that people need to check and be alert (so, be part of the community) to get tickets, and if they do, then they can enjoy an intimate and probably exceptional concert. During this seminar, some conferences proposed innovating systems of ticketing or relationship with the audience, which are new for the cultural sector, while already used in other sectors. Our next seminar in Copenhagen will also approach this question : how to include our audience in our venues ?

### Day 1 :

#### **PETZI tickets system presentation**

**PETZI is a new Live DMA member in 2014 so they could not join Lighthouses since the beginning but they joined us in Gent to present their own ticketing system.**

**Check the platform** <https://www.petzitickets.ch>

**Contact: [sophie.delalay@petzi.ch](mailto:sophie.delalay@petzi.ch) and [titouan.mesot@petzi.ch](mailto:titouan.mesot@petzi.ch)**

PETZI is an umbrella organization of independent and non-profit venues and festival in Switzerland. PETZI provides specific help on problems encountered by venues & festivals (security, sanitary issues, fundraising, social insurances, etc.) and links members with authorities when necessary. PETZI team offers training & legal advice, and acts as a lobby on the federal/national/european level.

PETZI has create a ticketing solution for its members. PETZItickets is an online agenda for members, managed by a specific workgroup from PETZI. The system is a non profit organisation for non profit venues. It carries a strong ethic and responds the member's needs to sell cheaper tickets to the audience than other usual ticketing systems. It has been developped by club and festival members. PETZItickets is runned by 6 volunteers (strategy, maintenance, legacy) and 3 employees who represent 80 % ETP for development& maintenance, support and accounting. It is self sufficient, even beneficiary and it has a very light structure so it is very easy to adapt. The main difficulty is that competitors are very strong (there are more than 3 other ticketing system in the country) and Switzerland is a small market. The project needs a high maintenance, especially for the security and transactions. Anyway, PETZI tickets is going on with its development, next step are to develop a mobile application, offline tickets reader and a new website.

In 2014, 2971 events were on the agenda for 99 clubs and 69 festivals, it represents 113 106 tickets sold and 1 million euros of annual sales.

Datas are not shared between members. The venues and festivals collect only the datas from the tickets of the concerts they organise. Data is not such a big concern for Switz venues because most of them are runned by volunteers so they cannot spend so much time on data analysis.

Petzitickets have partners sales. The venues decide if they want points of sales or not. Points of sales do not get extra fees but their interest is that people are coming in and can buy something else in the shop.

Petzi ticket works as a big open space, and is ready to work with other countries.

Day 2 :

How to evolve from transactional ticketing to a customer relation

What does the modern consumer want? How does he live?

How to capture data? Which communication possibilities do we have ?

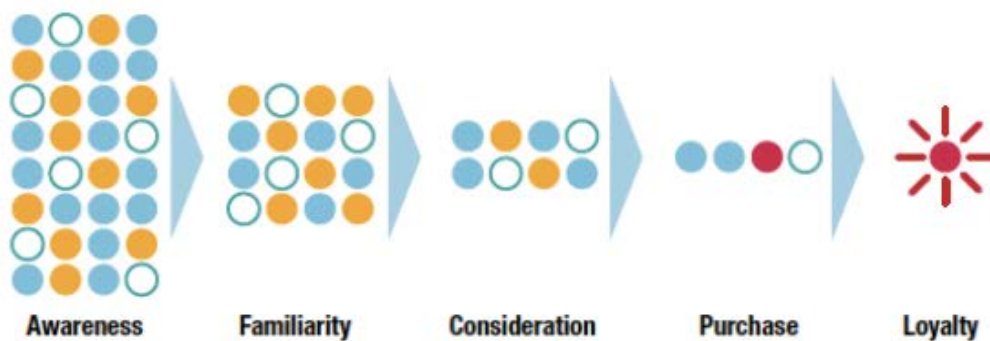
Contact : [joke@jokeclaessen.be](mailto:joke@jokeclaessen.be)

- Brands & Audience purchase models

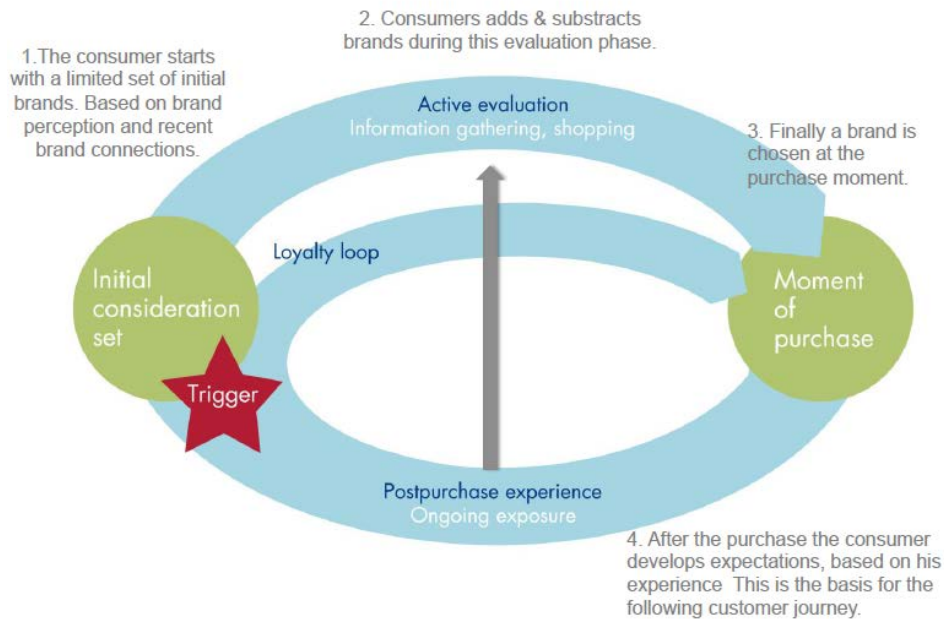
The world has changed and we must adapt to new models and strategies :

In the old model, the consumer knows a lot of different brands (awareness), but he reduces the number of brands in his mind (familiarity, consideration) to decide to purchase only one (purchase, loyalty).

### The traditional funnel



In the new model, the consumer starts with a limited set of brands based on recent perception. Then, something happens that make him decide to buy, it is an active evaluation : the consumer adds and substracts brands during this evaluation phase. It is important to be HERE at this choice moment.



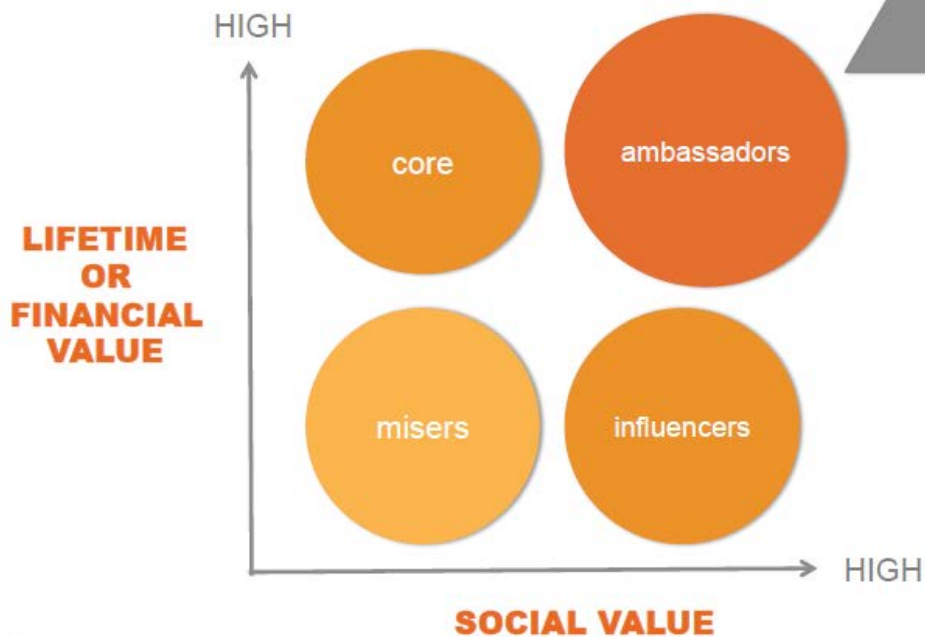
From this evolution, we notice that you should not be at the beginning of the schema (awareness) you have to be at the purchase moment. After the purchase, if you create a relationship with the consumer (= nice experience), it will create a loyalty so people will go to you directly without going back to the active evaluation.

- **Target group and communities**

Do not think you are the target group of what you are doing. The target group is no longer our end destination, it is our medium.

People like when we ask their opinion because it is a mark of respect. Be careful the way you ask opinion. Instead of « asking » the people, it is more about « involving », like a community. Do not underestimate the number of communities you are part of. In each community there is a leader. You are targeting a person and the people around this person (its communities).

- The misers are the one who buy a ticket once and they don't tell about it.
- The core are the one who often come to your place but they don't say it
- The influencers don't have time/finance to come often but they often share what they do or what they want to do
- The ambassadors are often coming and share a lot their experience. They are people who create potential for you.



It is a huge communication challenge to combine ambassadors and cores. The idea is not only to try to reach them but to find many ways to trigger them, to give envie.

Usually the core is the biggest group. It is hard to encourage people going up (coming more often), it is easier to involve them more and make them talk about you.

- **Create your own story**

The relationship with the consumer has to be a CONVERSATION. For example, social networks should not be a way to « announce » things. It must be a conversation, like asking questions... because if people react and answer, then your publications will appear more often on their wall. People who react will remember you longer.

To have good communication and relationship with your audience, you need a story. Try to think like a traveller : discovering, looking things like the 1st time. First impressions are very important. Don't change all the time because people need to recognize you. Don't try to be everything, you have to make choices in order to make people to choose you. You have to think about values and what you will tell.

It is about rational and emotional. People will remember you longer if you touch the emotional brain. Stories give meanings to numbers. Infographics are more interesting. Stories make you unique. The bands who are coming to you also go to other places, so you need something particular. Stories are shared.

When you communicate, think about relevance (= it concerns me and not everyone, context and environment) and utility (it helps me to : save time, save money, be with friends, gain knowledge, discover things, avoid problems, make me feel better). You should make a list of the added value you bring to your target group.



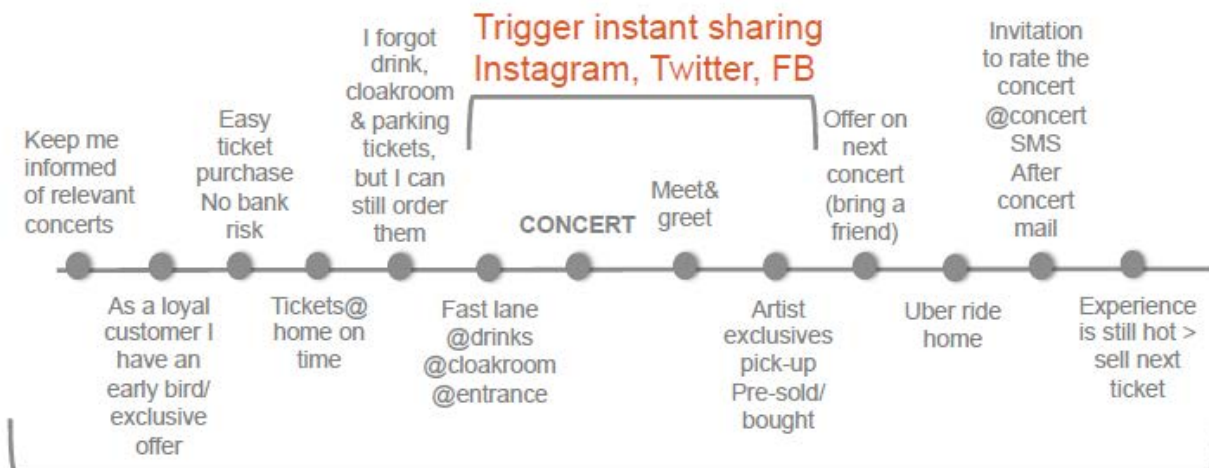
More than just telling stuff, you need to do stuff as well. You cannot claim something you don't do. You need to have some values and you need to act.

- Follow the experience in your communication strategy

## EXERCISE



Own it: #  
Stimulate it: contest best picture/movie



They will share this socially,  
From check-in to positive review.

- Behave like people, don't behave like a company.

To understand the relationship, ask yourself: What do you represent for people? Are you their passion, their family trip, something they can't afford?

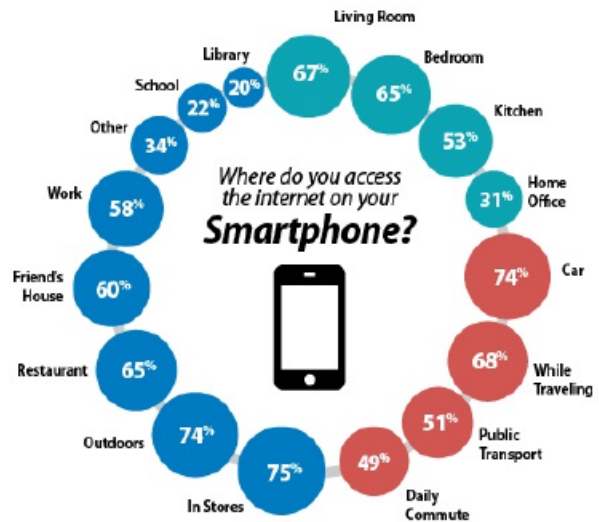
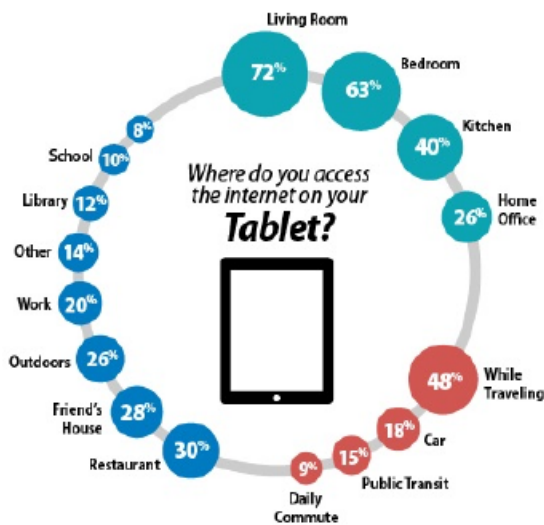
Think about what is key in the relationship: Respect- Empathy - Honesty – Recognition – Dialogue- Dynamic- Sense of humour- Practise what you preach

- Mobile and digital

**Content x traffic = effect**

Those are the key words for a good strategy on social networks. The schema below show where people use their smartphone and tablet.





- **Collect audience data**

A qualitative data is vital to develop good relationship with the audience. If people ask « why do you need those informations », it means they will expect a better experience and a value exchange from this collect.

If you have name, surname and date of birth, it is enough to find a unique person because this data rarely change.

Lots of compagnies do not have money or knowledge to have data softwares. But from a basic collect, you can already apply some strategy with your audience, always in a community dynamic. For example, make special offer for birthdays (if you buy 1 ticket, 1 is for free). And one of the first thing which is important to read in the data, is to know if your customer is coming back, if you attract new customers or if you are loosing some.

Then you can draw a marketing plan. Do you work on the whole program or show by show ? People listen to the same music they listened between 15 and 25 during all their life. You have to track your customer DNA : what kind of music do they like ? Instead of communicating about the whole program then you can communicate about all jazz concerts or metal concerts for instance.

Your work has to be structured in a mathematical way :

- Get the basics right, it is important to have a correct data
- Be honest and clear about what you want
- Link the data (not just collect and have it)
- Structure actions (mails, sms...)
- Think more in programs than campaigns (more targetted)

Data is not always used as a marketing tool. Some venues in France have to lead studies about their audience to justify subsidies they receive from public authorities. Data is also very important for the music venues sector to show the work they are doing with the audiences.

## Day 2 :

### Dynamic pricing

Why do airline companies use dynamic pricing? How does it work?

presented by Yorick Buys from Brussels Airlines, Revenue Management Development Analyst

[yorick.buys@brusselsairlines.com](mailto:yorick.buys@brusselsairlines.com)

- What is revenue management ?

If you know up front that you cannot sell a seat, sell it the price you want, even 1€ because it will be 1€ which is not lost, but do not sell it if you think you can sell it more expensive tomorrow. Revenue Management is offering the right *product* to the right *customer* at the right *time* via the right *channel*.

Dynamic pricing is the process to find an optimal price at a current time and find when customer will to pay, considering competition and their own priorities. First, see when you can sell it the more expensive but be careful to competitive conditions : what are doing the others ?

How does it work ? Fares are link to different class registered in a system. There is a specific amount of seats/tickets for each class which close when they are full. It starts cheaper to go more expensive and in the same time, there is, for example only 5 seats on the low prices, 6 seats on the medium price etc.. capacity + time.

The risk is to sell the seats too cheap. You have to think about customers and time : if you up the tickets from 5€, you can loose a lot of interested people, but in the same time, some people also will to buy the ticket whatever the price is.

The willingness to pay for the customer is not link to how full the flight is. It is only linked to the budget they want to spend and outside factors.

Those principles of revenue management and dynamic pricing are applicable to music venues if they fulfill the prerequisites :

- The product has to be perishable : it is lost after a date
- Low variable cost : it cannot be 100 euros difference and you have to do the concert, even if you are loosing money
- Fixed capacity
- Market differentiation : you can offer different things
- Distinct market segment : people have different wills so you can sell the product different prices
- Historical information : data available to forecast the future
- Advance sales booking
- Electronic distribution system

### Remarks :

Dynamic pricing is not a « promotion ». Promotion gives a bad signal, so you should not say it. Cheapest tickets are bought really in advance, at elastic moment, so the wrong message is to say « wait for the promotion ». And then it is a + because you have an overview on you capacity and filling in advance.

Problem is that habits for buying tickets for a big show are different : people will have more willingness to pay in advance an expensive ticket if they really want to see the show, but for less well known concerts, they will buy at the last minute. If people do not care about a plane being full or not, people really care to know if the concert is full.

So how long does it take to change habits ? In fact it is not changing habits. The one who buys last minute still buy last minute but there are new people who will buy in advance.

Some festivals already work with « early birds » tickets in limited amounts / pre sales / doors price and it is very efficient.

Let's focus more on the experience people have when they come instead of giving discounts to attach people to the venue. The problem is to reach new generations. It is easy to fill your venue with a big artist and 20€ tickets, but it is hard to have an audience for emerging artists because people go to see one artist especially, they don't come for a musical evening anymore.

And it is also a problem to find your audience when you are doing a lot of different things between small gigs, and parties, and well-known artists.

Some venues in Europe have a strong volunteers system, and then it is not the same way to work. Volunteers are young and they attract their friends circle. It is a different message because it is a different sender.

## **Day 2 :**

### **Seaters**

#### **Start-up story on how to sell last minute tickets**

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

Some events are sold out but in fact there are still some free seats. Seaters has created an application where people subscribe to a waiting list to get the seats that are free in the end. It is a redistribution application. Seaters become a new sales partner.

At the last minute, if people decide not to go on a show, they can sell the tickets where they don't go on Seaters. Seaters are partners of event organisers, they are dealing with face value, but they take big fee on the seller. So what is the advantage for the organiser? There are more people inside the venue so that can be a bar or merchandising consumer. The app gives indicators if there are chances to get a seat or not. After 15 minutes late, your ticket can be resale (90% of its price) to the waiting list!

Seaters is also working with some « wish list » and dynamic prices to see if people are ready to spend a certain amount of money to see one show.

### Day 3 :

#### **Ticketing and regulations**

#### **What are the rules and regulations for venues with regard to ticketing? presented by Chantal De Pauw from FOD Economie**

This workshop aims to present law and regulation in Belgium and answer questions. The laws and regulation are provided for the consumer protection and to combat extortionate prices. Occasional resale is legal if lower or equal price are practised. Regular resale is forbidden and reselling ticket with a higher price is forbidden too. There can be some civil sanction (re-claim the surplus payment) or criminal sanction (cease in commercial court)

A ticket is a proof for obtaining the right to attend an event. It can be a document, a message or a code. The indications written on the ticket must be unambiguous. The definitive price must be indicated even if it is an invitation. When someone buys a ticket and have questions, you cannot charge phoning extra fees.

You are also obliged to fulfill some conditions when you conclude a distance contract (phone, internet) to buy tickets. Before the consumer is bound, you must precise the general obligations : geographical address, characteristics, price, arrangements for payment, delivery, and which means of payment are accepted and additional information : the cost of means of distance communication when other than at the basic rate, informations about the right of withdrawal and its conditions, or the absence of right of withdrawal. During the reservation process, you must be clear with : the different technical steps to follow to conclude the contract, whether or not the concluded contract will be filed by the service provider and whether it will be accessible, the technical means for identifying and correcting input errors prior to the placing of the order, the languages offered for the conclusion of the contract. Before the final click it is recommended to resume the reservation and the object and price, with possibility to correct. Immediately after a 'confirmation of receipt of order' must appear on the screen and must be sent on a durable medium.

Unfair commercial practises can be set as misleading or aggressive commercial practises.

### Day 3 :

#### **Mike Van Gaasbeek presents Stager, his ticketing solution [www.stager.nl](http://www.stager.nl)**

Why does Live Nation own ticketmaster ? Because then, they own data. The ticketing market is going through a big development, and big compagnies know there is a big interest in buying ticketing solutions.

What is a ticketing system made for ?

- Create agenda websites
- Collect data to improve online sales
- Work with physical presale points

Ticketing should be integrated in our practises because it is not a separate thing, so it is very important that we manage it ourselves.

Stager is a system made out of venues and festivals collaboration. It is system for all the process (production, marketing, ticketing) which can be personalised. It can be integrated on a website in the main navigation, so it has the same look and feel as your own website. Ticketfees are invested in the production process and the data collected is owned by the venues and festivals. Stager also use the visitors history to see what is the interest of a person. Stager answers the KISS philosophy : keep it simple stupid.

How to run a ticketing company ? Stager only uses free softwares. Mike runs everything from his phone. He uses Jira for the development, Zendesk for the support, Podio for the operation and Whatsapp for the communication. The volunteer help desk is more efficient than an agency and less expensive.

What is the future of marketing & communication ?

The marketing is more and more targetted by using data and user profiles. The audience is segmented. People will have a centralised “profile” (copy of themselves) in the cloud that checks out information in other databases. What people like, admire, who they want to relate to, what they posses is in that profile. Apps on a personal device (agents) will suggest, advise, or even plan your social life. Automation of social life: my app tells me there is a gig that matches my profile/likings within 10 km distance. 3 of my friends will go there and my ticket is automatically purchased.

## Conclusion

### Satisfaction Survey

A satisfaction survey has been launched after the seminar and 83% of the participants sent it back. Questions were concerning the interest, the quality and the length of each workshops. The seminar received the average note of 3,56/5. The participants paid much attention and were very interested in the presentations about customers relationship (day 2, morning) but they were less interested in the law and regulation presentation because it was only about Belgium and it was hard to stay focus at the end of those 3 days. Comments show that we need to find a good balance between conferences and workshops because the participants like interactions, with more practical experience. They recognise the quality of the presentations but it is easier to stay focused during work group, and this seminar was really intense. They also really enjoyed the atmosphere in Gent and the fact that this meeting was in parrallel of Glimps festival.

### List of participants

Name	Organisation	Mail	Country
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Audrey Guerre	Live DMA	<a href="mailto:audrey.guerre@live-dma.eu">audrey.guerre@live-dma.eu</a>	France
Celine Rousseau	Paloma	<a href="mailto:celine@paloma-nimes.fr">celine@paloma-nimes.fr</a>	France
Stéphanie Thomas	FEDELIMA	<a href="mailto:Stephanie.thomas@fedelima.org">Stephanie.thomas@fedelima.org</a>	France
Mathieu Gervais	ATM	<a href="mailto:mathieu@transmusicales.com">mathieu@transmusicales.com</a>	France
Thomas Blanquart	4 ecluses	<a href="mailto:accompagnement@4ecluses.com">accompagnement@4ecluses.com</a>	France
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Benedicte Froidure	File 7	<a href="mailto:direction@file7.com">direction@file7.com</a>	France
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Mike Van Gaasbuck	Worm	<a href="mailto:mike@worm.org">mike@worm.org</a>	Netherlands
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