

HOMEOPERA – DIGITAL SOCIAL CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Benchmarking Best Practices



Programme for Sustainable Growth and Jobs

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DIGITAL SOCIAL CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

BEST PRACTICES

The digital leap spurred by COVID-19 has had profound implications on the way people come together and interact. The very human experience of meeting and being met has truly gone digital, and service providers are innovating concepts to meet these needs while following the changing safety instructions set by the pandemic. As part of Haaga-Helia's HomeOpera – Digital Social Cultural Experiences -project, we explored the implementations of technology and digital sociality in various cultural events through market research and best practice benchmarking. Here, we collate some of the key insights we found in our research.

HomeOpera

The HomeOpera-project aims to develop a concept for a social XR-service that improves elderly peoples' opportunities for a high-quality and stimulating life at home.

In essence, the project develops an innovation ecosystem of cultural organisations, XR-companies and health technology companies to accelerate the development of new digital service production and distribution channels. This creates novel business opportunities and accelerates recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read more about the project [here](#)...

Keywords: experience economy, culture, digital experience, digital sociality

TOMORROWLAND

MUSIC FESTIVAL

Multi award-winning electronic dance music festival Tomorrowland built their **New Year's Eve concert** into a digital platform.

Their visually stunning festival arena *Naoz* hosted over **950 000 visitors** and **28 performing artists** on 4 stages during the one night event, resulting in 21,5 hours of music. While the visitors could enjoy the experience from the comfort of their homes, the artists' performances were streamed to the venues utilising cycloramas, 3D design, video production, and real time programming of lights, lasers, and fireworks.

The festival took place across **27 different time zones** and the complete footage of 160 hours was made available for the visitors for a short period afterwards.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Streaming together; streaming transformed to 27 time zones
- Gift access for friends
- Virtual interaction with other visitors

BEST PRACTICE

- UI & UX very user-friendly with tutorials and tips
- Full points for content accessibility!
- Soundscape to enhance the ambience

TO DEVELOP

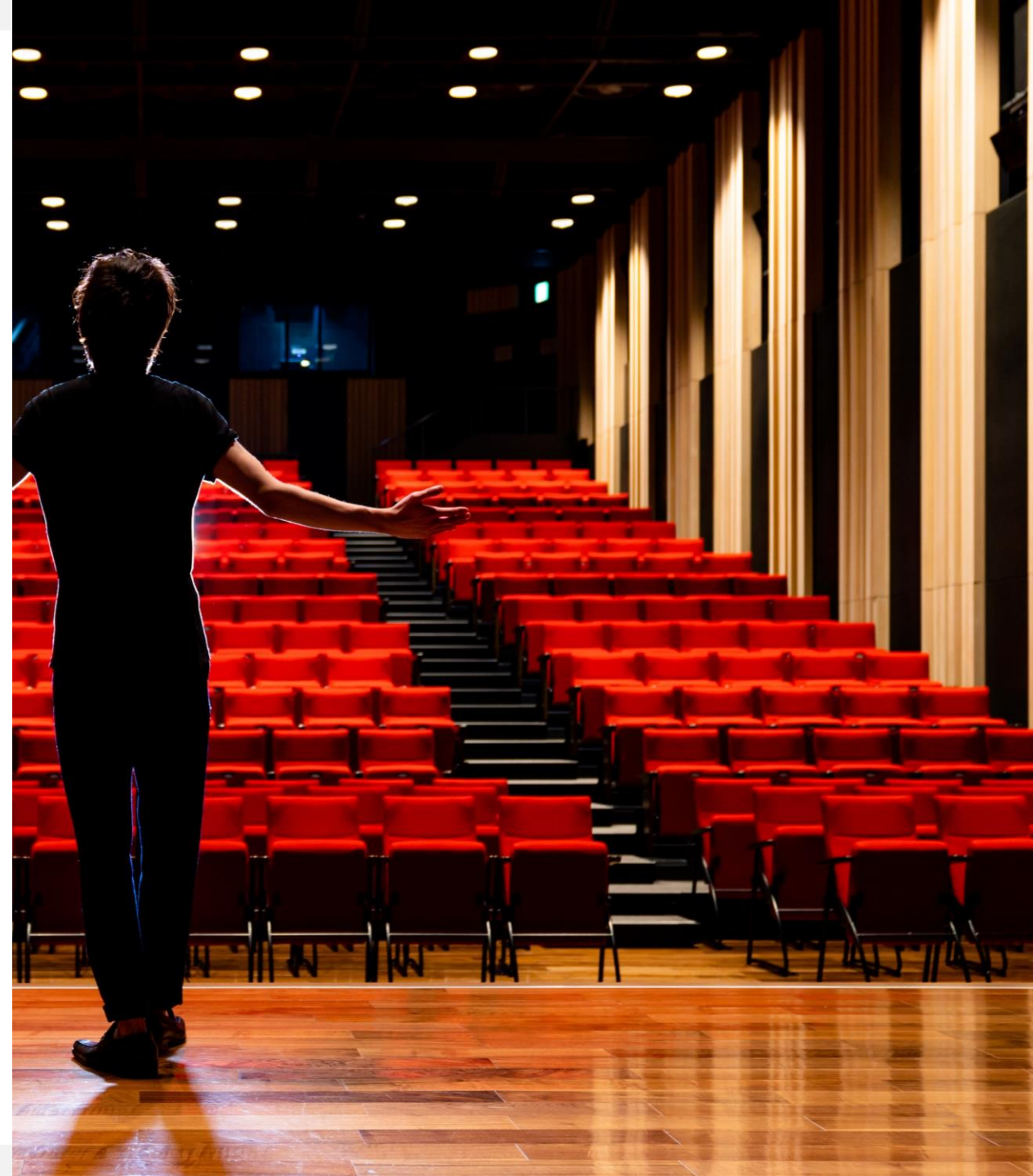
- The interaction feature would have been better if the participant could have found and talked with their friends rather than strangers

INTERACTIVE PLAYS

IMMERSIVE THEATRE

Co-operative theatre experience to wake you up from Zoom fatigue

With human **interaction** at its core, Morpheus theatre's pre-planned shows or custom-made sets combine live theatre and technology. The shows utilise a **video call** platform, and engage the participants by creating a unique ambience through **soundscapes**, **storytelling** and **imagination**, as the viewers are also asked to cover their eyes for the show. Each story is always unique because the story advances according to the viewers co-operative decision-making during the show.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Co-operation with the other viewers to decide the course of the narrative
- Interaction with the actor

BEST PRACTICE

- Utilising video call technology at its best
- Engaging storytelling and soundscape

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WINTER'S DANCE

DANCE & ART EVENT

Mixed reality meets live performances to create immersive experiences on public spaces.

Winter's Dance #onRobson is an annual event organised by Smallstage. It aims to **attract new audiences** to experience **dance**, while experimenting with new ways to utilise technology in the dance scene. The main elements of the event are **live** and **digital**, combining live dance and music with projections and mixed reality technology.

The audience is invited to walk around and get immersed to the scenes, enhanced with augmented and virtual reality content such as animations, special effects and light installations. The artists represent a diverse group across cultures and genres and the event wants to digitally connect participants to public spaces while **making dance accessible** to all.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Visiting the event together
- Increased accessibility through utilising public spaces

THEATRE THROUGH VR

THEATRE

On-demand theatre streaming platform to turbo-charge performing arts.

LIVR brings theatre to the **virtual reality** and offers live performances with a 360° degree view from the comfort of your sofa. Upon signing up to LIVR's digital service, participants receive a VR headset compatible with their mobile phone, making them ready to dive deep into the digital theatre through the company's **mobile application**. Front row seat to every show is guaranteed; just tune in!





BEST PRACTICE

- Easy to use
- Soundscape depicting audience reactions enhance the ambience and makes it feel like a real, “live” theatre

TO DEVELOP

- VR set gets heavy during prolonged use
- Content is mainly aimed at adults, and as such, content for kids could be developed
- Downloadable content for when there is no wi-fi connection would be a plus

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LOST HORIZON

MUSIC & ART FESTIVAL

Two-day festival experience in a virtual multiverse.

Lost Horizon, world's biggest **virtual music and art festival** by the creators of the renowned Glastonbury festival's Shangri-La. Four stages, over 50 performances, and 250+ pieces of art in fully virtual VR platform aimed at creating the very next best thing to a live festival experience. To make the experience more immersive, visitors can create and customise their own **avatars** to enable them to explore the festival area, mingle with people, and even hit the virtual dance floor.

Besides the VR world, the festival was also made available to experience with computers through **online content-streaming** platforms like Twitch, Beatport and Youtube.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Interacting with others in VR and across the different streaming platforms
- Creating personalised avatars for higher feeling of immersion
- Exploring the festival area and engaging in activities like dancing together

BEST PRACTICE

- “Real festival in a virtual world”

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NBA SEASON RESTART

DIGITAL SPORT EVENT

After a four month shutdown, the re-opening of the NBA league season 2019-20 created a **new kind of digital experience for sports lovers**.

Described as epic, the NBA teamed up with Microsoft to create THE next generation sport visitor experience. The basketball court was equipped with enormous screens and fans could join the audience and cheer for their teams through **Microsoft “Together mode”** from the comfort of their homes. Multiple cameras and microphones were placed to capture every angle and sound, while DJ’s replicated the **soundscape** of live matches to make the ambience as authentic as possible.

The concept was praised for the **communal experience**, whereby fans could interact with others in the same seat section throughout the match as well as during the breaks. Participants could also cheer their through a dedicated platform for the players and broadcast viewers alike to see.



SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Interaction with other fans on Microsoft “Together Mode”
- Cheering experience through NBA app, website, Twitter
- Live trivia on each game
- The virtual audience is visible to the athletes and in the broadcast

BEST PRACTICE

- Interaction and a sense of community
- Mix of broadcast audio and live crowd simulation
- Technology and the concept worked great
- Moderator to control inappropriate behaviour

TO DEVELOP

- Long list of advice to get the stream working
- Live Q&A would have been helpful when joining the stream
- One unfortunate fan was seated among opposing team’s supporters

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VATICAN TOUR

VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOUR

Experiencing Vatican from home.

A **guided virtual tour** to Vatican with a licensed guide offers a front row seat to the architecture and art Vatican has to offer. The 1-hour tour is executed through a livestream led by a professional guide. The digital experience also features a **live chat function** for participants to interact with the guide during the experience, as well as a live **Q&A session** at the end of the tour to address any unanswered questions.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Guided tour via livestream
- Chat function and Q&A session
- Shared experience

BEST PRACTICE

- Interaction with the guide
- “Fabulous and educative”
- “Priceless to see everything without the crowds”

TO DEVELOP

- No live assistance to deal with visitor’s technical issues during the tour
- Event registration complicated
- Guide sometimes difficult to understand – perhaps captioning could be added!

COLORING FROM HOME

ART EVENT

Hosted online colouring sessions to keep the kids occupied after home school.

RxArt is a nonprofit organisation transforming children's health care units and hospitals into **inspiring healing environments** with the power of art. As part of their colouring project, which collaborates with numerous well-known artists, RxArt has created the #ColoringFromHome – initiative.

#ColoringFromHome is a **communal art workshop for children**. The workshop, delivered through Instagram Live, is hosted by a different artist each week. The workshops feature freely downloadable templates from the RxArt Colouring Book, co-created by the participating artists.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Doing something fun and low-key together
- Hosted sessions
- Instagram chat, hashtag, sharing and comment functions for participant interaction

BEST PRACTICE

- Increasing dialogue and sharing within the community

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PERFORMANCE FOR ONE

INTERACTIVE THEATRE

May I have an **Intimate theatre experience** for one, please.

Untitled Theatre Company offers one-on-one 25 minute performances where the actor is the performer and the viewer the script writer. The experience is created with a changing cast through an **interactive video call**, creating a special feeling of **personal connection** to the theatre.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- 1 on 1 interaction with the actor
- The participant gets to decide the direction of the narrative

BEST PRACTICE

- Intimate, emotional and personal experience

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THE THIRD DAY: AUTUMN

THEATRICAL BROADCAST

Not for the faint-of-heart: a **12-hour continuous live performance**

The Third Day: Autumn was part of a three stand-alone stories, interconnected by their overall narrative. It was **broadcasted live** during a 12-hour continuous take which was later transformed into an **on-demand online stream**.

The experience was produced by Sky Studios in co-operation with HBO, Plan B Entertainment, and Punchdrunk, and it won the RTS Award for “**Best Live Event 2021**” as well as the DQ Daily award “**Drama Craft**” at the C21 International Drama awards 2020. The experience was also **BAFTA nominated** for “**best live event**” in 2021.





SOCIAL ASPECTS

- Binge-watching the stream together

BEST PRACTICE

- Experimental yet engaging due to the length of the experience
- Showcasing the power of the humble stream: as long as the content is gold, you don't necessarily need any extra bells and whistles!

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