

CASE STUDY HAMBURG

GAME-DESIGN: Learning the other way?

LABOURGAMES
work and play



Game-Design: Learning the other way?

The **Game Jam in Hamburg** was organised in cooperation with Germany's largest independent theatre production site **Kampnagel** and involved learners and teachers of both, borough and comprehensive schools. It connected them with actors from the world of work, but also with artists, designers and other experts and embedded all of them into the framework of the annual **PLAY festival** in Hamburg in order to create games around the topic of work.

The accompanying evaluation was focussing on the question to what extent Game Jams are suitable to attract new audiences, i.e. target groups that were previously rather distant from culture and what potential game jams have for future-oriented working and learning. Therefore, perspectives and experiences of all groups involved in the Hamburg Game Jam were examined.

As a result in brief: Game Jams are a playful setting for teaching and learning and unlike traditional educational set-ups, they unleash motivation, initiative and creativity.

Facts

Format: four-day Game Jam

Location: Markthalle Hamburg, embedded in the PLAY17 Festival

Date: 1.-4. November 2017

Participants: 28 learners from five secondary schools in Hamburg

Partner: Kampnagel Hamburg, PLAY17 Festival, IG Metall (labour union)

Accordingly, the following factors are clue for both game and audience development:

Process Design

- Game Jam as a development tool for games is suitable for the involvement of new target groups if it is well prepared, moderated for specific target groups, stringent in the process and creates a balance between strict rules and freedom.
- The cycles underlying the game development such as the change of creative, implementation, testing and test cycles as well as its strict results orientation are easily accepted by new audiences.

Motivation

- Games-typical immersion and flow experience work in new audiences intuitively and are boosted by good process design and socially competent process facilitators.
- Motivation and personal responsibility are strengthened by the game development process, provided that rooms are created for active participation - i.e. with decision-making authority (see below).
- Motivation is promoted when all participants meet at eye level and cultivate a culture of welcome and support.
- The positive error culture inherent in gaming enhances motivation and output orientation.

Learning

- Game Jams are intensive learning and research arrangements: they allow individual, emotional as well as cognitive and experience-based learning that contrasts to school-typical, instruction-led learning. It promises to be more playfulness and sustainable.
- Game Jams are particularly suitable for the development and acquisition of knowledge by the participants themselves. Through their experience and generation aspect, they can be more effective in learning settings such as school and vocational training than conventional teaching/learning means.
- Gaming fascinates through the interplay of immersion, creativity, structure and freedom. Game development requires additional distance from the process, which not every game affine can or wants.



Participation

- Game jams expand their potential when they take up the perspective of new »audience« and delegate decision-making power. Game designers should therefore see the integration of new audiences not as a marketing tool, but as a partnership and co-design process.
- Participation in game development means becoming part of an artistic process. Game Jam undermines the conventional concept of art, which aims to introduce (new) audiences to the autonomous art. Game Jams stand for a new artistic field that is low-threshold and blurs the boundaries between creative everyday experience and the so-called high arts.
- Game Jams transform developers into designers and producers who become authors to shape learning settings and social environments.
- Gaming in general and game jams in particular with new audience, as conceived in the **LABOURGAMES** project, promote diversity, personal responsibility, creativity and interactivity. In so far as this flows into social educational processes, it contributes to democratisation.
- The Hamburg game jam is also an example of audience development, which allows those involved to »experiencing, enjoying and valuing the arts«.

Transfer

- Game Jams as an audience development and development platform is flexible and can be transferred in areas where creation, learning and research is of primary interest.



Outlook: The skills required and promoted in the arrangement and process of a Game Jam are not only interesting for teaching and learning settings.

In a world of work characterized by transformation processes based on digitisation, Game Jams can be regarded methodically as strengthening central soft skills: user-focus, solution orientation, co-creation and teamwork. In this respect they prepare secretly for future forms of work and learning. Also of great importance is the intrinsic motivation of students created by (good) games, which is promoted equally by the self-steering nature of learning and familiarity with the new culture medium. Games are a regular feature in the everyday reality of young people and the culture means they most often use.

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