



# **HOW CAN YOU BEST TUNE YOUR EXHIBITION/EVENT TO THE NEEDS OF GENERATION X AND Y?**

**INSPIRING  
PEOPLE**



# HOW CAN YOU MAKE YOUR EXHIBITION / EVENT FUTURE-PROOF?

We believe in the power of connecting. While bringing people together remains the essence of every exhibition and event, people and their preferences change over the years. Visitors to today's exhibitions and events are mainly from Generation X and, increasingly, from Generation Y. How can you best align your event with these groups?

Together with Trendsactive and Ruigrok | NetPanel, we have compiled for you a selection of the very latest insights regarding Generation X & Y. These are based on qualitative research and sociocultural trend analysis. Using this research, TrendsActive explains what these insights mean for the event business. The various points are illustrated via a series of concepts that are sure to spark your creative strategic thinking!

So be inspired by this report and if you'd like to discuss the future of exhibitions and events further, Amsterdam RAI would love to be your sparring partner.

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# LET'S START!

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**GENERATION Y**  
**(20-35 YEAR OLDS)**

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**(35-50 YEAR OLDS)**

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# GENERATION Y

20 - 35 YEAR OLDS



## MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

**1. ME-CENTRIC**

**2. CONSCIOUS & SMART**

**3. VISUAL CULTURE**



# 1. ME-CENTRIC

**THIS GENERATION OF 'TROPHY KIDS' IS OVERLY PROTECTED & SPOILED WITH ATTENTION BY BOTH PARENTS AND SCHOOL.**

**PARENTS HAVE INVOLVED GEN Y-ERS IN FAMILY DECISIONS FROM A YOUNG AGE, MAKING THEM GREAT NEGOTIATORS. "I'LL MAKE SURE I'LL GET MY WAY!"**

**THE GENERATION GAP WITH PARENTS IS SMALL: THEY CONSIDER THEIR PARENTS FRIENDS.. "WE LISTEN TO THE SAME MUSIC!"**





# ME-CENTRIC EXAMPLES



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**ME-CENTRIC BEHAVIOUR OF GENERATION Y IS CAUSING QUITE SOME CHALLENGES FOR HR DEPARTMENTS. THERE ARE MANY WEBSITES, BOOKS AND CONFERENCES DEDICATED TO THIS TOPIC.**



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**MODERN PARENTS ARE NO LONGER SHOCKED BY LOUD MUSIC, A MOHAWK OR BAGGY TROUSERS. GENERATION Y'S WAY TO REBEL: TATTOOS.**



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**THE ME-CENTRIC ARCHETYPE CAN BE FOUND ABUNDANTLY IN POPULAR CULTURE.**

# ME-CENTRIC QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS



**'I WANT GREAT FOOD  
& GOOD WINE AT THE  
EXHIBITION STANDS,  
NOT SOMEWHERE FAR  
AWAY.'**

**'I DON'T WANT PUSHY  
EXHIBITORS. BUT WHEN I  
WANT INFORMATION,  
I WANT IT RIGHT AWAY!'**



**'I WANT ACTIVITIES  
TO BE FUN FOR ME,  
NOT A SALES TOOL IN  
DISGUISE.'**

**'I DON'T LIKE ALL THOSE  
OLD MEN IN SUITS.  
I WANT THE EVENT TO BE  
FOR ME TOO!'**

# WHAT DOES ME-CENTRIC MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## MAKE THEM FEEL SPECIAL!

### ADVICE 1

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**GIVE Y-ERS TAILOR  
MADE SERVICE**

### ADVICE 2

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**GIVE Y-ERS THE  
POSSIBILITY  
TO CO-CREATE**



# ME-CENTRIC IDEAS



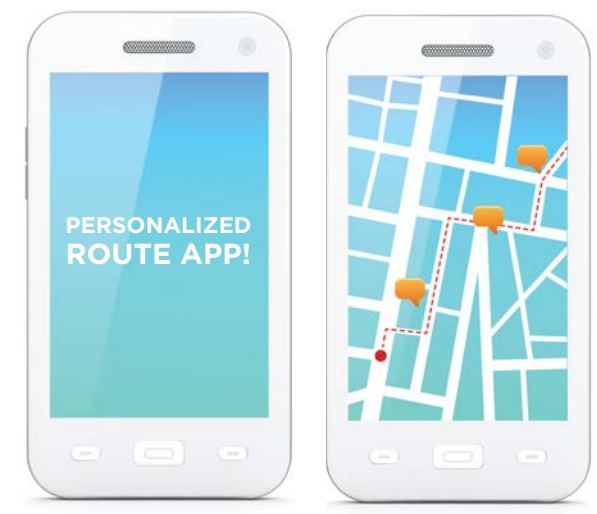
## CUSTOM TOURS

Consider guided tours for first-timers. Gen Y visitors aren't very familiar with the exhibition medium. Why not organise guided tours, both on- and offline, that take visitors to the exhibition floor?



## QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE

Ensure that Gen Y get what they want, by asking about their expectations in advance (e.g. online). What are you looking for? What do you want to discover? With whom would you like to get in touch? Or give them the opportunity to ask specific questions in advance that they wish to see answered at the event.



## PERSONALIZED ROUTE

When you know what your visitors need, you can take it one step further and offer them a custom product. For example an app that creates a walking route at the event, tailored to their needs.

## 2. CONSCIOUS & SMART

**GEN Y-ERS - CHILDREN OF THE NOUGHTIES (2000'S) - ARE VERY CONSCIOUS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE WORLD.**

**THEY LEARN IN NETWORKS. HAVING KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS ADDS VALUE TO THEIR NETWORKS.**

**HAVING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IS CONSIDERED COOL.**



# CONSCIOUS & SMART EXAMPLES



**CONSCIOUS IN GENERATION Y  
STYLE ON THE DASHBOARD OF  
A FORD FUSION HYBRID: THE  
LESS FUEL YOU CONSUME, THE  
BIGGER A DIGITAL TREE ON THE  
DASHBOARD WILL GROW.**



**THE BOOM OF 'TALENT SHOWS'  
THE PAST TEN YEARS HAVE  
IMPRINTED THE GEN Y'ERS  
WITH THE IDEA THAT THEY HAVE  
TO EXCEL IN SOMETHING TO  
SUCCEED.**



**GREAT EXAMPLES OF A  
GENERATION Y WAY OF  
LEARNING ARE THE FREE  
MOOC'S (MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE  
COURSE).**

# CONSCIOUS & SMART QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS



**'I LIKE TRADE SHOWS  
THAT HAVE CONFERENCE  
ELEMENTS, LIKE SHORT  
PRESENTATIONS.'**

**'ALL THOSE FLYERS  
AND LEAFLETS ON  
THE FLOOR... WHAT A  
WASTE!'**



**'I ALWAYS LOOK AT THE  
LIST OF EXHIBITORS.  
I WANT TO KNOW IT'S  
QUALITY BEFORE I GO.'**



# WHAT DOES SMART & CONSCIOUS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## EMPOWER SMARTNESS & SHOW CONSCIOUSNESS!

### ADVICE 1

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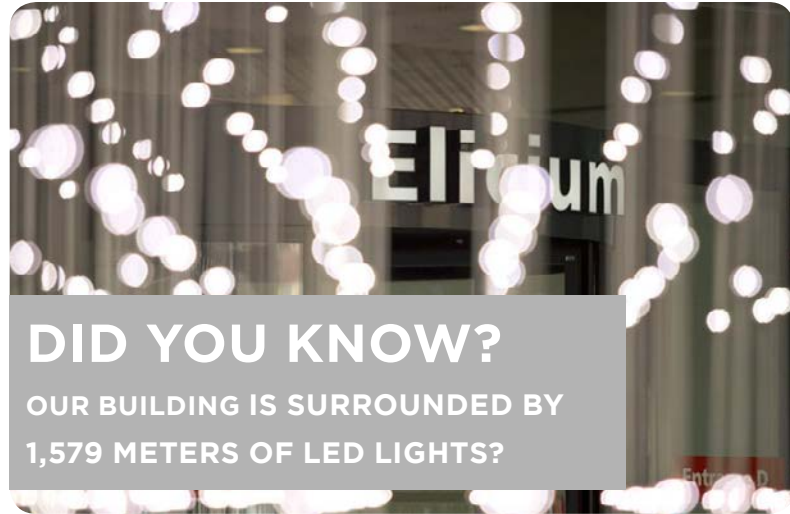
**COMMUNICATE YOUR  
SUSTAINABLE POLICY  
TOWARDS Y-ERS**

### ADVICE 2

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**GIVE Y-ERS  
KNOWLEDGE AND  
SKILLS. BEFORE,  
DURING & AFTER  
THE EVENT**

# CONSCIOUS & SMART IDEAS



## CLEVER COMMUNICATION

Communication with Gen Y visitors should be focused on smartness. For instance, you can underline the chance for visitors to learn something or get more knowledge. Think about statements in terms of “did you know that...?”.



## DO IT YOURSELF

Keep in mind that Gen Y visitors don't want to just passively look and listen. They want to do things themselves. Facilitate this via mini-courses or workshops.



## QR FLYERS

One way of tapping into the conscious mind of the Gen Y'er is by using less paper. Technology provides new opportunities: digital brochures can be easily distributed with QR codes. Visitors can choose for themselves which folders they wish to download.



# 3. VISUAL CULTURE

**OUR CULTURE IS RAPIDLY BECOMING MORE VISUAL AND ORIENTED ON IMAGES.**

**THE MAIN DRIVER: THERE ARE SCREENS EVERYWHERE. GEN Y-ERS ARE SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS SCREENAGERS.**

**GEN Y-ERS ARE NOT JUST CONSUMERS OF VISUALS, BUT ALSO AVID PRODUCERS.**



# VISUAL CULTURE EXAMPLES



**YOUNG Y-ERS PREFER YOUTUBE AS A SEARCH ENGINE OVER GOOGLE (= TOO MUCH TEXT).**



**'BORING' DATA ARE LIKED MORE AND REMEMBERED BETTER WHEN VISUALIZED INTO INFOGRAPHICS.**



**AUGMENTED REALITY OFFERS MANY FRESH OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS. FOR INSTANCE, DURING A MUSIC FESTIVAL IN 2012, A HOLOGRAM OF DECEASED RAPPER TUPAC PERFORMED ON STAGE.**



# VISUAL CULTURE QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS



**'ALL THOSE  
STANDARDIZED  
EXHIBITION STANDS:  
BOOOOORING!'**



**'I WANT TO HAVE  
EXPERIENCES AND NOT  
JUST GET INFORMATION!'**

**'I'D LIKE TO  
SEE 3D PRESENTATIONS  
AND HOLOGRAMS AND  
EVERYTHING.'**

# WHAT DOES VISUAL CULTURE MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## FOCUS ON VISUAL MESSAGES & IDENTITY!

### ADVICE 1

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**BE PLAYFUL AND  
INTELLIGENT  
WITH YOUR  
COMMUNICATION**

### ADVICE 2

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**THINK IN EXPERIENCES  
& EVENTS**

# VISUAL CULTURE IDEAS



## RECOGNIZABLE IDENTITY

Develop a creative, inspiring and iconic identity. The ideal is to have a corporate visual identity that is so iconic that the event is instantly recognised by one visual element.

## EXPLORE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Create the feeling of a smaller (more personal) exhibition or event by making better use of visual communication through a thorough concept. The use of new technologies could also be useful for a real sensory experience. Use visuals and technologies to 'breathe' a theme 360°.

## RECONSIDER THE WORD 'EXHIBITION'

Here is an interesting topic to consider: should we use the word 'exhibition'? Do a Google image search on the word 'exhibition'. What are the results? Open a new window and Google the word 'event.' Now what do you see? The different results illustrate the problem Gen Y has with 'exhibitions'.



# RECAP GENERATION Y

## CHARACTERISTIC ONE **ME-CENTRIC**

**MAKE THEM  
FEEL SPECIAL!**

### **ADVICE 1**

Give Y-ers  
tailor made service

### **ADVICE 2**

Give Y-ers the possibility  
to co-create

## CHARACTERISTIC TWO **CONSCIOUS & SMART**

**EMPOWER  
SMARTNESS & SHOW  
CONSCIOUSNESS!**

### **ADVICE 1**

Give Y-ers knowledge  
and skills. Before, during  
& after the event

### **ADVICE 2**

Communicate your  
sustainable policy  
towards Y-ers

## CHARACTERISTIC THREE **VISUAL CULTURE**

**FOCUS ON  
VISUAL MESSAGES  
& IDENTITY!**

### **ADVICE 1**

Be playful and  
intelligent with your  
communication

### **ADVICE 2**

Think in experiences  
and events

# GENERATION X

35 - 50 YEAR OLDS

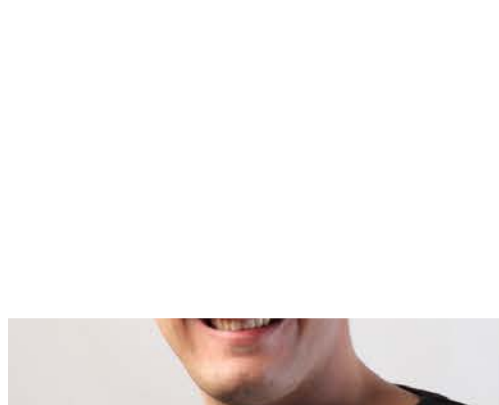
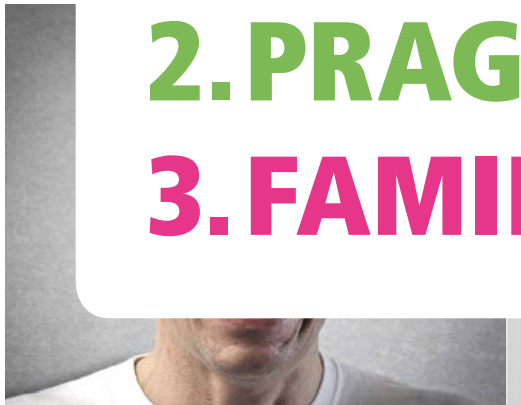


## MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

**1. CYNICISM**

**2. PRAGMATISM**

**3. FAMILY-FOCUS**





# 1. CYNICISM

**THEIR 'FORMATIVE YEARS' (BETWEEN THE AGE OF 12-24) WERE ROUGH, BOTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY.**

**GEN X ARE SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS 'LATCH KEY GENERATION' AS THEY GREW UP WITH BUSY PARENTS WITH A WORKAHOLIC - DIVORCED GENERATION.**

**GEN X-ERS ARE SKEPTICAL ABOUT MEDIA & MARKETING MESSAGES.**



# CYNICISM EXAMPLES



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**GEN X-ERS ARE CYNICAL TOWARDS BABYBOOMERS WHO DOMINATE POPULAR CULTURE AND HOLD THE JOBS (AND MONEY) THEY ASPIRE.**



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**SOUTH PARK & FAMILY GUY ARE EXAMPLES OF POP CULTURE MADE BY GEN X-ERS THAT SHOW THEIR CYNICAL VIEW ON SOCIETY, POLITICS & MEDIA.**



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**GREAT EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL GEN X-ER IN BOTH FORM AND CONTENT: JULIAN ASSANGE OF WIKILEAKS.**



# CYNICISM QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS



**'THOSE EXHIBITORS ARE  
STANDING THERE FOR  
THEMSELVES AND NOT  
FOR ME!'**

**'EXHIBITIONS WANT YOU  
TO BELIEVE THEY'RE  
CHEAP. BUT ADD  
PARKING, DRINKS AND  
THE CLOAKROOM AND IT  
BECOMES EXPENSIVE.'**

**'I DON'T LIKE GIVING  
MY PHONE NUMBER TO  
EXHIBITORS. YOU NEVER  
KNOW WHAT THEY'LL DO  
WITH IT.'**

# WHAT DOES CYNICISM MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## BE TRANSPARENT AND PERSONAL!

### ADVICE 1

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**PROVIDE  
(BRUTALLY HONEST)  
TRANSPARENT  
INFORMATION WITH  
A PERSONAL TOUCH**

### ADVICE 2

---

**PLAY WITH CYNICISM**



# CYNICISM IDEAS



## MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

To prevent X-ers from being disappointed after a visit to the event, it is important to show what they can expect. Especially ensure that you don't make promises that you can't keep. One way is by showing previous editions of the event, using film clips, preferred last edition features, and the like.

## PLAYFUL COMMUNICATION AND PRODUCTS

Find ways to play with this cynicism (especially with your tone of voice and communication).

## COMMUNICATE ON A PERSONAL LEVEL

Communicate on a personal level, not as a big company but on a close and human scale. Who are the real people behind the event, the brand or the stand? You can, for instance, make nametags more personal by adding hobbies, children, and personal likes.

## 2. PRAGMATISM

**GEN X-ERS HAVE LITTLE LOYALTY TOWARDS BRANDS OR EMPLOYERS. IF THEY CAN GET A BETTER DEAL SOMEWHERE ELSE, THEY WILL PURSUE IT.**

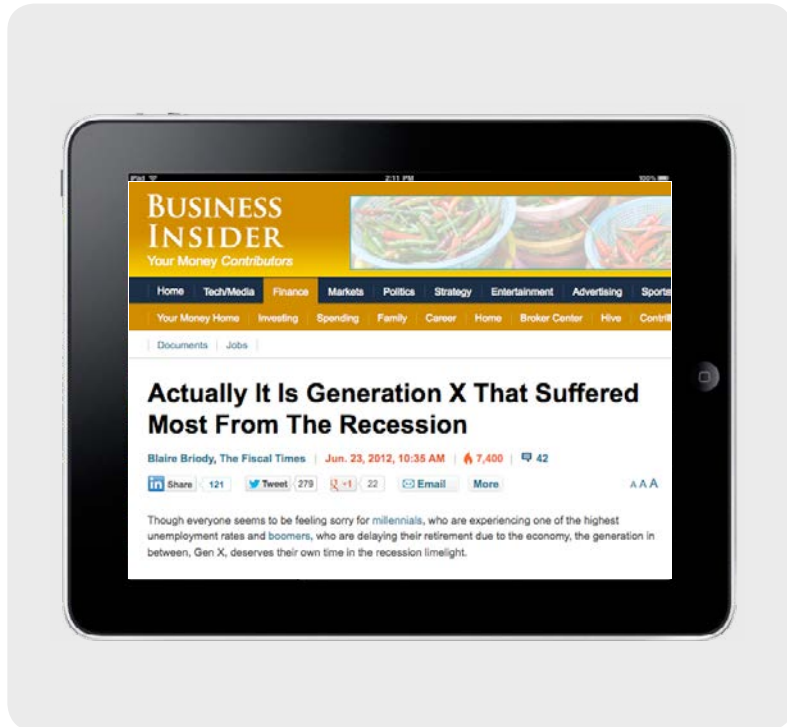
**THEY PREFER AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH IN RESPONSE TO MASS CONSUMERISM.**

**COMPLICATING FACTOR WHEN TARGETING X-ERS:  
THEY ARE HALF ANALOG / HALF DIGITAL.**





# PRAGMATISM EXAMPLES



**REPORT AFTER REPORT SHOWS THAT GENERATION X SUFFERS FROM THE ECONOMIC RECESSION THE MOST. THIS DRIVES PRAGMATIC BEHAVIOUR.**



**AN EXAMPLE OF AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH IS THE LIMITED EDITIONS - GEN X-ERS LOVE THOSE AS A RESPONSE TO AN ERA OF MASS PRODUCTION.**

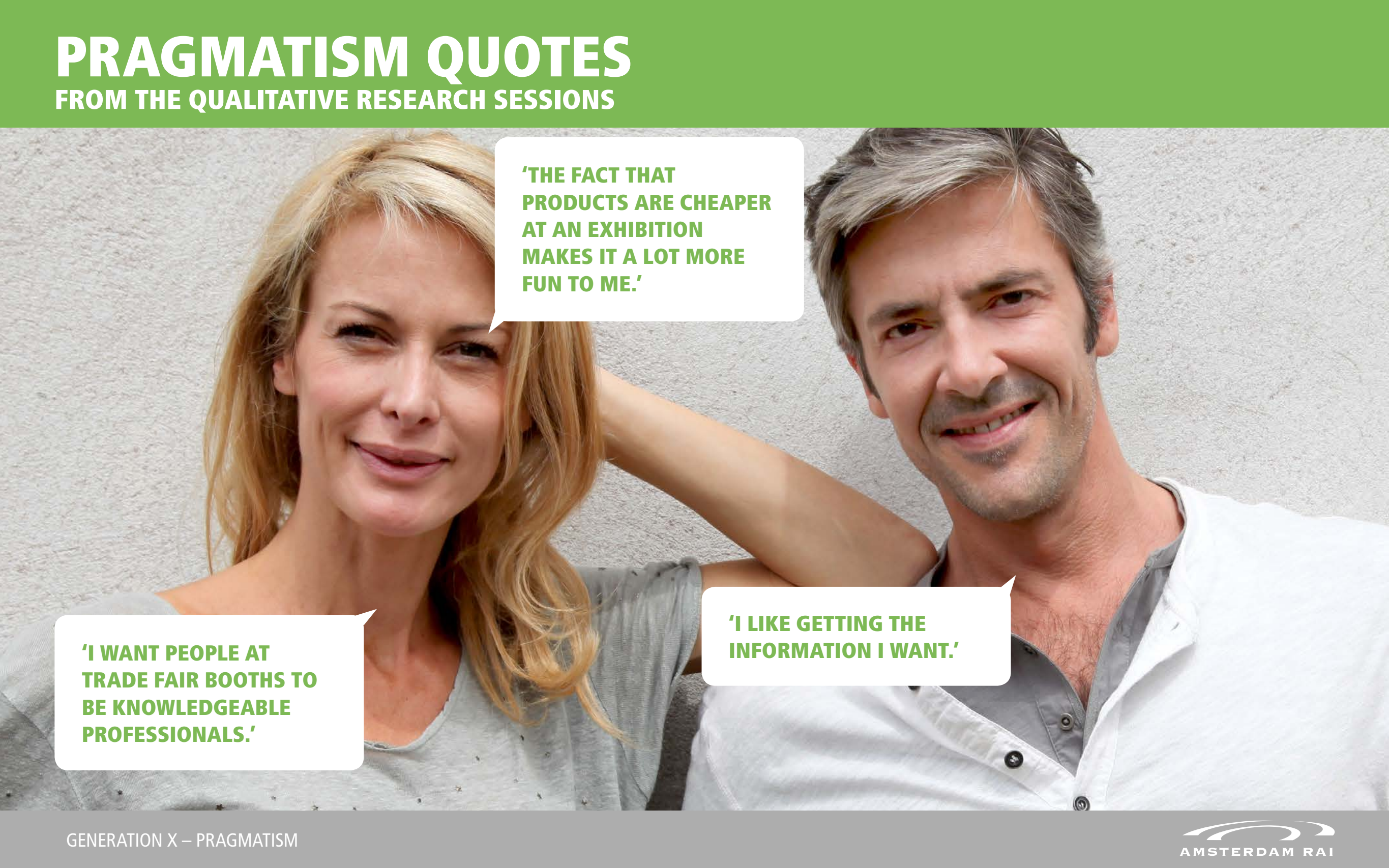


**THE PERFECT GEN X PHONE CONTRACT: FREE TO GO WHENEVER THEY WANT.**



# PRAGMATISM QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS



**'THE FACT THAT  
PRODUCTS ARE CHEAPER  
AT AN EXHIBITION  
MAKES IT A LOT MORE  
FUN TO ME.'**

**'I WANT PEOPLE AT  
TRADE FAIR BOOTHS TO  
BE KNOWLEDGEABLE  
PROFESSIONALS.'**

**'I LIKE GETTING THE  
INFORMATION I WANT.'**

# WHAT DOES PRAGMATISM MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## SHOW PRAGMATIC THINKING!

### ADVICE 1

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**RATIONALIZE ALL  
COSTS &  
GIVE SECURITY/  
WARRANTY**

### ADVICE 2

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**EXPLAIN YOUR USP'S**

# PRAGMATISM IDEAS



## RATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Put offers and discounts at the heart of your communication. Show how much visitors will be able to save when buying products at the exhibition. Compare exhibition-prices with retail-prices. Guarantee a vast amount of products that are cheaper during the exhibition.

## NO SURPRISE TICKETS

To prevent Gen X visitors from buying a ticket and then being unpleasantly surprised by all the additional costs, it's smart to offer an all-inclusive package. This could comprise entrance, parking and/or travel costs, food vouchers and coat check-in.

## EXPLAIN YOUR USP'S

For instance: "Always wanted to know how product X works? Come to the exhibition.", "You can't touch or try products when you buy them online.", "Exclusive products.", "The latest trends.", "Be surprised, be inspired, get new ideas.", "The perfect day out."



# 3. FAMILY FOCUS

**GEN X-ERS ARE 'PROJECT PARENTS':  
HYPER FOCUSSED ON THEIR CHILDREN.**

**A HEALTHY WORK/LIFE-BALANCE IS  
VERY IMPORTANT TO GEN X-ERS.**

**THE FIRST GENERATION WITH WORKING  
MOMS AND CARETAKER DADS:  
MERGING OF GENDER ROLES.**



# FAMILY FOCUS EXAMPLES



**A GLOBAL FISHER PRICE REPORT SHOWED THAT 80% OF PARENTS PRACTICE HOME EDUCATION.**



**EXAMPLE OF PROJECT PARENTING: SPECIAL CHILDREN'S CELLPHONE WITH GPS-TRACKING AND AN ALARM BUTTON.**



**MERGING GENDER ROLES ARE VISIBLE IN POLITICS, MARKETING & MEDIA.**



# FAMILY FOCUS QUOTES

FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH SESSIONS

**'I LIKE CARS AND  
GADGETS TOO.'**

**'INSTEAD OF GOING TO  
AN EXHIBITION, I CAN  
DO A LOT OF FUN THINGS  
WITH MY FAMILY.'**



# WHAT DOES FAMILY FOCUS MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

## UNDERSTAND THAT X-ERS HAVE A FAMILY!

### ADVICE 1

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**SHOW YOU  
UNDERSTAND THEIR  
HECTIC PARENTAL  
LIFESTYLE**

### ADVICE 2

---

**CATER TO CHANGING  
GENDER ROLES**

# FAMILY FOCUS IDEAS



## EVENT WITH CHILDCARE

Busy Gen X parents want to make the most out of their weekends and bring their children to events or exhibitions. To give parents a few hours of time without their bored children, offer high quality childcare. Preferably with a monitoring system, so the project parents can check up on their little loved ones.



## TOTAL FAMILY CARE

Project parents want to spend time with the whole family during the weekend. So offer services for 'the rest of the family' at your event in corporation with partners. Example: dad (or mum) can enjoy a car show for a few hours, while the rest of family can spend time in the proximity of the venue at a museum, a local zoo etc.



## ALWAYS CATER TO THE OTHER SEX

Men are increasingly discovering their feminine side and vice versa. Ideally there will always be something to do for the other sex. For example a fathers area at a future mum fair or a women's night at a car show. These can be linked to the content of the event, but can also be just for fun, like a game cave for men.



# RECAP GENERATION X

## CHARACTERISTIC ONE **CYNICISM**

### **BE TRANSPARENT & PERSONAL**

#### **ADVICE 1**

Provide transparent  
information with a  
personal touch

#### **ADVICE 2**

Play with cynicism to  
co-create

## CHARACTERISTIC TWO **PRAGMATISM**

### **SHOW PRAGMATIC THINKING**

#### **ADVICE 1**

Rationalize all costs &  
give security / warranty

#### **ADVICE 2**

Explain your USP's

## CHARACTERISTIC THREE **FAMILY FOCUS**

### **UNDERSTAND THAT X-ERS HAVE A FAMILY**

#### **ADVICE 1**

Show you understand  
their hectic  
parental lifestyle

#### **ADVICE 2**

Cater to changing  
gender roles

# SUMMARY & METHODOLOGY

## INDEX

- 1. SUMMARY Y**
- 2. SUMMARY X**
- 3. METHODOLOGY**
- 4. RESEARCH PARTNERS**
- 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

# SUMMARY GENERATION Y

20 - 35 YEAR OLDS

## ABOUT

Generation Y are used to **getting exactly what they want**. They are **conscious** about world problems and love to have specific **knowledge & skills** that give them value in their networks. Gen Y'ers are children of a our visual culture and therefore love **everything visual**.

## INTERPRETATION

### MAKE THEM FEEL SPECIAL!

#### ADVICE 1

Give Y-ers  
tailor made service

#### ADVICE 2

Give Y-ers the possibility  
to co-create

### EMPOWER SMARTNESS & SHOW CONSCIOUSNESS!

#### ADVICE 1

Give Y-ers knowledge and  
skills. Before, during  
& after the event

#### ADVICE 2

Communicate your  
sustainable policy towards  
Y-ers

### FOCUS ON VISUAL MESSAGES & IDENTITY!

#### ADVICE 1

Be playful and intelligent  
with your  
communication

#### ADVICE 2

Think in experiences  
and events



# SUMMARY GENERATION X

35 - 50 YEAR OLDS

## ABOUT

Generation X'ers are very **pragmatic** when it comes to making decisions, mainly because they **suffer the most** from the current economic crisis. They are **not loyal** if they can get a better deal somewhere else. They often have a **cynic** world view and are very conscious of media and marketing. Many of them are **project parents**, which describes the over-involvement when it comes to their children.

## INTERPRETATION

### BE TRANSPARENT & PERSONAL

#### ADVICE 1

Provide transparent information with a personal touch

#### ADVICE 2

Play with cynicism to co-create

### SHOW PRAGMATIC THINKING

#### ADVICE 1

Rationalize all costs & give security / warranty

#### ADVICE 2

Explain your USP's

### UNDERSTAND THAT X-ERS HAVE A FAMILY

#### ADVICE 1

Show you understand their hectic parental lifestyle

#### ADVICE 2

Cater to changing gender roles

# METHODOLOGY

## INSIGHTS PHASE

1.

### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research on Dutch visitors of trade shows and consumer exhibitions from the Generation X and Y, based on the main and subquestions of Amsterdam RAI.



## INTERPRETATION PHASE

2.

### SOCIO-CULTURAL TREND CONNECTION AND ANALYSIS

The main and subquestions of Amsterdam RAI and the qualitative research are matched with TrendsActive's sociocultural trend database.

These insights are interpreted into a strategic framework for Amsterdam RAI.

**TRENDSACTIVE**  
trend interpretation agency

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

3.

### CONCEPTS FOR EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

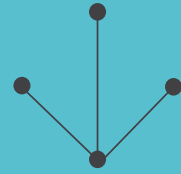
The development and visualization of several ideas and concepts - based on the results of phase 1 and 2.

The development of three tailor-made presentations and a final report for Amsterdam RAI.

**TRENDSACTIVE**  
trend interpretation agency



# RESEARCH PARTNERS



## ‘GREAT RESEARCH, BUT NOW WHAT?’

### TRENDS:

TrendsActive researches global consumer behavior from a sociocultural perspective and classifies its research in structured, practical trends.

### ACTIVE:

TrendsActive uses its research to develop innovative strategies, marketing campaigns, products and design.

**TRENDSACTIVE**  
trend interpretation agency

For cases, methodology and top notch trends:  
[WWW.TRENDSACTIVE.COM](http://WWW.TRENDSACTIVE.COM)

## RUIGROK | NETPANEL: MARKET RESEARCH WITH VISION

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# THANK YOU!

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