

“Without knowing, we all play the game ”

Utrecht, June 2 2009. Elan Lee, Sicco Beerda, Joost van Liemt and the earlier announced Adrian Hon will give a keynote speech during the NLGD Festival of Games concerning the phenomenon Alternate Reality Games. ARG's are games that play with the boundaries between reality and fantasy, and on- and offline spaces. Besides the growing popularity within the game industry itself, large commercial campaigns use this phenomenon as a means of advertisement as well.

ARG's currently are a trend, yet ten years ago Sicco Beerda and Joost van Liemt made one of the first games in this genre for Nokia. The Nokia Game captured the Netherlands for several weeks in 1999. Players searched for answers in an enigmatic mystery through the internet, commercials on radio and television and via their cell phones. It provided Nokia a troop of loyal fans and a lot of free publicity. Nevertheless none of the participants experienced the games as a marketingtrick.

Elan Lee is also engaged in ARG's over ten years now. He is one of the inventors of the game 'The Beast'. Microsoft lunched this game concurrently with the movie A.I. from Steven Spielberg. 'The Beast' consisted of a quest for a fictional character. A phone number and several clues about a certain 'Jeanine' were hidden in movie adds. What the advertisers where hoping happened: ten thousands of people picked up the signals and started searching for clues. These people were players of the so-called Alternate Reality Game. Nobody exactly knew where reality stopped and fiction began. The 'players' received a brand experience that went way beyond any add they had ever seen.

The speakers mentioned above will share their visions on the phenomenon of Alternate Reality Games in a historical and future perspective during the Game Conference.

During the Festival of Games visitors can experience what it means to invent an Alternate Reality Game during the workshop Playful Tinkering. Participants with and without experience can join the workshop and play the games afterwards with the conference visitors. The most creative game will be rewarded with a prize.

The Festival of Games in Utrecht is one of the largest business and academic oriented game festivals in Europe. Besides the NLGD Conference, the Festival consists of a Game Development Rally for young develop talent, the United Games Industry Party, several specialist workshops and summits and Pitch & Match, where over 50 international and national companies join. Potential buyers and sponsors of games, like publishers, mediacompanies and investors are speeddating with developers of games. Besides Pitch & Match, the Control Career Fair attracts many companies looking for employees.

More information about the NLGD Festival of Games can be found at:
www.festivalofgames.org

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Festival of Games 6 - 14 juni

Game Conference 10 - 12 juni

Pitch & Match 11 and 12 juni

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