

AN INSPIRING JOURNEY THROUGH THE EUROPEAN LIVE COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

by Maarten Schram,
Founder & CEO of LiveCom Alliance



A year ago during the EuBea Festival 2015 in Seville, I presented the concept of the Pan-European Alliance of professional associations of #eventprofs. The aim was to develop the industry through highlighting local expertise and creating a common global professional community for exchanging ideas, inspiration and market research. The community was named the LiveCom Alliance, and founded officially in February 2016.

In the past six months, seven associations from seven countries with a total membership of over 600 agencies have joined the Alliance: EVCOM (UK), ACC (Belgium), NAOM (Russia), AEVEA (Spain), APECATE (Portugal), LEVENEMENT (France) and IDEA (Netherlands). Providing unique individual insights to the development of their local event industries, these associations are united by a shared vision to bring their local expertise to a global level, and we've been able to connect local media channels in order to share PR in the most effective way and create as much reach as possible.

In March this year, all our members gathered together during the EuBea Advisory Board meeting in the Italian Alps to set goals and priorities for the first year of the Alliance, and in June, a second meeting took place in London. Our focus was to discuss and define the outlines for our priority project: Pan-European event-industry market research.

SEVEN ASSOCIATIONS FROM SEVEN COUNTRIES



Pan-European market research

The key goal of the project is to underline the impact of live communication in the creative industry, whilst also highlighting the role of live in the brand marketing mix in different countries within the EU. The main focus of this research is to measure the volume and value of the European live communication industry, and will be conducted in two stages – collecting existing data from local markets, and initiating its own more precise research next year. Starting off with an inventory of all existing (local) market research results, we are able to estimate the average and point out differences and similarities in market size (both volume and value) of different European countries. The results of this first stage of research will be presented during the LiveCom Alliance yearly meeting at the EuBea Festival 2016.

Differences and similarities

Travelling through Europe this past year, visiting colleagues of the member associations and also meeting potential new members, I was struck by fascinating intercultural differences. Yes of course, several clichés were proven to be true, but I realised the way we communicate and do business can vary significantly. Sometimes these things can seem small and only in the subtle details, yet can have a huge impact, so a very important aspect of being connected through LiveCom Alliance is about meeting each other and experiencing different business ethics and styles of communication, which is crucial for doing business successfully on an international level. The key benefit of joining the Alliance is to give and receive the best a local market can offer.

The future of our industry is paved by opening international markets, stimulating conversation and pinpointing the impact of live communication can have globally. In our fast moving world we are confronted by innovations constantly; Online tools, digital technologies, virtual reality and much more. And as with every industry, it's our duty to follow these innovations and see what more we can bring.

The future of events is GloCal

Because of this we are able to get into the heart of brands and of organisations, and from that moment on, borders are no longer important. In fact, they almost do not exist. Global success can only be achieved by understanding and grasping the successes of the smaller local markets within it. And once you've achieved that, the world is at your feet. There's no global success without local, so we must think 'GloCally'!

Building the future together

We've had a great success after our first year, connecting seven leading associations in events and live communications. And now the future is to create an even stronger network, uniting professionals from all corners of Europe. But it doesn't stop there; contacts have been made, meetings are planned and several new members are pending as we begin work to open up the Alliance for the internationally focussed memberships. More and more, I'm asked to connect agencies all over Europe looking for global opportunities and local expertise and partners. Connecting them through the LiveCom Alliance online platform is a great and interactive way to boost their development and growth.

LiveCom Connect

Despite the name, we can't avoid online and stick to purely 'live'. Building a strong and working community only on 4-5 live meetings a year is clearly impossible. It's crucial to be connected online too. That's where our online platform, LiveCom Connect, comes in. LiveCom Connect is a way to unite the member associations in an interactive and dynamic way, streaming a timeline of news and messages whilst creating a platform that enables users to post, reply and store all kinds of data. Which is a very important benefit for our members and for the internationally focussed agencies within our member associations.

Live.Meeting

At the end of August, together with Live Communication Magazine and IDEA LiveCom Alliance, the first Pan-European meeting for #eventprofessionals from all over Europe took place. The event was arranged within three weeks with the help of many passionate people, aiming on the development of the industry. We gathered approximately 140 eventprofs from 7 countries for a one of a kind inspirational event in one of the best event venues in Amsterdam. Energised by this amazing experience we are now exploring the possibility of growing the Live.Meeting brand in 2017, in which all LiveCom Alliance members would have special preferences and roles in this great initiative. To be continued... ●