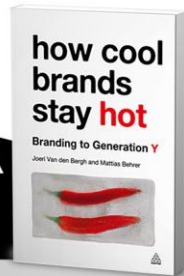


# how cool brands stay hot



## The 5 'coolness' guidelines at Rock Werchter

**GHENT June 27, 2011** | Rock Werchter is getting closer, it's as good as a sell-out, and like every year this year loads of youngsters will again travel to Werchter to enjoy a lot of music and the festival ambiance. Many brands will be present at Rock Werchter as well. Studio Brussel and InSites Consulting aimed at finding out what is cool and not cool at festivals and wanted to find out why. That is why InSites Consulting invited some 50 festivalgoers at Rock Werchter last year from different age categories to take pictures for 4 days of everything that stood out as being 'cool' or 'uncool'. In total this resulted in over 1,200 pictures, made by and commented upon by themselves, which were analysed by the agency. "Our big festival survey last year already taught us that a festival is not just about the music, but also about the ambiance," says Jan Van Biesen, manager at Studio Brussel. "Through this survey we wish to check in a more creative way which parts of a festival are savoured on location and why." Pictures of youngsters, asleep or reading magazines, during the concerts were labelled as 'uncool'. "A multiple day festival like Rock Werchter is also about the social befriending of people you know and don't know and allows to escape the daily routine and to really go mental in the temporary 'state' Rock Werchter," says Joeri Van den Bergh, Managing Partner at InSites Consulting. "Antisocial behaviour is therefore disapproved of by youngsters these days at an arena such as Werchter where everything is about the shared and unique experience."

The 1,240 pictures, taken by the festivalgoers, allow us to distil some major trends, the main 5 of which are:

### **1 Memories and surprises**

That's what it's all about at a festival where you are together to experience the music and the ambiance around it. Memories, bizarre underpants with strange texts, weird people, strange hairdos, risqué texts written on boards. It's about the exclusive goodies which are only available at Rock Werchter and which you can reminisce about afterwards. "These youngster generations are stimulus junkies," says Van den Bergh who also published the book 'How cool brands stay hot. Branding to Generation Y' a few weeks ago. "An example from Pink's concert last year: the singer did not simply appear on stage but fell out of a massive box, and later on in the concert she rolled over the entire audience in a large transparent ball; she took everyone by surprise, both friend and foe of her music. You want to be there, with such an experience, so you can talk about it or write it on your Facebook page."

### **2 Look after each other and those around you**

The festivalgoers also shared pictures of earplugs, of very ugly tattoos (tagged with the message that it's a pity it is so difficult to have them removed), of the litter which is left behind on the festival arena once everyone has left and of signs of destruction. Today's youth has respect for the human body, for their environment, and more and more they think about the future.

### **3 Luxury**

How about refrigerators to keep your food cool at the festival arena? Or power points where you can recharge your mobile phone or other electrical appliances? Or the option to drink Jupiler beer in proper glasses, not plastic cups, at the Joe Piler Saloon? Luxury is no longer a dirty word at festivals. A campsite without mobile phone recharge post is *not done*; the home luxury needs to be available at a festival. Since 3 years there is a Rockvillage, 200 wooden chalets with real beds, warm showers, Jacuzzis and breakfast-with-newspaper; these are a clear demonstration. And every year it's a sell-out.

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## **4 Authenticity**

Festivalgoers shared pictures of fake tattoos of the only real gnome who's always straightforward: Gnome Wesley. The pyramid tent Marquee, the place where you can discover smaller bands and participate in more intimate sets, was often mentioned amongst the cool moments. By now the Marquee has probably turned into the most important symbol of Rock Werchter. Certain Werchter traditions were also present in the picture report of the festivalgoer: the Galaxy Disco bar deejay sets between gigs, the firework at the end of the festival, etc. "In a world which is flooded by a wealth of events and products, youngsters often choose authentic, real and honest things," says Joeri Van den Bergh from InSites Consulting. "The key to authenticity means you give youngsters a chance of self-expression and self-fulfilment. Last year Green Day invited some youngsters on stage to sing along with them. In the arena and in the streets around the festival arena you often see groups of youngsters who dressed up eccentrically and that way hope to co-determine the festival's ambiance."

## **5 Conversation starters**

Youngsters would like to meet other youngsters; they are quite keen to do so. Anything which gives cause to talk to people you don't know, is a good move. The signs by De Morgen on which you could leave your personal messages are a good example of how a newspaper facilitated conversations at Werchter. The number of T-shirts with funny one-liners at such a festival is uncountable. Rock Werchter also has a long list of famous visitors. Famous people such as Prince Laurent, K3's Josje or Piet Huysentruyt are simply amongst the crowd and are very willing to be in pictures. At Werchter everyone is the same and everyone is there for the same ambiance.

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## About the survey

The Rock Werchter Coolness survey is an ethnographic survey in which some 50 youngsters were asked to report on what they found cool and uncool on the site (and also on the campsite), by means of pictures with SMS labels. In order to enrich the interpretations, we used a new analysis technique where respondents analysed and interpreted each other's answers.

## About the book

Generation Y is the most critical consumer generation ever. But what keeps them going and how do you develop the correct strategy to connect with them? *How Cool Brands Stay Hot* is based on 5 years of research and interviews with people responsible for marketing at international youngster brands H&M, Nokia, G-Star, Coca-Cola, Nike etc. The book highlights the 5 main attributes of a youngster brand. A must read for anyone who wants to make his brand cool and keep it that way.

More information on [www.howcoolbrandsstayhot.com](http://www.howcoolbrandsstayhot.com)

## Joeri Van den Bergh

Joeri Van den Bergh is the co-founder of InSites Consulting, a global 'new generation' research agency with offices in Belgium, the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands. He has extensive experience of all aspects of branding, marketing and advertising to kids, teens and young adults. His clients include global customers such as Lego, Nokia, Sony, MTV Networks, Danone, Unilever and Coca-Cola, for whom he has provided research and advice on how to target the youth market. As author and contributor to numerous journals, he also lectures throughout the world on marketing topics.

## About InSites Consulting

InSites Consulting is a fast-growing, global, online marketing research agency, delivering comprehensive solutions and advice to world leading brands in nearly all industries. Our mission is to challenge conventional marketing & research wisdom by putting conversations and storytelling at the heart of our thinking and acting. We stay ahead of the game via our ForwaR&D lab, co-creating state-of-the-art research solutions together with clients, suppliers, academics, consumers, and professional organizations. Over the last 3 years, we received no less than 12 awards from different internationally well-respected bodies such as AMA, ARF, ESOMAR, MRS, Media Marketing, MOA, SPSS, AMMA, and eConsultancy. We do not believe in 'one-size-fits-all' solutions, emphasizing the need for customization and consulting in formulating answers to marketing challenges. Being fully independent, we stand for flexibility and long-term focus. We are headquartered in Belgium, having offices in the UK and the Netherlands, New York office opening in 2012. More information is available on our website [www.insites.eu](http://www.insites.eu) and blog <http://blog.insites.eu>.