



CASE STUDY

Roots & Routes

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A lot of projects in the field organize social activities to display the skills of social, economical and cultural disadvantage people. The projects organize an activity where young and talented people can perform and show their talent to the public. But most of the time, after the performance, the activity stops and there is no follow up for the participants to develop their talent to a professional level.

Most of the talented people need help to get their skills to a professional level. The gap between the art of the street and the vocational education is too wide. Therefore it's hard to become professional for people with social, economical or cultural disadvantage. This also shows in the conservatory where 80 to 90% of the students are white and wealthy. This is not a proper reflection of the population.

Case profile – Roots & Routes in a nutshell

	Roots & Routes Celebrate cultural diversity
Website	http://www.rootsnroutes.eu
Status	Active/running (2001 – 2010)
Interviewed person	Jeroen Marcelis
Funded and promoted by...	Community Rotterdam, Service Art and Culture. Leonardo da Vinci, EU programme of education and culture.
Location of the Learning Activities	Combination of formal setting (e.g. school internship) and non-formal/informal setting (e.g. summer schools, home/online)
Target group(s)	Target group are young people between 15 to 25 years who do not have the same chances as most people because of social, cultural or economical circumstances.
Number of users	858 online users/profiles.
Educational Sector(s)	Vocational Education (Internship)
Category of the Learning Activities	Combination of formal, non-formal, informal
Web 2.0 technologies used...	Learning blogs, social networking tools, video/audio sharing tools.
Methods to support inclusion	(Peer) e-mentoring, displaying talent of users offline and online.

Short description and key characteristics

Roots & Routes gives talents of multi-ethnic cultures and international backgrounds the opportunity to enrich their knowledge and skills and take part to an professional existence within the creative industry, also by offering the opportunity to get notice of any relevant secondary vocational educational program or an higher educational program.

Roots & Routes is funded by Community Rotterdam, Service Art and Culture (Rotterdam was elected cultural capital of Europe in 2001) and Culture and Leonardo da Vinci, EU programme of education and culture. For the implementation there were three parties

involved. Miramedia (Social cohesion and intercultural dialogue), NPS (TV programme maker) and the programme staff of Rotterdam cultural capital had the goal to involve all layers of the population on a cultural level. The first project was televised by the NPS with the help of young media makers. The website is created and run by JFC Medienzentrum Köln. Roots & Routes is active in 12 countries. In those countries there are 13 partner organisations who organize activities under the Roots & Routes flag.

Dimension of learning and inclusion

Roots & Routes accompanies young talented people who want to become professional in music, dance or media. By recruiting young talented people R&R gives them a chance to enhance their talent in an international and cultural group under guidance of professionals. These groups are as well offline as online. The social networking tools makes it possible to keep in touch with international participants and follow each others progress by uploading own material or writing a learning blog.

Another aim is to bring the art of the street closer to the vocational education for people with an economical, social or cultural disadvantage by getting more experienced through feedback and training by professionals and the composition of the groups they gain knowledge being an artist. The competence development makes sure every participant experience a certain form of personal and/or professional growth. The knowledge is given by the professionals and the user are able to put it into practice at the same time by festivals. The festivals are a part of the learning cycle but are also a way to create role models in the target group who can encourage other talents to participate. By putting a young talent on the stage with big names where talents can display his skills, the participants set a good example for people from his own neighbourhood. Participants are also stimulated to become peer coaches. The online audio/video sharing tools makes it easier to comment on each others work.

Innovative elements and key success factors

Roots & Routes is innovative in creating a link between the street art and the formal education so participants can re-engage in education to give them a chance to become professional in their discipline. Where other initiatives stop after a performance, Roots & Routes lays more emphasis on the next step to professionalize of participants. By focussing on the professionalization of participants a close connection with the art education is necessary to offer participants an opportunity to develop. In the Netherlands Roots & Routes works very closely with the art education field including two Conservatory Codarts Rotterdam, the Albeda College in Rotterdam.

The approach is that users first experience and learn by doing. After that Roots & Routes provide the theory. The education material online can support the actual learning by giving new ideas and good examples in practice. Roots & Routes also follows an innovative approach as it comes to sharing knowledge. By using the learning blogs and social networking tool the time where knowledge can be exchanged is expanded. The knowledge can be shared faster because the possibility to ask questions online about workshops for example. There is also more peer to peer education. Users can upload audio/video for other users to comment on. Users can listen to each others beats or view music videos. By peer to peer education online the knowledge transfer expands.

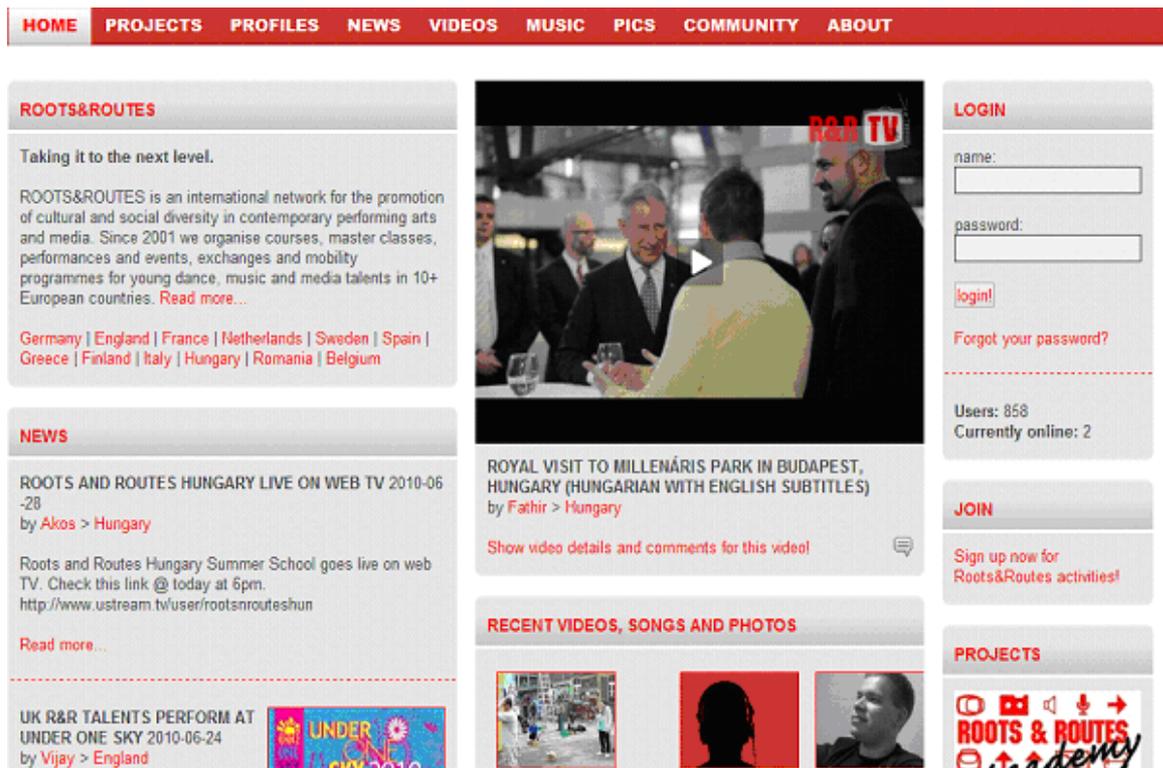


Figure 1: Homepage of Roots & Routes with a short introduction of R&R, news and recent videos

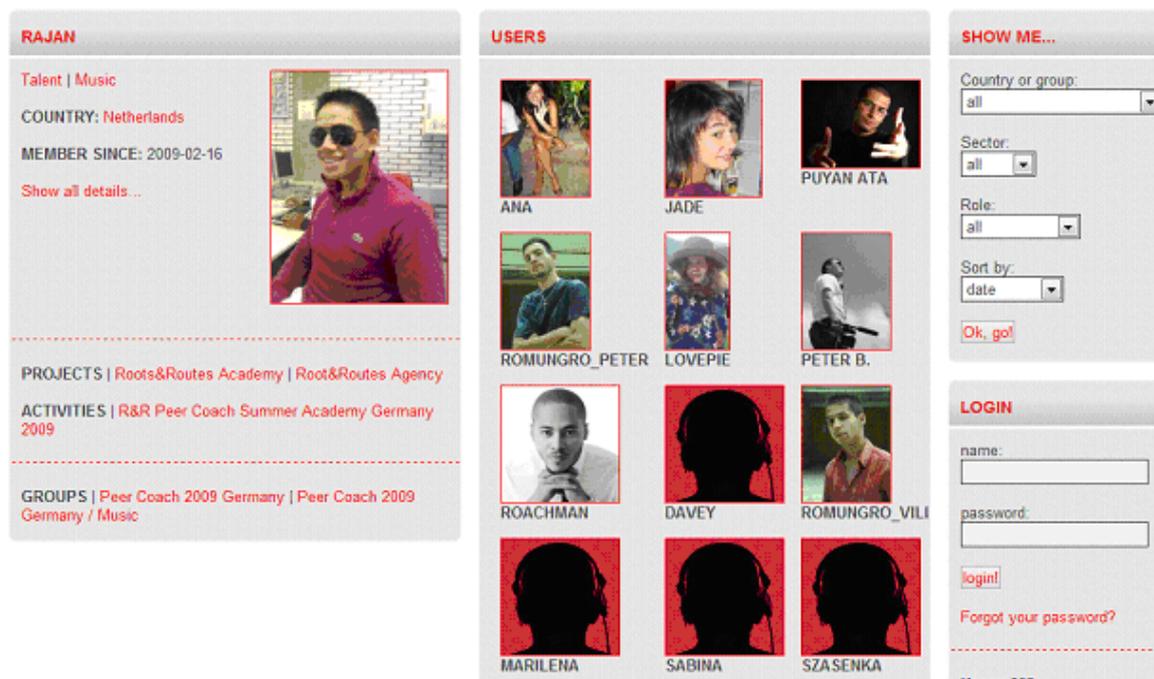


Figure 2: Online profile of a user¹

¹ The discipline of the user is displayed in the upper left corner. The projects and activities that the user participate in is displayed on the left side. When participated in an event or activity of Roots & Routes the user can become member of a group. The groups have a own environment where they can ask questions and ask advice at the (peer) coaches.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

The first projects, till 2003, focussed on users meeting the professionals and each other and develop their talents. It were short projects of about a week and were very intensive. Workshop, master class, performance at a festival and project was over. Participants were clear in that the projects were very cool, but everyone was back at home because there was no follow up. That was the starting point for Roots & Routes to think about the next step in this learning chain. This led to the development of Summer School and after that a close partnership with the vocational education.

To reach to target group has been an issue for a long time. The word Summer School is not appealing by itself for the target group. This is addressed through working on branding and the deployment of users as ambassadors. Also working with professionals who are idols for the target group is an important strategy.

Collaborating institutions in LINKS-UP



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www.fim.uni-erlangen.de



Arcola Research LLP, London, United Kingdom

www.arcola-research.co.uk



eSociety Institute, The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Hague, The Netherlands

www.esocietyinstituut.nl



Servizi Didattici e Scientifici per l'Università di Firenze, Prato, Italy

www.pin.unifi.it



Salzburg Research Forschungsgesellschaft, Salzburg, Austria

www.salzburgresearch.at



European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN), Milton Keynes, United Kingdom

www.eden-online.org

Project information

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