




# TRY-ANGLE MEETING #3 INTERNAL REPORT

Monday & Tuesday 16/17 October 2023  
Helsinki (FI)



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**LIVE**  
DMA

## Introduction

The Try-Angle experimentation process offers representatives of 18 live music venues in Europe the time and resources to take a step back and find new perspectives on audience development.

Live music venues selected to be part of this project are working together on audience development strategies, notably via the Try-Angle prototype model designed by Live DMA.

On 16 & 17 October 2023, the Try-Angle group met in Helsinki (FI) for the third time, in G Live Lab venue. This third Try-Angle meeting intended to focus on ending the review of the Try-Angle prototype as well as a setting the first stones of the new graphic design and format the tool should have.

You can read the report of the first Try-Angle meeting in Bilbao [here](#) and the second meeting in Lyon [here](#).

This report of the third meeting aims to convey the main points of discussion and decisions taken regarding the Try-Angle prototype tool.

### Venues part of the Try-Angle experimentation project:

- Phil Henrion for [Atelier Rock](#), Huy (BE)
- Egija Salnikova from [Cesis Concert Hall](#), Cesis (LV)
- Jaani Haapsalo for [G Live Lab Helsinki](#) and [G Live Lab Tampere](#) (FI)
- Mike Naert from [Het Depot](#), Leuven (BE)
- Jean-Christophe Gérard and Alain Brohard for [L'Autre Canal](#), Nancy (FR)
- Charlotte Olejnik for [Le Gueulard Plus](#), Nilvange (FR)
- May Linn Vollen Heggertveit, Bente Sjøfting and Frode Kleveland Baardsen for [Lie Bydelshus](#), Skien (NO)
- Gonçalo Riscado for [Music Box](#), Lisbon (PT)
- Marine Idir for [Petit Bain](#), Paris (FR)
- Elio Giacoma, [Povero Ragno](#), Cuneo (IT)
- Steffan Lykke Møller for [Radar](#), Aarhus (DK)
- Célia Carron for [Rocking Chair](#), Vevey (CH)
- Tomi Legido Sanchez for [Sala Mardi Gras](#), A Coruña (ES)
- Aitor Bengoetxea for [Sanagustin Kulturgunea](#), Azpeitia (ES)
- Ben Zschorn for [Scheune](#), Dresden (DE)
- Waldo Volmer for [Stad als Podium](#), Harderwijk (NL)
- Kukka Hytönen for [Tanssisali Lutakko](#), Jyväskylä (FI)

## 1. Feedback on steps 5/6/7 of the Try-Angle

The first part of the meeting was dedicated to reviewing the final steps of the Try-Angle prototype tool. Here are some comments and feedbacks that were raised and discussed:

- Step 6 should have a more focused approach (on one specific audience segment, on what happens inside a venue...)
- The questions trigger ideas and discussions, but it's hard to answer yes or no. It's a spectrum, sometimes "it depends"
- The final tool should allow people to go into concrete examples related to the questions. Examples should not only focus on best practices, but also share some failures, because you can learn a lot from them. It would make the tool alive.
- With all the examples given, we see it's more nuanced, it's not about YES or NO. Also, with the good practices we talked about, it drives it into an online tool, something that should evolve, that is alive. Paperform is overwhelming.
- One of the best things about this tool is that it's about sharing experience, but you need more feedback about how you're using it. Feedback qualitative & quantitative. Questions lead to examples leads to contact forms. Some questions lead to no example. What happens with the empty slots?
  - Everytime we do sthg, do a little video, have a Try-Angle youtube channel. Can be tutorials detailed, can also be anecdotes.
  - Give contact details of someone who done it. Curated database of specialists: closed, only for Live DMA members
  - Challenge to keep everybody involve in the next couple of years.
- Audience vs community. To work with community and involve them, you need to look at it in the timeline of a year. Strong community = strong venue. Need constant communication, build trust. In communication strategy, programming strategy, participatory activities: what should I do to raise this community & have it strong. That's a level missing in the try-angle right now.
  - We started the try-angle from a promotion point of view (sell tickets). Powerful to look at it from grassroots point of view
  - To look at how to bring communities inside, different from bringing audience in and sell tickets. We need to explicit it in the tool. Communities already exist, and venues can build their own communities.
- The tool is missing the communication part. We see how to put ideas into action, and that's important. But missing the audience dialogue, the right tools to communicate info and engage communities, you're struggling. Need to think about the daily constraints. Need story-telling tool, how to implement dialogue with audience. Perhaps in the form of a timeline (how often talk to your audience, with what means, etc). We need a story-telling approach in the tool.
- Tool starts with questions about what you wanna do and ends about story-telling approach.
- Not policy vs events but: what's the story you wanna tell and how to put it into a timeline?

- Event step is really focused, then you zoom out, but unsure how steps 6 & 7 relate to the rest. It's important to know where you're going. You need a satisfaction at the end, have something to take out from tool.
  - End with some words of encouragement or hope. Think about mental health of staff. "If you don't tick all the boxes, it's okay".
- It's important to make things explicit: we work for this group & that group and you're welcome to join us.
- **Make the tool actionable, people feel like they done good work and not have more work**
- Story-telling: you cannot tell the same story for 20 years. Good stories from 1990s, but how to tell new stories? How to get rid of old stories? >> not get rid from old stories but have new perspectives on it.

#### SUMMARY OF THINGS TO INCLUDE IN THE NEXT TOOL

- Online tool with practical examples
- No Yes/No questions, or with examples to illustrate it
- Difference between "audience development" (sell tickets) and "community-building"
- Include story-telling approach
- Tool needs to end with satisfaction of having done good work



## 2. Revelland presentation: the notion of «creative accessibility»

During the Try-Angle meeting, was also organized an online exchange with Ronald Ligtenberg from Dutch organization Possibilize, specialized in running cultural projects which involve people with physical or intellectual limitations. They notably organise the Sencity Festival in Utrecht, a sensory festival to experience music & culture with all senses. Possibilize is also involved in the Revelland project, which aims at developing inclusive and immersive multi-sensory shows.

Throughout all the work Possibilize does, they rely on the notion of "creative accessibility": accessibility in such a way that multiple groups benefit. Creative accessibility provides an equal experience for all, although it focuses on certain specific groups of people with disabilities (intellectual limitations, people who are deaf or with hearing limitations...) and includes them throughout the whole process via "Inclusion Boards".

### ACCESSIBILITY ELEMENTS

- Usability - where can you order?
- Reliability - is your communication correct...?
- Understandability - is it clear where...?
- Reachability - can I reach....?
- Treatment- do my colleagues know....?
- Payability - who pays ....?
- Experienc - what is happening on stage?

Ronald also shared in his presentation some basic accessibility elements, and basic things to think about when wishing to welcome people with disabilities in a venue.

#### Where to start:

- Involve people with a limitation:
  - with every new plan... ("nothing about us without us")
  - ...from the very beginning. ("not 'care for' people, rather look with them")
- Honest description on the website.
- Research on terminology (in general - individual)
- "How can our solution benefit multiple groups?"

This project and philosophy presentation was relevant for the Try-Angle group because there are some links between the two projects: working with specific communities, changing the artistic and settings side of an event to bring in new value...

### 3. Dilemma exercise: artistic gatekeeping

From the last Try-Angle meeting, we could notice that participants were more reluctant to change the artistic side, than the settings side. Artistic gatekeeping, the fact that only a handful of persons within a venue have the power over artistic decisions (booker, programming committee...) is the reason of this reluctance.

Thus, we decided to do a dilemma exercise with participants to help them reflect on this notion of artistic prescription. The exercise presented two ideas, which were put in the form of a dilemma: X vs Y. Participants had to choose a side and explain why they chose this one. Of course, the whole point of the exercise was that it was not easy to pick a side, the dilemma presented could not be answered through Yes or No. This exercise triggered discussions and debates.



### Dilemma #1: We give audience what they want VS we give audience what they need

#### “we give the audience what they want”

- Evolve from gatekeepership to curatorship (what communities need)
- Since taking part in the Try-Angle project, some participants' mentalities have evolved. One venue testified of their choice to programme genres they would not programme before. These nights are now sold-out. The audience have made the venue understand that it is now part of the artistic line of the venue to programme such genres
- As promoter, a participant sees himself as working for customer service.
- “We don't know better than the others”
- It has a lot to do with money issues, certain principle that venue don't exist if they don't sell tickets, so need to think about commercial side = not for profit need money still.

#### “we give the audience what they need”

- Giving audiences only what they want would be a narrow perspective.
- Discovery/Prescriptor/educational role of venue (mission driven).
- First give what they want, then go the extra mile to give them more, something they didn't know they needed.
- We give audience what they need, because other venues have the role of giving audience what they want.

### Dilemma #2: A good gatekeeper can judge good quality in every kind of music VS you need to know a music scene deeply before you can judge quality

#### “a good gatekeeper can judge good quality in every kind of music”

- Music is about quality, not about being an expert
- A good gatekeeper can judge
- A good gatekeeper has to have a good network (not necessarily know everything about every genre, but know people who know)
- Judging is easy, but maybe you're wrong.

#### “you need to know a music scene deeply before you can judge quality”

- It's a slippery slope to go this way because music & different scenes are grounded in very specific contexts, cultures, etc. If you don't surround yourself with people who really know and pass on this heritage and take the time to understand what it's about, hard to grasp what's going on.

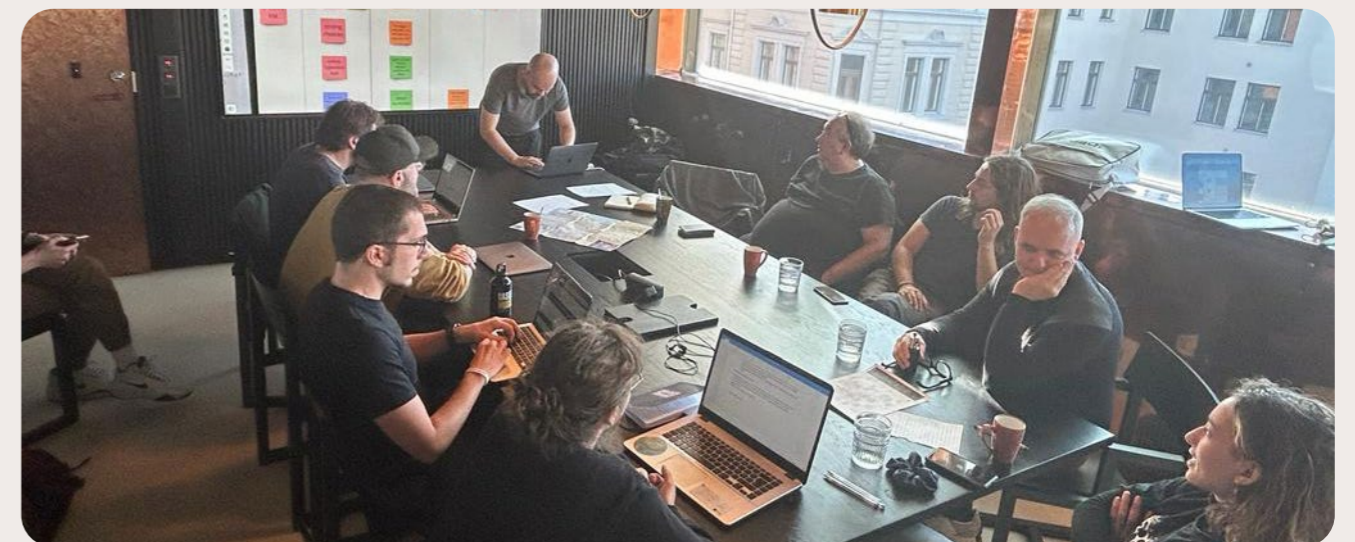
### Dilemma #3: Our job is to find great bands vs our job is to find great audiences

#### “our job is to find great bands”

- I work in a music venue, so I work on the bands side
- If you find great band you find great audience, the reverse not necessarily true
- Our focus is on building audiences, and the best tool is to do that through choice of the band.
- Long-term, if you put quality every time, audience will trust the venue as good venue.

#### “our job is to find great audiences”

- Need to match audiences with bands
- Sometimes, no audience for great bands
- As programmer, 10000 bands/year offer for only 300 spots.
- If you find your audiences, it would be easier to book the great bands.
- Open-mic evening organized at one venue for 20 years, no marketing but full room
- When I put music not so great, I still see audience smiling and happy, and this collective thing is good.



## Dilemma #4: Quality is a fact VS quality is an opinion

### “quality is a fact”

- We are looking at band life, we recognized something going on. But, there's a little something in the air, that's quality
- If the audience is into it, then perhaps it becomes a fact.
- A good band is to have great audience for that band.
- What does it say about you as gatekeeper if you can't differentiate opinion & fact?

### “quality is an opinion”

- Skills affect but that's not the only thing. Skill is different from quality
- Do not mistake quality with taste. What is the difference between taste & quality? >> Depends on what is your criteria for quality (number of tickets sold? Fact. Popularity? Situated in time-frame, geographical, etc so opinion).
  - What is quality for you?
  - Be explicit about what quality is for your venue
- When a venue organizes contests, they have a jury with different people. Decision should not rely on one person only.

## Dilemma #5: We need older experienced gatekeepers VS we need younger fresh gatekeepers

### “we need older experienced gatekeepers”

- Once you get older & more experienced, the tricky part is to stay fresh, and that doesn't work the other way around.
- Older needs an open mind, otherwise you're not a good gatekeeper.

### “we need younger fresh gatekeepers”

- We already have plenty of old, we need young & fresh.
- “We need a freshkeeper”
  - Be curious, and the way to keep curious is to talk to audiences.
- Term gatekeeper comes when you're more experienced. Only experience gives you this self-awareness.
  - “Be a door-opener”
- Difference between good & bad gatekeeper?

## 4. Exercise - 3 questions

### What is the role of a gatekeeper? Describe

- Defending / be aware of the values of a venue
- Fulfilling your mission (//mission driven or self assigned)
- Matching audiences with your offer
- Know the segment of your audience
- Involve the other tribes but that don't come to your venue
- Project in long-term, educational perspective, and refresh the audiences (they get older, need new customers asap, audiences of tomorrow)
- You have to make choices, saying NO is an answer
- Maintain a relevant network
- Transmission role is crucial, hard to find new gatekeepers which have a general approach of popular music

### What would you need to feel safe in your venue to change artistic side?

- Money & trust (from municipality...) to develop an artistic view for a longer period of time
- Image: hard to develop artistic side if you have to fight against your image of your venue
- Data: proof that there is an existing or potential audience before feeling safe to change artistic side
- New people that want to commit to your mission/venue; New ambassadors that are part of communities, that know the genre, have a network of their own
- Open horizons
- Long-term vision
- Audience changes over time
- People like new stuff
- Discussion on venues that do not want to change
- Changing artistic side does not mean doing more. Can mean doing less or shaping it in another way.
  - Do for everybody is do for nobody. Make choices
- Sometimes, they are other dependencies. Hard to change because of fixed processes.
- when change the artistic side, they complain cos they don't like that kind of music. Same for Raine, venue run by volunteers metal heads. Don't like when there is rap show, hard to get volunteers to work on these nights.
  - Key issue for mission-driven orga. People volunteer for you cos they believe in the music you put out. But, they're not happy when the music changes.

### Why could changing the artistic side be good in a venue?

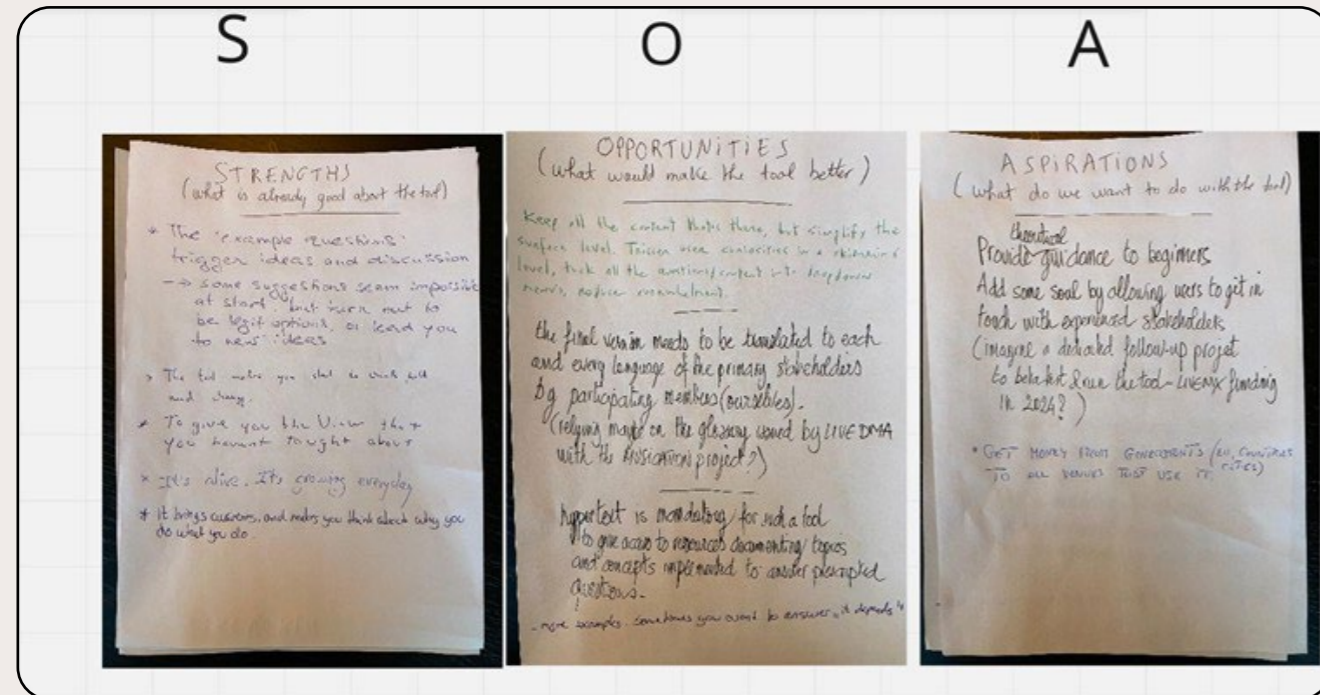
- Renewing
- A way to renew/attract new audiences and appeal to their new habits
- Reflect best society, and how its evolving >> be a part of society
- A way to get out of your comfort zone and see things differently, find meaning in your work, can be fun and inspiring
- Can be good cos new approach & artistic line can be an attractive reason for media coverage / communication
- It can help you change the settings side, improve the venue settings
- Changing artistic side is more than just doing more events. Maybe do less & more focused
- In order to not become extinct, call to action



## 5. Brainstorming graphic design & results of soar exercise

Throughout the two meeting days, participants could write down their thoughts & ideas regarding the tool & its graphic design format on three pieces of paper. The first one asked participants what they thought about the **strengths** of the tool (what is already good about the tool). The second presented the **opportunities** (what would make the tool better). The third paper showed the participants' **aspirations** for the tool (what do we want to do with the tool).

The participants answers can be seen below. We also discuss these ideas, and see if new ones emerged, with the whole group.



### STRENGTHS:

- Good base, need to make it simpler though
- Triggers new ideas
- Adapt the tool to each organization
- Brings awareness, reflect on your daily work, helps internal discussions, things feel more deliberate

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Simplify the surface level, reduce overwhelm, trigger user curiosity
- Needs translation (// glossary from musication project)
- Hypertext is mandatory to give access to resources
- More examples + not answer "it depends"

### ASPIRATIONS:

- Provide theoretical guidance to beginners
- Add some soul, get in touch with experienced stakeholders

- Dedicate follow-up project (LIVEMX?)
- Funding tool, get money from govts to all venues that use it
- Could travel fast if newsletter thing is a repeating thing. Newsletter could include video instructions. Tackle different aspects within the scene
- Talk about weakness. Talk about what you do.
- A way to trigger exchanges of staff between venues

Then, the analysis of the **strengths, opportunities & aspirations** participants had for the tool gave us some **results**: what the tool should include and look like. Then, participants were asked to find cheaper, effortless alternatives to these **results** and their wishes, in order to find the "essentials of the tool".





## ESSENTIALS OF THE TOOL:

- A good, convincing introduction and foreword telling the user that mandatory action needs to be taken for venue to be viable in the future for venue to exist.
  - Why? Convince music venues
- Hypertext tool
  - Why? To include pop-ups and mention inspiring examples. Create layers to keep the overview. Keep the overall mapping to remember where you stand.
- We value the (binary) strong option
  - Why? To get reflection prior to decision of clicking, not take the easy way out
- Recommended format for inspiring examples (diverse set of examples): audio or video footage
  - Why? More accessible
- A tutorial video on how to use the tool (introduction)
- Easy language so its accessible for whole team & also encouraging, it has to feel good
- Has to be challenging and suitable for multiple types of organisations
- How many languages? 27 languages?
  - Ask network to translate into their language
- Something about persistence & commitment for all over the steps. Encourage people to share & report results. A measure of your progress/timeline. Get some badges (for contributing to the tool).

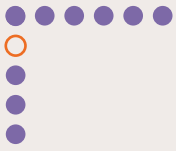
- Why? To empower and stimulate commitment of the organization. Get a reward.

- Can be saved and continued later
- Living tool: version number & release notes/dates
  - Why? Tool can be updated
- A very simplified version of the tool, like a game, easy to implement in teams, stimulate easy questions, once everyone knows what's about, introduce the tool (questionnaire simplified? It tells you you may go deeper in this section, etc)
  - Why? First step that can also be an end result
- Timeline & measure of progress = overview
- It needs a strong ending, call to action, hell yeah!
  - Why? Motivation
- You want to replay it again and again
- Gamify: make a card game, can be translated into a physical tool not overwhelming
  - Why? Work on it around a table
- Who updates the tool? First version: try-angle group. For new versions: Live DMA controls the new updates ? New contributions for examples on a generalized format
- Access for everybody
- Find a new name?? (it's not about a triangle anymore)
- A space to discuss or react (comment zone, discord, forum...)
  - Expert group moderator/monitoring. A referee per territory. Be the ambassador of the tool. Ambassador: someone you can go to ask questions, present the people who made the tool. Valuing what we did in the experimentation phase.
- Ongoing discourse about audience/community
  - Why? Spread message and create impact

## 6. Conclusions

This third Try-Angle meeting allowed us to reach a full reviewing of the Try-Angle tool as well as having concrete leads on the next format and “essential components” of the tool. For the next meeting in May 2024, Live DMA will propose a new prototype tool to be presented to the group, for one last final review. This final meeting will also be the occasion to find a new name to this tool, and discuss possibilities/needs for translation and dissemination.

One flaw of this third Try-Angle meeting was that we did not valorise enough the homeworks participants were asked to realise (a video visit of a venue made by one member of the staff, and by one member of the audience). These homeworks will be valorized in the future.



THANK YOU!!



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