Focal Point: Fifteen Seconds Festival 2017 and Product Placement

2 Years and 15 Seconds

Premiere at the Fifteen Seconds Festival

On the 8th and 9th of June, the Fifteen Seconds Festival, where digital pioneers and marketing experts from all over the world met for lectures and networking, took place at the Stadthalle in Graz. The Graz based start-up e.com was also present, and, after a two-year development phase, finally presented its VR-enabled social network “*connect*” which received fantastic feedback. Michael Schöggl, founder and managing director of the project, summed up, "We have received incredibly positive feedback and numerous well-known companies have expressed an interest in working with us." This does not come as a surprise — *connect* offers the opportunity to showcase products in an innovative and yet unobtrusive way to its customers.

A new form of advertising

If a *connect* user wants to take a photo, he or she only has to touch the photorealistic 3D model of a camera in the self-explanatory app. The customer alone decides which model is placed on their virtual desk. Which models are available to choose from will be decided by the companies. They can upload their latest camera as a 3D model in the app, and present it to the users of *connect* — clearly and yet unobtrusively. "This idea was well received by many companies who would like to see their products in our app," summarizes Michael Schöggl.

Uncomplicated but effective

During the Fifteen Seconds Festival, e.com was already busy talking about potential cooperations and technical prerequisites. According to e.com, a simple system is planned in which companies can upload the 3D models of their products, and are immediately represented in the app. "Since *connect* is as customizable as possible, it is of course up to each user which products they use in *connect*," explains Michael Schöggl. However, information about which user accesses which product will not be passed on for privacy reasons. Companies will receive anonymized data feedback on how many customers have chosen the uploaded product. Through this form of product placement, *connect* can permanently remain free of charge, and, unlike its competitors, must not force advertising on users or sell their personal information.