This report is based on a study conducted during the MID Europe festival in Schladming 8-13 July 2013. The purpose of the report is to give a fuller picture of the environment in Schladming to new experimenters helping them to orientate and understand the issues at stake. It aims to give a context to the experiments helping them to provide more value to Schladming as well as the possibility to find new points of interests for their experiments.
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1. About this report:

1.1.1. Method

This report is based on a study conducted during the MID Europe festival in Schladming 8-13 July 2013. MID Europe is one of the world most known festivals for wind instruments featuring orchestras from all over the world but with a distinct Austrian touch on the music and atmosphere. The study consisted of interviews with local stakeholders and visitors, participatory observation in festivities, excursions in the region and of reading through online and print materials from Schladming.

Image 1: Concert in the main square of Schladming
1.1.2. Purpose
The purpose of the report is to give a fuller picture of the environment in Schladming to new experimenters helping them to orientate and understand the issues at stake. It aims to give a context to the experiments helping them to provide more value to Schladming as well as the possibility to find new points of interests for their experiments. This is not a complete guide for all that goes on in the region – that would be an impossible task to condense to a report – but it should work as a starting point and further exploration into any of the issues presented here can be taken up with the relevant stakeholders in Schladming or with the Author of this report.

1.1.3. Structure
The report begins with an overview of the local and regional issues identified by the respondents as the most important for Schladming to tackle in the coming years. It then presents the tourist experience in Schladming; its offers, visitors and geography. After this follows a case study of a group of visitors to Schladming in the form of an international youth orchestra that forms and plays annually at the MID Europe festival. The report concludes with some methodological recommendations for experimenters.
2. Important Local and Regional Issues:

2.1. Changing tourist industry

2.1.1. Competition
The competition in the tourist industry is getting tougher by each year. Prices are being pushed down, there is new competition from the former Eastern European countries and visitors decide more on the spot where to go. A lot of barriers for tourism have also been eradicated. The language barrier is not as strong now as before. German speakers used to travel more within German speaking countries but now English skills in both the visitors and in the host countries makes language less of an issue. Low cost airlines have also made it just as easy and cheap to travel abroad as in the home country. Of course, another factor is the ease of marketing opened up by the Internet. Many more countries are now open for on-the-spot tourism.

This creates new conditions for regions such as Schladming that has to be flexible and sensitive to changes in demand. The region that picks up new demands faster than the others and adapts to this will be the winner. Therefore, Schladming tries to be present in many different fields and for different target groups in order to be able to adapt.

2.1.2. Internet
The Internet has made it possible for visitors to have much more information about a destination before they visit it. They know what to expect, what to offer and what they can demand. The element of surprise that used to be involved with visiting a new region is exchange for the meticulous planning and time-management of pre-studies over the Internet. The visitors have often planned what to do which day, especially considering that they are only in Schladming on average 3.5 days.

2.2. ICT in Tourism
Tourism is a special form of product that has a special relation to ICT that needs to be taken into account.

- Consumption of tourism takes place in the future and the consumption of the tourism coincide with the production itself. Tourism is therefore not something a consumer can inspect before purchase. Therefore, meta-information about the experience and trust in the supplier is crucial for the decision of consumption.
- The quality of the tourist experience is defined by the interaction between the supplier and the consumer. This is the tourist experience; it is not external to it. ICT therefore is not an informer about the tourist experience, but is part of the experience itself. If the ICT mediated interaction with the supplier is perceived as troublesome and disturbing, the whole experience is perceived as such. On the contrary, if the experience of getting the information is perceived as meaningful in itself -- such as asking a local for the best restaurant in newly learned German instead of looking it up online -- this provides value to the whole experience. The act of getting information and unlocking a destination by learning more about it as one goes along and discovers things through experience is thus
part of the construction of a narrative that makes the tourist experience meaningful and valuable.

Because of these factors, tourism has always been characterized by a high degree of informality. It is also labour intensive and relies a lot on the knowledge and social networks of individual actors. Tourism has never been Fordist and streamlined like many other industries. Tourism is characterized by a high degree of ad-hoc solutions and on-the-spot improvisation since the tourist experience is produced at the same time as its consumption, and one could argue that it is always produced in collaboration with the consumer (which in that case would become a prosumer).

2.3. Marketing
Marketing and branding is key in this new tourism climate. Schladming is now polishing their branding because there has been some confusion in how the name Schladming has been used both in Schladming (the town), Schladming 2030 (the organisation), Schladming-Dachstein (the regional tourist organisation) and Schladming-Rohrmoos (local tourist organisation in Rohrmoos). Now they want to use only Schladming or Schladming 2030, but it is difficult to align all the actors to communicate the same profile. Apart from the different official organisations communicating, the local actors such as hotels and event destinations all have their own communication channels.

Marketing is easier for winter than in summer because of the major events. The ski world cup was a big help with 50000 spectators on the main night plus TV-audience and Internet and social media exposure. Several actors, from official organisations to individual businesses, have their own social media accounts. Winter also provides a clearer offer while the summer offer is very diverted and a bit more confusing. Apart from the big events the important marketing channels are participation in tourism fairs, making deals with travel agencies and visibility in social media. The aim is to become one of the five leading all season destinations in Europe. The target is the mid-price level. Not to be a luxury destination.

2.4. Sustainability
One area where Schladming is very active and are aiming to take a leading role is with work on sustainability relating to the region as a whole and in particular in regards to tourism. They are trying to learn from other towns and regions that have already experimented a lot and to implement the best practices. It is also something that the EU is sponsoring at the moment so there are opportunities to have projects funded. The long-term aim is to make Schladming co2-neutral. The focus is a lot on alternative energy sources, also as a message to the tourist that they are aiming for sustainability.

The relation between sustainability, ecology and tourism is also becoming stronger for example with offering locally produced food, special sustainability offers from hotels and the use of alternative energy to power tourist related activities. Congress Schladming is a showcase for this. It uses a special wood for the facade, uses bio heating, have solar panels on the roof, use water as cooling and that same water is the source of the snow cannons in winter. The aim is to have a synergy between the need for cooling in summer and the need for heating in winter.
There is also a group of about a dozen hotels called "Ramsau Bioniere" (The Ramsau Bioneers) that have pioneered the sustainable tourism and offer "100% organic holidays". They offer healthy organic food, sustainable accommodation and activities close to nature. The tourist group that demands these kinds of holidays is called LOHAS (Lifestyle Of Health and Sustainability) and are becoming an important visitor group. Schladming offers bio shops, organic farms with rooms to rent, electronic bikes, several small producers and the easy for new actors to get aboard with the help of the summer card offers.

Image 3: Ramsau Bioneers.

The challenge however is how to merge sustainability on the one hand and large events with thousands of visitors on the other. Also some of the hiking paths such as "Wilde Wasser" is already bordering on mass tourism with parking lots and long queues in the high season. This is the next big challenge for Schladming. Schladming 2030 plays a key role here to get all the stakeholders abroad, to be able to communicate this to tourists and to involve the young generation in thinking sustainably. It is also a matter of competition because if Schladming can’t find the answers to this, other regions might do.

2.5. Economy

Compared to other Austrian regions and other European regions, Schladming is doing quite well in these times of crisis. The tourism industry accounts for 80% of the economy and as long as that is doing well, Schladming is doing fine. However, it is hard to measure how much tourism actually contributes to since, in a tourist region, everything tends to become part of tourism. The local baker is equally part of tourism as the ski slopes. Agriculture is also still an important economic activity in the region.

Schladming has a low unemployment rate, although it has recently increased since the bankruptcy of the German Schlecker company, which had considerable employment in the region. Although in total numbers it might not seem like much, for a small region, even one company firing 70-80 people gives a considerable bump in unemployment. Schladming 2030 is working with project related to unemployment now, which would now have been an issue ten years ago.

The big problem for the regrowth of Schladming is to get young people to stay in the region. Nowadays, most young people go to study in Graz, Innsbruck or Vienna and it is difficult to get them to return. There are fewer jobs relating to their education and they earn less than they
would in a major city. However it is important for Schladming to keep the know-how and social networks of people who grew up in the region. The key would be to combine the know-how of the region with the special fields that people get education in. But now, many hotels hire people from Germany or Eastern Europe instead who are seasonal workers that don't return the next season. This makes Schladming lose a lot of acquired know-how and having to start over the next season.

The uncertainties that come with the economic crisis also makes Schladming in general go for more small scale projects and try to scale them up rather than major investments that risk failing. Here, Schladming 2030 has a key role. However, the crisis is also an opportunity for Schladming to innovate and do things in new ways.
3. Schladming:

![Image 4: View over Schladming](image)

3.1. Location

Schladming is located in a valley in the region of Styria in central Austria. Close to Salzburg, Linz, Graz and Innsbruck. It's a town of about 4500 inhabitants located right below the Planai Mountain. Rohrmoos, Rohrmoos-Untertal, Ramsau am Dachstein are examples of nearby towns that are a natural part of the visitors experience in Schladming with busses going between them. Many of the offers presented to visitors in Schladming actually take place in or around these towns. There are also smaller villages and individual houses scattered across the mountainsides all over the region.

3.2. Major Events

3.2.1. Ski Championships

Schladming is no stranger to larger events. The most recent was the Ski World Championships in Winter 2013 that featured 50000 visitors. A lot of the new infrastructure in Schladming was built for this event. Schladming also hosted the same event in 1982.
3.2.2. **Special Olympics**

The next big event is the Special Olympics in 2017 with second site in Graz. Most of the hard infrastructure is in place for this event already but the challenge is the "soft" infrastructure of coordinating 3000 athletes, 2200 coaches and 3000 volunteers as well as all the visitors who should also be able to enjoy all the offers that Schladming has. A major task for Schladming today is to bridge from the ski championships to the Special Olympics. This includes training the staff and volunteers, be able to accommodate everyone and to have an online platform ready to support the event, although the Austrian ski federation who are the main organisers of the event develops this.

3.2.3. **Mountain Bike World cup**

Schladming annually host the mountain bike world cup down the Planai track – the same slope as the ski championships use.

3.2.4. **Concerts**

Concerts are another type of event that Schladming can host. For example the Swedish House Mafia had their only Austrian gig at their final tour in 2012 in Schladming with thousands of visitors.

3.3. **The Town of Schladming**

3.3.1. **Square**

Schladming is geographically a small town and everything in it is within walking distance. The main square that intersects the main shopping street in the southern part of town is where most of the restaurants, cafés, bars and stores are located. This is where you will find people in the evenings. At MID Europe there was one stage at the beginning of the street, one at main square and another on a square in a side street, so most activities took place in this short strip. This is also where you can go to withdraw money, go to the pharmacy, or find any other necessities. Most of the city centre is a pedestrian zone.
3.3.2. **Planet Planai**

Another major site is Planet Planai which is the new complex located where the downhill slope of the Planai mountain ends which is also the same place as the finishing line of the ski races. This area also features some hotels and pubs and in the case of races, this is where the action is. There is more to read about the organisation around Planet Planai in the section about relevant organisations.

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**Image 5:** Café in the centre pedestrian zone.

**Image 6:** Planet Planai complex. The ski slope ends to the left of the building.
3.3.3. **Congress Schladming**

The newly built congress centre is located on the eastern edge of the city a few minutes’ walk away from the city centre from Planet Planai. It is highly equipped and can take a lot of visitors and the building itself is part of a sustainability effort.

![Image 7: Congress Schladming](image)

3.3.4. **Tourist Office**

The tourist office is strangely enough located outside of the city centre near the train station in the western end of the town. This is perhaps indicative of a bygone era where the centre of activities were located here. As a consequence, a lot of visitors don’t know where the tourist office is or don’t bother going there unless it is for specific questions about offers they have. More everyday questions are directed to the hotels they are staying at or to Planet Planai, which is more central to where the activities are. Both the tourist office and Planet Planai however close at 6 so after that the hotels are the major source of information.

3.3.5. **Getting around Schladming**

Getting around the town of Schladming is easy. Not only because of the small size but also because there are signs everywhere pointing visitors to the relevant places. It is clear when you are in or near the tourist and food & drink areas because signs everywhere point you in the right direction. Some areas to the north part of town are strictly residential and this is noticeable because the signs suddenly disappear. As a visitor you get the feeling that this areas is for the locals only and you quickly venture back to the city centre in order not to disturb.
There are also information booths with posters of current and upcoming events located around Schladming. These are handled by the local Kaufmannschaft (an umbrella organisation for local business) but it is possible for the organisations that Experimedia work with to use these if necessary. In other words, there is no problem getting around and finding out what goes on in Schladming.

3.4. **Outside Schladming**

A lot of the activities both in summer and in winter take place outside the town of Schladming in the nearby region.
3.4.1. Planai

The Planai mountain is one of the first things new visitors visit. There is a cable car going right above the slopes up to the top where there are restaurants and from where one can go on different hikes.
3.4.2. Dachstein
Apart from the Planai mountain with Schladming right at its foot, the most popular destination is the Dachstein glacier that has skiing opportunities all year round and a spectacular view from the suspension bridge and skywalk at the top. They also recently build a new viewpoint from the top and an exhibition space for ice sculptures carved into the glacier. You can go here from Schladming with bus and cable car to the top.

![Image 12: On top of Dachstein glacier.](image)

3.4.3. Other mountains
There are other mountains located nearby such as Hochwurzen near Rohrmoos-Untertal that offer both summer and winter activities.

3.4.4. Hiking trails
The mountains and valley around the region are full of different hiking trails, which is one of the most popular summer activities. They are clearly marked and described both in online and offline information available in Schladming but also in the new information boards located at cross-sections of the trails. These information boards are strategically placed at the spots where hikers have some choices in terms of where they can go next. If a hiker is tired they can sometimes choose a shorter hike for the rest of the trip at one of these spots for example. There is quite a high rate of rescue missions in Schladming precisely due to hikers who are not aware enough of their own capabilities and the challenges of the environment and end up getting
exhausted. Some trails also feature thematic experiences such as the "wild water" tours of waterfalls and a 50-meter high suspension bridge.

Image 13: Information board along hiking trail.

3.4.5. **Other destinations**

There are also other destination points scattered across the mountains such as adventure parks, local production of goods and food as well as local farms.
3.5. Activities

3.5.1. Winter
In winter the main activity is skiing. There are slopes both in Planai, Hochwurzen and other mountains. The mountains also feature other winter activities such as downhill sled riding (tried and evaluated first hand by the Experimedia team) and plenty of gasthauses. You can also go off-pist, cross-country, snowshoe walking and there is a snowboard park. Compared to some other ski resorts Schladming is quite family oriented in the sense that the partying and nightlife is not in focus although there are plenty of pubs and gasthauses. There are a few clubs in town but nothing compared to the more party oriented ski resorts.

3.5.2. Summer
The amount and variety of summer activities has increased in the later years when Schladming is aiming to become an all-year destination. The most popular activities are hiking, mountain-biking and visiting the glacier. But there are also possibilities for golfing and a number of adventure sports such as paragliding, rafting, climbing and swimming. For the less adventurous there are a number of destinations to visit and nature to enjoy. For example you can take a tour and learn about local herbs, enjoy the view from the skywalk at the glacier, visit animal parks, Jesuit gardens, wool production sites, museums, a local distillery and many more. In contrast to the more straightforward skiing in winter, the summer offers can be hard for visitors to pick and choose from and the variety can be overwhelming.

One thing that helps is that each visitor that stays in Schladming has free access to the summer card which gives discounts or in many cases free entrance to over 200 offers. There is also a well developed website with interactive hiking maps and a hiking app called Summit Lynx to help hikers along. However, many offers are in remote locations so there is still a question of how visitors should spend their time among this abundance of offers. Another consequence of this is that visitors rarely are in the vicinity of some point of interest that they didn't already plan to go to. In contrast to an urban area where each block is filled with things to do, in a region like Schladming the starting point matters less because a car or a bus is most often anyway needed to get to the destination. This is especially the case in summer. In winter, the skis provide some flexibility in terms of how one wants to move down the slopes.

Image 14: The Schladming summer card.
3.6. **Who visits Schladming?**

2/3 of the visitors to Schladming are Austrians. The most common foreigners are Germans. Visitors also come from the nearby eastern European countries such as Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia. England is also a considerable contributor of visitors and visitors from the Nordic countries are increasing due to a special deal between the new hotel at the foot of the Planai and a Nordic travel agency.

Each year 2.8 million nights are booked. The stay is getting shorter. 20 years ago people used to stay 10-14 days. The average stay today is 3.5 days. Nowadays many come just over the weekend if the weather is nice and decide to go on the spot rather than plan in advance. This is most common in the summer where the summer card offers make for a nice family weekend excursion. The accommodation in summer is also cheaper than in winter when the hotels are fully booked with skiers. Families still mostly come in the high seasons, while nowadays the low season is filled with hikers and weekend visitors.

3.7. **Internet**

Schladming is well equipped with WiFi-spots that stretches also up to the connection points and stops on the mountains. There is a free WiFi-network to log in to and this is a fundamental infrastructure for Experimedia.
4. Relevant Organisations:

4.1. Schladming 2030

Schladming 2030 is the partner organisation of Experimedia in Schladming. It was set up in order to coordinate efforts before the ski championships of 2013 and to use the momentum of that event to continue with further development of the region with a more permanent organisation. It is a joint organisation of the town of Schladming (represented by the Mayor), the local tourist organisations, Planai and is also open to any strategic partner in the future of local, regional or national level. The ecosystem of actors that Schladming 2030 works with is formed anew in each project and there are no static relations. Schladming 2030 have a very broad focus in terms of what projects they do and are not limited to tourism. The purpose of Schladming 2030 is to coordinate the efforts of different interests in projects aiming to develop the region. They are therefore not involved in the everyday running of the facilities but have a more strategic role.

It is currently headed by Hans Miller who joined Schladming 2030 in 2011 to work on a fan activation project for the ski championships. Schladming 2030 is quite a small organisation in terms of staff and is therefore not involved in running any permanent operations. They initiate project and then when they have been proven successful hand them over to the relevant actors who can manage them further. An example is a project on e-tourism where Schladming 2030 held workshops and collected ideas but then let the tourist agency implement and manage the software. Another example is the concept of regional shops with local goods that was initiated by Schladming 2030 who was part of making the collection of traditional clothing and coordinating partners but now these shops are run independently.

4.2. Tourist Organisations

There are several tourist organisations operating in the region. The structure of them is also undergoing change at the moment. Schladming-Dachstein is the organisation that does marketing for the whole region. Then each city has their own tourist agency. The one is Schladming is shared between the town of Schladming and the town of Rohrmoos.

The Schladming tourist agency deals with all kinds of everyday tasks of coordination and has great local knowledge and track of what is going on. They are the ones with an "ear to the ground" compared to the more strategic role of Schladming 2030. These everyday tasks are everything from booking rooms for events, plan excursions for bigger groups, help organising
busses, sell packages for bigger events and organise special offers for companies and other bigger groups. They try to combine having offers for groups that stay longer with the ones that are only visiting a few days.

Apart from this they are also an everyday info point where people might come and ask for directions, opening hours, which excursion would be most suitable for today’s weather, what they can do with small children, or which hiking trails would fit the specific individuals asking. This is information that requires a local know-how and a feel for the visitors and would be very hard to formalise on a website or in an app.

The scope of what the tourist agency deal with is very broad since there is not much in Schladming that is not somehow related to tourism – even things that would not be considered tourism in other cities are handled by them in Schladming.

4.3. Planai
Planai is its own company with its own website (planai.at) that deal with everything related to the slopes in Planai, Hochwurzen and Dachstein, thus continuing a work that has been going on since 1949 although the company was founded in 1972. This work includes daily management and transports, as well as installing new attractions and services. They also run PlanaiTV that can be viewed in most hotels and features among other things live cameras from the mountains. Planai also manages Planet Planai which is the ski complex at the foot of the Planai slope which functions as a one-stop shop for ski needs and due to its central location also doubles as a general tourist information point. This complex together with many other infrastructure investments were done for the ski championships. There is some overlap between Planai and the tourist agency in the sense that they both offer guided hiking tours etc. These overlaps can be somewhat confusing for experimenters but it is mostly due to the fact that a lot of work in Schladming is done by people who know each other personally and can broker the deals with each other although they formally are in different organisations.

4.4. Kaufmannschaft
The Kaufmannschaft is an umbrella organisation for local business and represent their interests as well as develop various parts of the city centre to make shopping, dining and other offers easier. They are responsible for the information boards that populate the city centre as well as the "Schladming auf ein blick" maps that feature points of interest. They also have a huge map on a house wall in the city centre. These maps are also reproduced in interactive fashion on their website. They also produce the Schladming gold coins that one can purchase as a local gift as well as produce the "Schladming Post" paper. They are often part of co-producing larger events in the city centre.
4.5. Hotels

Hotels often book directly with travel agencies and Internet booking systems. The tourist agency is working to get all lessors and hotels online. However, some lessors are older couples who have a cabin in the mountain and don't even have Internet access. They have often rented to the same people for decades. Contacts with them have to go through the tourist agency. Many of the hotels located on the mountainsides are smaller family owned hotels. Apart from staying there you can often go hiking with the family that owns them and they thrive a lot on having a familiar feel and personalized contact with guests. The idea of them getting into a standardized booking system can threaten this familiar feeling for them. Instead, they are trying to get the same guests to return every season. This small scale and friendly experience is a key to the uniqueness of the Schladming experience compared to some of the larger, more streamlined resorts. Schladming has not been top-down designed as a ski resort but has grown out of the local social relations that are very much still intact.
5. World Wind Orchestra Project 2013

This report will end with this case study of a large group of visitors that was in Schladming during MID Europe. The purpose is for them so serve as an example for how ICT and social media are used in relation to Schladming. While they are not a typical visitor group, their structure and behaviours highlight some important points.

The World Wind Orchestra Project 2013 is an international youth orchestra that is formed and plays every year at MID Europe. The participants come from many different countries all over the world such as Spain, France and Japan. Each year they form in Schladming and practice their material for one week and then perform it in a concert. The organiser of the orchestra is a conductor from Austria living in the USA. This is the only time of the year that they play together and the members are selected organically by former members of the orchestra recommending new participants who fit the group and who are skilled and dedicated enough to learn new material for a whole concert in only a week. Since members are selected from the social acquaintances of former members (and some also return several years) the group of current and former participants in the orchestra grows as a social network.

The rest of the year they all stay in touch using a Facebook group where the majority that ever played are members and where the current orchestra members posts their pictures and stories from this year. This aspect of sharing serves an important social function. The pictures are not shared (primarily) for the public at large but are meaningful only to the social group itself, often containing internal references to events not understood by outsiders, but it is not only shared with people who were present at the event (this would have become less meaningful since they already experienced it) but with people who are socially connected to the people present at the event but whom themselves were absent. The pictures thus serve to reinforce the ties both within the group that participated this year and between the current members and the former members.

During the week they are present at Schladming they often move together as a group since they are scheduled for rehearsals most of the day and planned for group excursions in the afternoons and then go out together to the bars in the evening. There is thus little need for coordination or sharing through ICT during the actual stay in Schladming. However, ICT is crucial to make the group stick together the time they are apart before it forms again in Schladming the year after.
While this is an atypical visitor group to Schladming, there are several conclusions that can be drawn from this mini case study and from the rest of the information in this report.

1. Due to the small size of Schladming there is not so much need for real-time coordination of people or with people and locations, since most of the social activities take place within a small and defined area (the main street and main square) and other activities out on the mountains are planned ahead with natural breaks such as in the gasthäusers on the way down the slopes. One could argue however that this is because a lack of points of interests along the different paths.

2. The most meaningful sharing of recorded memories such as photos does not happen with the public at large nor only within the group that was present during the stay but with others who were absent yet have a social connection to the people in the group that was in Schladming. Those that could or should have been there, together with the group, but weren’t. They can also serve as historical archive and introduction to the social norms of the group for new members who are going to participate next year.

3. The youth orchestra can serve as a model for how to make groups of people return every season to Schladming. This is a social group that has a strong tie to the specific location of Schladming, where everyone has been, but never everyone at the same time. This kind of community-oriented tourism where a social community is formed online and offline with special ties to Schladming and with returning visitors who each time contribute to a growing collection of shared memories, is a strong concept that would provide each visit to Schladming, and only Schladming, with both familiarity and variation enough to make it attractive to return to each year.
6. Methodology conclusion

There are some lessons to be learned from this report in terms of how to best conduct experiments in Schladming.

Schladming is a region that is based a lot on personal relations and relations of trust. This is between the local stakeholders, between local stakeholders and visiting groups and among groups of visitors. Schladming visitors also consist of various types of groups and people with various interests, needs and reasons for choosing Schladming.

One consequence of this is that specific things to consider in terms of local culture or in terms of which local actors could be relevant to engage in an experiment is not always obvious from the start. It can be well worth consulting with for example the local tourist organisation or the hotels to find out which actor or which particular visitor group would fit the experiment.

When trying to engage users it is probably better to try to find a group of users who are in Schladming for some time and who have some relation with a local organisation. Recruiting visitors spontaneously without previous contact could be difficult. These special groups could be organised travel groups of hikers, groups who are in Schladming for a specific reason such as competitors in a mountain bike race and the youth orchestra from the previous section, or visitor groups that go to the Ramsau Bioneers each season. The recruitment of visitors can then happen with the local organisation as trustful mediators.

There is also all kinds of smaller scale events happening in Schladming that could be a good moment where there are a few more visitors available, and visitors often with some special interest in the region, but that is not so crowded as the big events. There can also be possibilities of having the experiments be an official part of these smaller events. A conclusion from the attempt to market the applications during MID Europe was that it was a low interest because everyone was already busy going to the various concerts around town and thus had no interest in spending more time with an app.

All of this depends on what is required of the users both in terms of their efforts and in terms of what follow-up evaluation is going to be made. Getting people to download an app and try it out with an in-app evaluation could work with the “shotgun-approach” of just approaching visitors, but the benefit of engaging some special group with relations to local actors is that it can give a fuller picture of what their needs and, how the experiment responded to those needs and in what socio-technical context the recruited group live.