

Hit the city



Organising institution/partners:

Hit the City is an online city game, developed by Link in the Cable, Carabas / Tincture and Vliegwerk with the support of Mediawijs.

Country:

Belgium

Hashtags (key words):

#socialmedia #game #youngpeople #vulnerable #online #identity #guide

Main topic/Theme:

The game focuses on socially vulnerable young people from 13 years old and challenges them to think about the use of social media and their online identity.

Media Literacy Competencies/Aims/Expected outcome (individual and social impact, challenges, risks):

This game enables young people to enhance their own use of and analyse their attitude to social media. In 'Hit the City' players get missions in which they have to prove that they can deal with social media in a responsible way.

General Pedagogic Objectives:

Through this game young people learn about new aspects of their (urban) environment.

Participants – age:

Young people from 13 years old. The game was made in collaboration with and tested by socially vulnerable young people (special youth care, newcomers, ...), but of course, it can be played with other audiences.

Participants – number:

From 6 players (no upper limit)

Participants – entry competencies/skills

The participants need to know how (social) media works on a basic level.

Description – step by step:

Preparation:

To get started with 'Hit The City', it's important to adjust the website for use.

Via the admin page, you customize the videos you want to use as game explanation, determine the timing of the assignments and make sure all text is correct. Try to estimate (based on the number of players) how many points the players have to reach at the end of the game.

Most of the assignments are ready for use, but some assignments you will need to adapt to the environment or circumstances in which you want to play the game. In addition, you have to make sure you have enough cards with the clan

codes (1 per player, so you can keep access codes for one clan secret for the other clan players) and masks that allow players to fulfill their challenges anonymously.

Start the game:

At the start of the game, you collect all the players on one location. You give them a brief explanation of the game course. Then you watch the introductory video together with the players, in which the virtual opponent explains his plans and challenges to the players.

Make sure you have 1 supervisor for every clan who thinks with the youngsters about the concrete implementation of the challenges. This supervisor organizes the game on a practical level: Who does what assignment? What material can we use? Where do we speak? How much time do we spend on?, ... These coaches are completely involved in the game. This way participants are very motivated and focused.

The neutral game leader can meanwhile moderate and approve the challenges through the admin site. This way the game leader can give a full update to the players at the end of the first game session (after 2 hours for example). At the end of this first game session in group, you can also motivate players to work individually on certain challenges.

Second session:

During the second session, you can discuss with the players about the (best) submissions of the first challenges. In addition, you can introduce new challenges in the group. Players now have the choice to continue working on any previously unsuccessful targets, or shift their focus on the new challenges. This widens the potential game actions and makes the game more entertaining. As a neutral game leader you can also work on the moderation of assignments (something that is also possible in between the game moments).

Final:

The final of the game is the last game session. In this session you try to collect as many players as possible. During this game session players have a last chance to make as many entries as possible for challenges that have been running for a long time. In addition, the latest challenges are introduced. These are assignments that require some more practical organization (for example because they are location-based or because the players are dependent on others to handle them).

At the end of the deadline, the game has ended and you will overview with all players if the goals are reached, which clan has won and which entries are most noticeable. There is also room for a discussion en reflection about the media literacy aspects of the challenges.

Hit The City is available under a Creative Commons license. You can install the game for free. You can also ask for the expertise of the creators (Link in the cable, Vliegwerk and Carabas / Tincture). Do you want to get started with Hit The City? Then contact david.loyen@lidk.be to see how you work best. They can provide a substantive, technical and / or game technical support.

Resources:

Time/duration

At least 3 sessions of 2 hours, spread over at least 3 days. The participants can play individually in the meantime. The game can be spread over longer periods.

Hit The City is conceived as a multi-day game activity in an open formula. This means that young people can board and get off whenever they want. During the game sessions they are actively encouraged to participate, but can also play individually outside the game sessions. The game sessions have 3 targets:

- to motivate the players adequately
- to provide additional game explanation
- and to introduce new challenges to the players.

It is no problem if some players stop to participate during the game or if new players get involved. In addition, it is possible that the players get help from friends, relatives or even unknowns in executing the challenges.

Venue/place:

You can play the game in every city you want if you adjust the challenges. The first Hit the city game is developed to play in the city of Leuven (Belgium).

Equipments/Materials:

- A room with computer, internet connection and projector for showing the game manual.
- The website www.hitthecity.be is the virtual headquarters of the game. The site contains a video with game layout, the score overview, the explanation of the various challenges and the possibility to submit submissions to challenges.
- Tablets or smartphones for the players to fulfill different challenges. Ideally these devices have a mobile data connection.
- For each player a paper with the clan code
- A mask for each player (see hints)

Human resources:

At least 3 supervisors (from 20 players you count 2 extra assistants per 10 additional players).

1 supervisor has a neutral role. He takes care of the explanation of the game, moderates the entries of players and keeps the practical organization in mind.

The other two coaches each take care of a group of players and help them with the execution of the challenges.

Evaluation

Link in de Kabel organised a try-out of the game with a group of vulnerable young people in Leuven. The results are integrated in the hints for the facilitator.

Hints for the facilitator

1. Create your own social media accounts. Make sure you have an account per clan on YouTube and Instagram. This way you avoid that players are going to use their personal account, which means that there is a smaller threshold for the young people to carry out the challenges.
2. Use masks. Young people feel safer when they are more or less anonymous. Especially if the assignments are about posting movies or pictures of themselves, the masks are a great way to avoid privacy issues.
3. Use the opportunity to make challenges in which the young people discover their city in another way. For example, send them during the final to a place where they would otherwise never come. Or let them search for objects, places, buildings or monuments that they may know but they never actively looked at. In this way, you can also work on – in addition to the media literacy goals – the way in which young people perceive or deal with their surroundings.
4. An award is not really necessary. The young people who participated in the try-out had the reputation to be very competitive and ask at the beginning of each game what they can win. By the approach with a video introduction and the use of the website was this feeling completely absent. The competition is in the double challenge: get enough points against the deadline with all players and try to overtake another clan.
5. In the ideal scenario there is a supervisor per clan. This supervisor can help the young people to avoid frustration. Young players may need help in the process of consultation and organization, but also for media-related matters. In addition, the clan supervisors can encourage a healthy competitive atmosphere between the clans.

Further information:

Contact:

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