

11 | DISCOVER THE WORLD OF BFM THROUGH ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Marikit Taylor¹, Loïc Hans¹, Johan Jaquet¹, Dan Meyer²

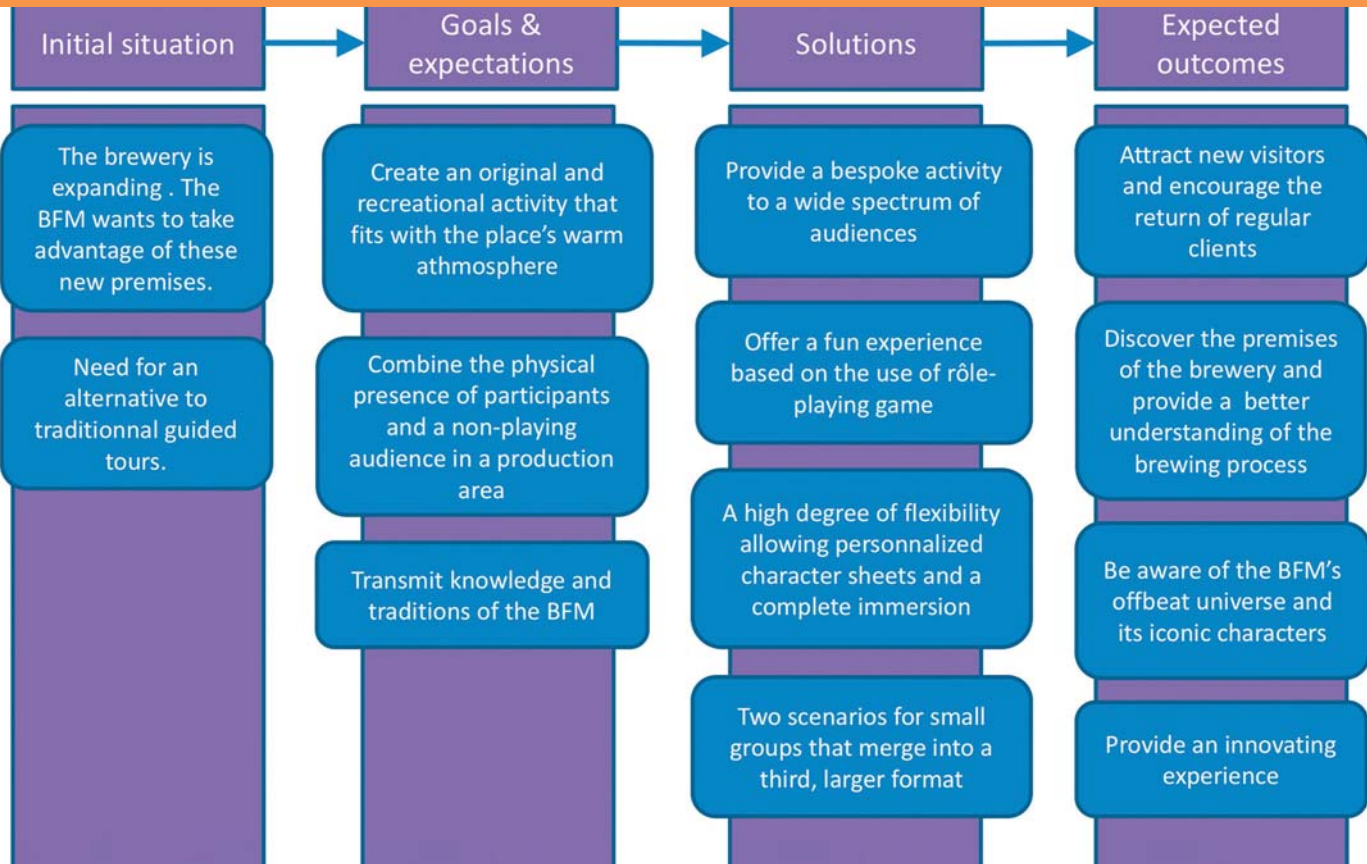
1. Entrée de Jeux
 2. Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes
 Contact: loic@entree-de-jeux.ch

ABSTRACT

« La Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes » (BFM) offers premises where customers, visitors and employees meet in a warm atmosphere. Beyond its traditional beers, the brand stands out for its rich and offbeat universe. The brewery wants to encourage the return of visitors who have already come in the past. To complete the existing guided tours offer within its walls, three unique role-playing activities are developed. These serious games allow groups of visitors to discover the brewery's culture and emblematic characters in a recreational way.

KEYWORDS

Role-playing game; Brewery; Immersion; Communication; Cultural heritage; Story telling; Serious game.





CONTEXT

“La Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes” (BFM) is established in Saignelégier, Jura. With its spirited image, BFM is to be positioned as a pioneer in Swiss craft brewing. It creates fine, complex beers which are exported in more than 15 countries.

The world famous BFM can be discovered at the brewery, where several open spaces intertwine to create a brewery with its own particular character and identity. These include all the infrastructure necessary for brewing, storage and fermentation, a shop, a bar and an area dedicated to entertainment (stage, cultural events). Here, customers, visitors and employees congregate to enjoy the warm atmosphere of the BFM. The brand has created a rich and offbeat universe of its own, linked to emblematic characters of the brewery.

Following the BFM’s economic development, a new reception area has been established at the heart of the brewery. To make the most of these unusual premises, the BFM has chosen to develop specific offers that take place within its walls. These include an innovative experience based on the immersive practice of role- playing game. These serious game activities are intended to transmit the culture and universe of the “Brasserie des Franches Montagnes” in a recreational way.

TARGETED ISSUE

For several years now, the “Brasserie des Franches Montagnes” has been offering relatively formal guided tours with identical contents from one time to the next. It also proposes traditional beer tastings, bar service, foosball, darts, a shop and various events (concerts, game evenings, meals, ...). Regulars are also delighted by the presence of 27,6, the brewery’s lucky cat. The aim is now to expand the existing offers to encourage the BFM’s public to return to the brewery, and to attract new audiences such as groups of players.

To do this, it is advisable to develop a short animation concept (about 1 hour) which is both immersive and original. The desired thematic axis for this concept aims to introduce the world of the BFM in a fun way and to describe the various stages of beer production. The transmission of content must be done in a pleasant and recreational way to be in harmony with the warm atmosphere of the place. It is necessary to ensure the well-being of the participants, who must feel comfortable.

As the reception area includes places with different functions, the game must therefore be adapted to the simultaneous presence of participants and a non-playing audience.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The chosen solution is proposed by Entrée de Jeux, a cooperative company formed of game authors and historians (among other skills), which has the specificity of creating highly themed role-playing

To make the most of its unusual premises, BFM has chosen to develop specific offers that take place within its walls.



games that are accessible to the general public. Participants embody emblematic characters inspired by the brewery’s universe and aim to solve different mysteries as they evolve inside the premises. It is mainly a game of communication between players. The “serious” content is distilled via the character sheets. It is spread to the whole group as interactions occur. A short debriefing at the end of the game uses the different aspects of the game as a basis for transmitting more in-depth content if desired.

Role-playing is often overlooked as an immersive learning tool. Its practice has been strongly renewed and democratized in recent years. The social bond forged between participants during the activity allows the pleasant transmission of content within a process perceived as recreational by the players.

The experiments proposed at the BFM are scripted to be as autonomous as possible. A BFM animator presents the game and offers a light coaching. The presence of actors or animators specialized in role- playing games is not necessary. This is an important aspect of maintaining a permanent offer.



RELEVANT INNOVATION

55

Two distinct role-playing scenarios have been developed. The first is entitled “Red Alex Redemption” and the second “Les Aventuriers de la Bière Perdue”. Their respective formats are similar: 1 hour of animation, 8 to 15 players. One of the innovations is that they are designed to be combined to form a third fun experience, offered for groups of up to 25 people.

One of the two role-playing scenarios includes “escape game” mechanisms, in which players have to solve puzzles while playing their character. To our knowledge, such a mix of genres is a first in Switzerland.

The three fun experiences provided to the BFM are coded in a software. It allows the simple and fast export of character sheets that have to be printed. The use of such software is highly innovative and provides a large degree of flexibility:

- › The objectives of the characters vary according to the number of players.
This added value makes it possible to accept groups varying in size.
- › The character sheets adapt to the names and genders.
- › It is possible to assign specific roles to people who feel more at ease, and less demanding roles to more reserved people.

The role-playing games convey the values of the brewery and immerse the players into the world of craft brewing by encouraging their awareness of the steps involved in making beer. By proposing an immersive serious game approach, which takes place in the very heart of a place with multiple uses is very original and stands out from the usual practices.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS

The process of creating the role-playing games took more than a year – time for the designers to immerse themselves in the world of BFM, acquire the knowledge that needed to be transmitted, carry out test games, and propose a game format with three unique experiences, adapted to the brewery and its constraints.

Both scenarios will be showcased in mid-March 2019 at the Ludesco games festival in La Chaux-de-Fonds. The last test games will take place on this occasion. The finalization of the permanent offers is scheduled for April 2019. They will be available in French during the first operating season.



The main outcome is to increase the number of people visiting the brewery by encouraging the return of visitors who have already come in the past.

CONCLUSION

New and original game experiences complete the BFM's offer to the general public (locals) and visitors of the brewery. Beyond the manufacture of beer itself, the "Brasserie des Franches-Montagnes" is also based on an offbeat universe as well as the use of a unique multi-purpose reception area. The use of role-playing games as a tool for transmitting knowledge makes it possible to value and transmit a rich culture in a pleasant and immersive way to groups of varying sizes.

PERSPECTIVES & NEEDS

Costume elements will probably be added in the near future to increase the immersive aspect of the game.

After the first year of operation, it is planned to develop the game in other languages (German, English) in order to promote this original offer for audiences coming from beyond linguistic borders. This approach will be coupled with promotional actions.

REFERENCES

Le jeu de rôle, outil d'émulation. L. Jeannerat (2014). Extrait des Actes 2014 de la société jurassienne d'émulation.

Jouer avec l'Histoire. O. Caira, Jérôme Larré et al., L'atelier du jeu de rôle, Pinkerton Press (2009)

Jeux de rôle, les forges de la fiction. O. Caira, CNRS éditions (2007)

La bible du team-building. A. Tonnelé, Editions Eyrolles (2017)

Description of the BFM's world and activities: www.brasseriebfm.ch

Information on role-playing game projects developed as serious games: www.entree-de-jeux.ch