

The Great Transition

Project 56 – “L’île de la Transition”

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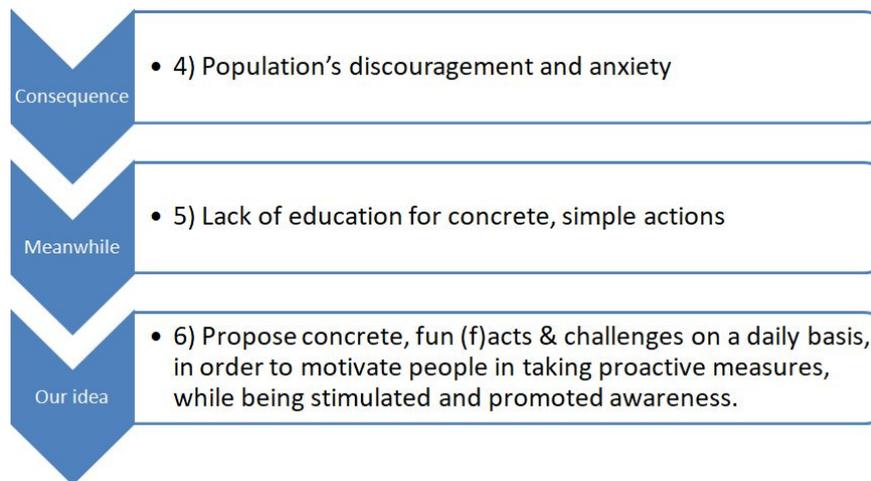
NOTE OF INTENT

1) Problem

November 20, 2019. Jennifer Schuessler informs about the Oxford Word of the Year 2019 in *The New York Times*: **climate emergency**. Indeed, “the dictionary company released an all-environmental shortlist including “climate action,” “climate denial” and “eco-anxiety”[1]. On Oxford Dictionaries’ website, climate emergency is defined as “a situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it. This year, heightened public awareness of climate science and the myriad implications for communities around the world has generated enormous discussion of what the UN Secretary-General has called ‘**the defining issue of our time**’[2].

Thus, global warming appears as the biggest issue of the 21st century, both for the humankind and the Earth. Fighting this growing threat implies tremendous efforts, and it is expected from the humankind to reshape and revolutionize its way to live and consume. Since urgent and proactive actions are necessary, we do believe in the power of **education** in this perilous fight. Moreover, in the stretched context of the recent “fake news” trend, education appears as the main key to struggle against misinformation. Our project is based on our personal, chronological analysis of the problem inducted by the perception of climate change, as follows:





In order to conduct our project – the concept of which, you will discover later on– in the most relevant way, we chose the **entertainment industry**. Indeed, this industry does perfectly affect our target: the youth. In our society nowadays, the youth often admires the owner of a powerful Mercedes, and seek resembling to him, rather than resembling an individual who uses their bike. Since ecology is perceived by many youngsters as lame and boring, the challenge we face is make ecology fun and cool, through an entertaining, playful, and educational television emission fighting against stereotypes about ecology.

2) Concept

Technology and environment may seem antinomic, but as a team, we truly believe in pedagogical contribution through media support, because it has an indisputable impact on society and its future. This is why a media such as television is still considered as a popular household item in more than 94% [3] of French homes because it mixes instructive aspect and entertainment for different generations. After a rigorous analysis of each television program’s potential, we have picked a reality show defined as a “virtual game” broadcasting live, the daily life of a group of individuals evolving in a given environment (e.g. a house and as per a set of predefined rules). The target-group for this program is mostly composed by people from 18 to 24 years old).

Nonetheless, players will remain on the show for several episodes which will alternate between community–life within the villa and hardships urging inhabitants to confront each other through mental, creative or athletic contests. Indeed, the rule breaking is considered to be environmental carelessness or disrespectful behaviors which will lead to the player being disqualified by Emma Jones, (a famous actress identified as “a coach”). On the contrary, players demonstrating environmental consciousness in their daily behavior such as waste recycling, water or energy savings, will obtain credits or advantages. During these moments, we will share advice, tips, environmentally friendly actions provided by participants and Emma Jones (example : short - video showing how to elaborate a homemade shampoo).

Nevertheless, developing a coherent project as a reality - show was truly challenging for us, since reality - shows elicit mixed - reactions such as repulsion and fascination. Undeniably, people often disagree to the alteration of personal values (superficial

relationships, celebrity driven culture instead of meritocracy celebration), often projected in reality shows.. Thus, it was complicated to bring the environmental emergency aspect into such a show. Nonetheless, young generations are constantly facing environmental warnings in the media, being sensitized, but feeling like there is nothing they can do to alter the situation. Through a reality-show focusing on actual day to day solutions, the audience will be able to integrate concepts and act accordingly, thus helping attitudes change, which is much needed in order for our planet to be preserved, for future generations.

3) Impact

Entertainment programs and reality shows are a potent force to be reckoned with, when it comes to the transmission of social values and norms. More than 40% of French people aged between 14 and 25 years old, frequently watch reality tv programs, making a habit out of it, whilst they are likely to spend more time exposed to reality tv content than at school or with their parents. Reality television is addictive because it's entertaining, relatable and interactive with audience. Many teens are completely obsessed with shows and with their characters. Young people compare themselves to the characters they see in those shows, whom are very often beautiful, rich and attractive. Hence, teens are very likely to pick up habits and views on real life situations from those shows. That's why broadcasting entertainment programs can have a strong positive impact on youth.

Firstly, we want to make everyone aware of environmental issues because awareness is the first step into changing individual habits to protect the environment. Through an educational approach (our characters are themselves discovering how to respect the environment), we aim to educate our viewers on the key issues linked to the protection of our environment: global warming, plastic pollution, endangered species... As most initiatives which attempt to tackle the environmental crisis mainly involve people that are already committed to this topic, we believe that there is a real lack of communication with less-educated individuals. We know indeed, that education is positively correlated to awareness when it comes to environmental issues but negatively correlated to watching reality tv programs. Therefore, by creating a powerful Reality TV show we should be able to convey powerful normative beliefs to a population that's usually not sensitive to environmental issues yet.

Secondly, we want to create a program that not only raises awareness but also disseminates information and proposes simple and pragmatic solutions that anyone can implement into their daily life. We know that, especially amongst teenagers, reality TV creates a very strong social pressure: either you watch it or you do not. Either you talk, dress, behave as its characters or you do not. Therefore, if those characters adopt eco-friendly practices it is very likely that viewers will do the same. They're a lot of simple behaviors that people would adopt if they were valued socially: just as the Kardashians promoted Fiji Water, our program can promote beautiful and fashionable glass water-bottle etc.

Therefore, through this program, we want to convey a simple message: Earth is hot, don't pollute. Being eco-friendly is the new cool and preserving the environment should be fun and glamorous for everyone.

4) Risks

In order to ensure the success of this project, it is essential to be aware of the risks that could reduce its impact on the target population. The first risk is the lack of visibility and audience. Indeed, the project must be able to sensitize young people, both massively and quickly in order to have an impact. To avoid a lack of audience when launching this reality TV season, we are first counting on a powerful marketing campaign. "Teasers" such as the one we propose at the end of this note of intent should have an attractive effect on young people, and invite them to take an interest in this season. Indeed, we take all the classic codes of reality TV to ensure continued public interest in the show.

In addition, we intend to sell our concept to television channels. Like that, reality show celebrities would participate in the show, and we could benefit from their brand image. Thus, we significantly limit the risk of lacking visibility. Another risk is also to create a true buzz on the short-run, but that on the long one people do not really commit to the actions. However, we will try to reduce this risk through the use of a website on which people will be able to find the tutos without needing to watch the whole episode again... Also, as daily impactful actions will be promoted, we truly believe that sensitization will change, even unconsciously, the behavior of the audience.

Finally, some might blame us for discrediting the environmental cause, thus damaging the image of our reality show. In our opinion, this criticism is unfounded. On the contrary, our program shows that sustainable development and environmental concerns are issues that are accessible and seizable for everyone. Far from discrediting other actions, it reinforces them, making it possible to bring this environmental issue to the attention of a population that has not been sensitized to it so far.

5) Deployment

As we mentioned, we plan on selling the concept of "L'île de la transition" to famous French national TV channels that are already used to successfully develop reality shows (W9, NRJ 12). They will make the best out of our concept, and make sure we have the attention of our target audience. With its Reality show "Les Marseillais", W9 reaches each night more than one million people and attracts youth with 16.8% of audience shares among 18-24 year olds (against 4% for the general public)[6]. This is exactly our target audience. Starting in France, we aim to reach an international market, starting the export with Belgium and Switzerland, and then the rest of Western Europe and the US. The fact that *L'île de la Transition* is shot in English makes its export outside France possible, and thus promises great lucrative prospects.

Also, we plan to develop a website and a newsletter so that our audiences can follow-up at home with tutos, recommendations for daily actions, season vegetables to buy or local organic stores in their cities for example. This website could also help us develop our

partnerships with other brands such as Velib, Yuka and make our public benefit from promotional codes.

6) Return on Investment

Return on investment will be based on an advertisement-based economic model, as episodes from our show will include ads at the beginning and in the middle of the program. Nonetheless, we are aware that a model strictly based on advertising no longer works. In order to solve this issue, we decided to explore potentialities offered by diversification. In other terms, other means of remuneration were identified to avoid advertisement dependence such as : cybercommerce, organic products promotion and event promotion linked to environment care. If the reality show becomes a genuine success story, we may look to establish a login system encouraging the audience to subscribe to our rebroadcasting website. Generating a gross margin will be inherent to advertising breaks before episodes' or during the video sequence. Our ambition is to implement a paying subscription, giving us the opportunity to be profitable, with a commitment to donate 4% of our pre - tax profits to environmental organizations. Moreover, a reality-show is a "program inventory" keeping its asset value, forever. Thus, we planned to create exclusive content such as : episodes extracts, videos focusing on environmental tips, characters' interviews, intimate moments with candidates, episodes prime shows before their actual official broadcast. This content could also be exploited for advertising purposes, in order to generate profit.

7) Organization

When implementing our solution, we have to take into consideration the possible partners and sponsors of such a project. We could start by partnering up with "**Sciences Po Environnement**", in order to get more ideas surrounding key issues and concretely create themes and episodes. After the concretization of our idea we can attract sponsors, and attempt to collaborate with them, ranging from organizations and businesses, to individuals looking to foster youth engagement on environmental and sustainability issues. Indeed, corporate social responsibility being a growing concern for every business, it is doubtless that our concept will attract plenty of sponsors and funds.

With a robust presence on social media, we will attempt to spread the main messages included in our episodes, as well as tips as to how an individual might reduce his carbon footprint. Our partnerships would be based on mutual benefit, as we will promote our partners' environmentally friendly products in our episodes, as well as on social media, and they, in return, will promote our show and zero-waste solutions. Such a system will permit our message to reach a wider audience, especially when it comes to youth, influencing, hopefully, their daily lives and carbon-footprint.

Watch the trailer on YouTube :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCYo_pMa3DO&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2pnLTDYAhgKwjxsJcTJGJEBclXkhpSdbKPYG3werPVnvRGoznJYqmO4

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[3] <https://www.ouest-france.fr/medias/television/pres-de-94-des-foyers-francais-sont-equipés-d-un-téléviseur-6082929>

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