

Review from Simon John, Director of Roost

Assumptions are a very real affect in marketing and no more so than in digital marketing. The pace of technology and consumers' adaption to it is at break neck speed, while agencies and organisations are making assumptions about their audience, their users are 'unliking' them and moving on. Having recently set up Roost (www.roost-online.com), a digital communication agency, I saw no better opportunity to get closer to the needs of the consumers than to attend the Research Institute for Cosmopolitan Cultures' (RICC) conference, *Affective fabrics of digital cultures: feelings, technologies, politics*.

Spending two days with group of anthropologists, sociologists and researchers from other disciplines who spend their days gaining insight into 'the field' and researching what organisations such as Roost do seemed a very logical step for an organisation interested in what others think about what we do. I attended some fascinating plenary and parallel sessions that tackled some very fundamental questions, often skirted over by planners en route to big ideas - How are emotions depicted online: Emotion in Digital Object Memories (Kerstin Leder)? How does the average user engage with digital media everyday: White collar intimacy (Melissa Gregg)? And what about the lack of facelessness of an online medium: The changes in embarrassment revealed by new media practices (Amparo Lasen)?

These and many more sessions opened my mind up to how consumers view and engage with different facets of 'the digital'. That is, digital marketing is no longer about thinking about a generic consumer and 'typical' habits and behaviours, but more about specifics and bespoke. It is these details that RICCs really unearthed and while I did not walk away with any specific answers to take back to my clients, I do know that I will be looking to attend more RICCs conferences and will be collaborating as much as possible with the brilliant people that I met, so that any and all digital plans meet the expectations and behaviours of those they are targeted towards.

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