



FORUM D'AVIGNON 2012

100 in 1 day: A case study for the Forum d'Avignon 2012

Intro and Hypothesis.

Culture has for decades and centuries been the foundation of societies all over the world. In the modern world we face a challenge of defining our culture in the new society and in a whole new economic situation. The financial crisis we have in Europe has and will continue to affect our culture, as such, we should try to rethink culture, in order to keep it alive.

“ Without culture, and the relative freedom it implies, society, even when perfect, is a bit of a jungle. This is why any authentic creation is a gift to the future.”

- Albert Camus

So to build on Albert Camus' thought, we chose a case-study from a project we (a group of 35 international Kaospilots) created in the spring of 2012 in Bogotá, Colombia.

We have based this case study on cultural relativism, which acknowledges that there are different customs, beliefs and values after which groups, tribes, communities and nations act and which form different cultures. We have incorporated the hypothesis in our work that the actions which are taken by various groups are often based on different basic assumptions¹ that are hard to challenge because more often than not they are unconscious and therefore non negotiable.

In the project we will describe how we worked from the following hypothesis:

¹ “Basic assumptions: Taken-for-granted behavior from which usual actions happen, because it is deeply embedded and unconscious, and therefor often not negotiated.”

- Edgar Schein's 'Level of organizational culture'

initiatives expressed and shared the values that Bogotá stand for, promoted imagination and gave hope to trust that culture, engaged citizenship and co-creation can bring us to a better future.

An intervention is an event which shows the potential of Bogotá and its citizens and offers a platform to notice the possible solutions. A span of intervention can be from an artistic act to a political one. From simple to complex. From serious to funny.

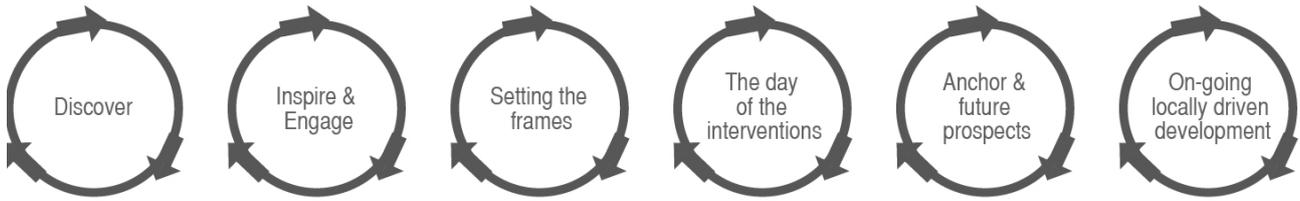
- Cristiam Salazar

There were a wide range of different types of mini-projects happening on the day, ranging from the very practical to the more symbolic. One of these mini-projects for example aimed to put attention to the massive amounts of waste the city created and piled up on the streets. To do so, a woman walked around the streets of Bogotá picking up trash which she then turned into a dress with the help of by-passers. Other more practical projects were a hospital which gave out free vaccines, communities cleaning up parks, a gay wedding in front of the church, groups of people fixing holes in the streets. Others put focus on taking possession of the public space through public yoga lessons, festivities, concerts, football games, picnics and theater plays.

100en1Día caught the attention of media and received coverage from newspapers and local television. Furthermore, the initiative at one point during the project was reaching more than 75.000 people a week on Facebook alone, not mentioning other media channels.

While 100en1Día was initiated by Kaospilots, it was co-created together with local Colombians, who later on built an organization, that will continue to work in the spirit of the 26th of May. The work done by Colombians and Kaospilots inspired the people to be more involved in creating their city and the future they would like to live in. Moreover, the successful outcomes of the day provided locals with the proof that ‘things can be done’ with collaborative creativity and motivation as the driving force.

How was it done? The steps.



Some of these steps are highly interconnected and happened simultaneously.

1. Discover

When we, the Kaospilots, first came to Bogotá, a group of students went out to explore the current reality by interviewing Bogotáños. We had talks and interviews on the street to hear and film people's opinions about their daily lives and their dreams. The questions chosen had deliberately a positive approach asking on what works and what would their dream be, instead of drowning in negativity and complaints. What did they like about their city? What were their dreams? What would they like to see in the future?

2. Inspire and Engage

At this stage we fed back our findings from the interviews through videos that were exhibited at a gallery as well as

through our website and Facebook page. A lot of Bogotáños found the idea really inspiring and were eager to join us on the project. Parallel to that we started our first weekly meetings to engage people in participating on the 26th of May. So we had the physical space where like minded people could meet. We



had build the framework - one day where people would take action towards a better city- and we were now looking for participants who would be the leaders of the interventions. Everyone was free to chose their project on location and engage more people.

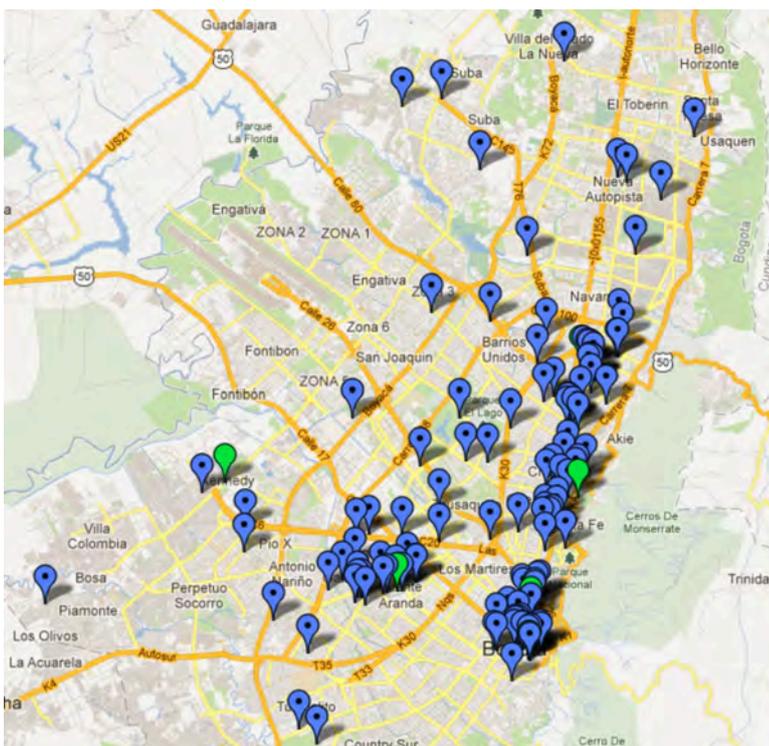
3. Setting the frames

At the same time we established the core group that consisted of 7 Kaospilots and 8 Colombians who wanted to be a part of creating the event. It was up to the core group to host weekly information meetings, to engage more people, get the media interested, take care of the Facebook page, get all permissions needed, engage the leaders of municipalities, as well as take care of all other logistics on the day.



4. The day of the interventions

The 26th of May was the day of actions when people engaged with the city through their initiatives and interventions. There were 250 interventions happening through the day and more than 3000 people were involved into making it all happen. How many people saw the interventions and were affected by them, one could make a guess, but that's probably thousands.



There were hotspots in most of the neighborhoods around Bogota, where the intervention leaders could get updates, upload pictures and get an overview of what is going on in their part of the town that day. Everything possible was immediately shared online to keep everyone on the same page. The day ended with a celebration party in order to anchor, unite with the people who made this dream come true and celebrate the hard work and great outcomes. This

succeeded in increasing the level of appreciation to all involved, uniting and encouraging them to continue making great projects.

5. Anchor and future prospects

In this stage we aimed to ensure that the project would actually have an impact in the future. It was essential for us that the value created was going to be long-term. We wanted the Colombians to carry on the project themselves when the Kaospilots were gone and also to heighten the appreciation, motivation and the pride in their accomplishments so they could continue the overall concept and their projects.

This was done through 3 different workshops:

a) A two day workshop with 14 Colombians who decided to make a core group and organisation to continue driving the project further. The aim of the workshop was to establish the group, connect them better, and teach them some KP methods while initiating some tasks immediately, like finding an office space.



b) An evaluation workshop for leaders and participants of the interventions. The intention was to close down the project, realise what happened and why, what had they learned and what could they do better next time. This brought everyone on the same ground, gave a feeling of finishing something and created both individual and group energy and motivation to do it again.

c) A workshop on how to take it forward. Colombian core group, local politicians, community leaders, NGO's, and local business people gathered together to share experience from the workshop and start dreaming more towards what else could be done to make Bogota a better place. New connections for further collaboration and new contributions for more projects were established.

The core (local) group of 100en1dia is now working with local institutions on one of Bogotá's biggest challenges - managing the trash. Moreover there will be 2 more

100en1Día events in Colombia this year, in Pasto and Pamplona. So the project is progressing and spreading around Colombia and hopefully it will reach all South America.

What made it work? The Elements.

First of all, we came from a different culture into a new culture. That meant we were not so accustomed to the rules and assumptions that Colombians acted upon. On one hand, this meant it was very important to collaborate closely with locals in order to be successful. On the other, this also meant we were *somewhat irreverent to the customs and assumptions this culture was built on*. This led us to see opportunities that locals could not see at first, as well as challenging the status quo at times without being aware of it.

Moreover, it is part of Colombian culture to value the opinion of foreigners. Because we could see potential in Bogotá they began to take a closer look. *Was there something here they had not seen?*



Another important factor was the *empowerment of the locals*. We set the frames for what could happen in the city as we did not want to influence the content, ideas or direction of what would happen. By doing so we made it easy to engage in the project while establishing and maintaining the ownership between the local

individuals, leaving room for them to fill 100en1Día with their own dreams, ideas and projects.

Furthermore, we had set a big, seemingly „impossible“, simple and clear goal of realizing 100 interventions in one day. This big goal set free energy as well as became a driving motor for people to engage. It was essential to the momentum that was created. While on the 24th of May we had only 75 interventions listed, 2 days later it became 250. This probably couldn't have happened if it was a top down movement making people do something that was decided before. **The whole idea of helping people to make their own dreams come true made it much easier to find followers.** *They wanted to be*

followers because they could be the leaders of their dream projects. The more people who joined, the more 100en1dia spread online and recruiting more volunteers. It became viral. Despite the project's big goal the approach to it stayed light, playful and positivistic throughout. **Though it was tackling problems and shortcomings the city had, it was neither pinpointing nor blaming but rather challenging the individuals to develop creative ideas to put light on these challenges, if not to find solutions to them.**

One thing that was beneficial to the project was that the concept of intervention was embedded in their consciousness and accepted by Bogotá. The city's former mayor and hero Antanas Mockus used interventions in the 90s to influence the city's culture in a similar way. In his eyes there are 3 ways to alter peoples behavior; through rules, morals, and culture. He chose to focus on the latter in his work for he saw the biggest potential in creating change in it.

One should also mention that social networks (primarily Facebook) had a huge impact on the success of this project in spreading the word. Bogotános are very active on Facebook and it was easy to reach them.



Last but not the least, we shall not forget the positive attributes of the culture we went into. Bogotános are very open to new ideas and are willing to put time and effort into what they believe in. It was a pleasure to work with such energetic people. Moreover, there is a certain openness towards foreigners and their ideas. Therefore it was relatively easy to get in contact with influential people and build a valuable network.

Our intention.

Our aim was to shift the rather passive culture of accepting things the way they are whilst hoping for those in power to change something, to taking action and create the change that communities wanted to see. In order to empower the individuals, they would need to see that it is not only possible but that many people want to create change. We, therefore, did not lecture about culture nor mention it, but instead, we aimed to create a new and

different way of approaching old challenges. Through new successes it might be possible to replace old values and more importantly assumptions that the culture of Bogotá is based on.

Hoping for culture? The reasons.

Culture as we have portrayed it is a powerful dynamic. When unaware of its influence and force it can undermine strategies or even rules and regulations even if this is counterproductive to the well being of a group, organization or nation.

There is no doubt that working with culture will be challenging. We have met many stepping stones along the way. Sometimes it was some elements of Bogotá's culture such as the noncommittal of our collaborators or the tardiness of participants. Sometimes it was our own cultural background that stood in our way.

On the other hand it can be a powerful driving force for accelerating the change needed and wanted. Currently we are facing major challenges not only in Europe but all over the globe. With a positivistic approach, a certain playfulness, the use of our current technologies and social networks as well as a willingness to try, fail, try and fail again, we are able to play with culture and influence it in a way that is suitable to the challenges we are facing.

That is why we should not only hope for culture but also use it as a driving force. If culture has been a key player in changing and improving Bogota since 90's, which at that time was one of the most corrupt, dangerous and poor cities in South America, it should not be forgotten or underestimated in Europe today.

Find all videos of 100en1Día here:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/100en1dia/videos>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fO3cSJYy6HU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4l1jbgkoKLc&feature=relmfu>

Websites:

<http://www.100en1dia.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/100En1Dia>

100en1Dia Pasto:

<http://www.100en1diapasto.com>