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ART &ALGORITHMS Titusville

Benchmark: Ars Electronica

The City of Linz, Austria, and the entire region,

is a direct beneficiary of the success of Ars Electronica,

a festival event started in 1979,

with much fewer attendees than our first year of Art & Algorithms.

The ARS ELECTRONICA FESTIVAL premiered on September 18, 1979.

This pilot project was designed to take the Digital Revolution's emergence as an occasion **to face important questions about the future and to focus on the nexus of ART, TECHNOLOGY and SOCIETY.**

This remains the festival philosophy today and the cornerstone for the ongoing success of this extraordinary undertaking.

From PILOT PROJECT to INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS STORY:

Now one of the world's most important media art festivals, Ars Electronica over the years has featured symposia, exhibitions, interactions, performances and concerts, each successive one more multifaceted than the one before. Since 1986, the festival has been held annually and dedicated to a specific theme. **In 1979, the festival lineup was a short list: 20 artists and scientists. Three decades later, several hundred network nomads, theoreticians, artists and technologists from all over the world convene in Linz each year, and about 550 journalists and bloggers report from the Ars Electronica venue. Key contributors to the festival's incomparable spirit are the approximately 35,000 annual visitors—a colorful mix of old friends and new faces.**

FINANCIAL SUCCESS: **Ars Electronica gross revenues for 2015 were €14.6 million,** a €1.5 million (11.5%) increase over the prior year, and topped the previous record in the corporation's 20-year history.

NON-CONVENTIONAL VENUES: The organizers of Ars Electronica are also constantly on the lookout for interesting new venues—indeed, the consistent effort to break out of the narrow confines of conventional conference rooms and artistic spaces, and to stage cultural and scientific encounters in the public sphere has become something of a trademark of Ars Electronica. Linz Harbor, a network of subterranean tunnels, a monastery and a tobacco processing plant have been among the settings of this festival that defines itself as a confrontation with prevailing circumstances and amidst them.

Learn more about the festival and its history. http://www.aec.at/festival/en/

SAYS the City of LINZ about LINZ:

"Linz is a symbiosis as a city of industry, culture and nature, and an international, contemporary Creative City – surrounded by stunning natural landscapes. The city's designation as a UNESCO City of Media Arts shows that Linz, together with Lyon, Sapporo, Tel Aviv and Dakar, is one of the world's most future-orientated locations. In addition to pioneering technology and visionary media arts, the city offers a variety of historical and cultural highlights, as well as culinary delights."

These are the *top 4 contributing factors* Linz lists as being significant to the City's success:

Ars Electronica Center

Ars Electronica Festival

Prix Ars Electronica

Ars Electronica Future Lab

 http://www.linz.at/english/index.asp

Key Extraction:

The first Ars Electronica Festival and the first visualisierte Klangwolke (clouds of sound) were staged as early as **1979**. Christoph Lindinger, co-director of the Ars Electronica Futurelab, one of the architects behind the recently designated UNESCO City of Media Arts:

"It is precisely because Linz focused on the connection between technology, arts and the participation of the population earlier than any other city that the many creatives, technology researchers and guests here in Linz were never only commentators on current events, but were also always pioneers and relevant co-creators of a technological revolution which, with the Internet, social media and other digital tools, has been part of our everyday life for a long time."

ABOUT THE PRODUCING SEGMENTS:

Ars Electronica Center The new Center—an enhanced and updated version of the 1996 original—opened in 2009, the year Linz served as European Capital of Culture. Attendance figures now surpass all other museums in this city that has dedicated itself to art in all its many forms. The center hosts: international meetings, corporate celebrations, galas, product launches, press conferences, conventions, presentations, lectures, workshops, R&D, concerts and open-air events, weddings, family celebrations, graduations, and summits.

Ars Electronica Festival *(the catalyst)*

Prix Ars Electronica The Prix Ars Electronica was launched in 1987. The categories at the outset were Computer Graphics, Computer Animation and Computer Music. In 1990, Interactive Art enhanced the array. A category especially for kids and young people was introduced in 1998. A prize for Digital Communities and [the next idea] Art and Technology Grant premiered in 2004, followed by Hybrid Art in 2007. The Prix Ars Electronica's most recent innovations came in 2014 with the introduction of a Golden Nica honoring the Visionary Pioneers of Media Art, and the reconfiguration of two pairs of categories—Hybrid Art and Digital Musics & Sound Art; Interactive Art and Digital Communities—which now alternate in a biennial rhythm. In **2015, 2,889 entries from 75 countries** were submitted for prize consideration to Prix Ars Electronica. This year's grand prizewinners are from Japan (Nelo Akamatsu), Mexico (Gilberto Esparza), Indonesia (XXLab), Belgium (Alex Verhaest), Australia (Jeffrey Shaw) and Austria (Gabriel Radwan).

Ars Electronica Future Lab Ars Electronica Futurelab focuses on the future at the nexus of art, technology and society--developing contributions through R&D methods and strategies of applied science, to result in new knowledge and experiences of societal relevance in art and science. The lab's team bases its work commitment upon transdisciplinary research with teams of Artists and Researchers from all over the globe collaborating – and taking residencies at – the Ars Electronica Futurelab. Our range of services concentrates on expertise developed throughout the years in fields such as media art, architecture, design, interactive exhibitions, virtual reality and real-time graphics.

More on 2015 Financials   (Linz, February 22, 2016) Ars Electronica Linz GmbH's 2015 gross revenues came in at €14.6 million, a €1.5 million (11.5%) increase over the prior year, and topped by far the previous record in the corporation's 20-year history. Chiefly responsible for this all-time high were the organization's for-profit activities, and especially the revenues generated by Ars Electronica Solutions as well as projects commissioned by the Ars Electronica Futurelab's impressive array of clients. These operating profits, in turn, not only contributed to maintaining Ars Electronica's other divisions; they substantially fostered performance growth on the part of the Museum, the Festival and the Prix. The 2015 bottom line for Ars Electronica Linz GmbH's results of ordinary operations was once again positive. "The just-completed final accounting for 2015 underscores the fact that this organization's financial condition is outstanding and it is achieving optimal results with its existing resources," was the highly upbeat summary by Gerfried Stocker and Diethard Schwarzmair, managing directors of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH. **READ MORE: http://www.aec.at/press/en/category/about/**

This is one of our primary benchmarks for Art & Algorithms and our purposes in building it--and building on it.
Remember, it started smaller than us in 1979.