

# MiceMedia - Neuroshaping article

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## **What Is Neuroshaping®? The Way To Make Your Event Unforgettable.**

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We live in an ever-evolving world, where people constantly see environments, information and presentations enhanced by technology. In this context, events in the meetings and conferences sector may seem unchanged, lacking in impact and inspiration, and delegates may not find your congress, seminar or talk memorable or effective.

In the MICE industry, we need to create new ways to capture delegates' attention, help them retain information and encourage them to feel positively about what they have seen and heard.

We need to surprise and delight them, and Neuroshaping® is the way to do it.

### **Challenge expectations and make stronger memories**

You're at a conference and it's the same old scene: rows of seats and a presenter on stage with a big screen showing slides to support the talk. Or maybe you're at a speed-networking session, chairs facing each other in the usual way, in a typical strip-lit meeting room.

How would it be different if the sound had been carefully designed to enhance the presentation? Or the background colours or drapes had been deliberately selected for their associations, and the typeface devised to help the brain learn?

What if the lighting changed according to the speaker's message? Or the smells? What if the chairs in the meeting were suspended 10 metres above the ground? And you heard a story, instead of facts?

It would transform how you reacted to the event, and deliver insights in a way that you will be sure to remember.

### **Welcome to Neuroshaping®**

Put simply, the goal with Neuroshaping® is to make an impact on the human brain, in order to drive a deeper experience of an event and create longer-lasting memories.

It's like creating a toolbox to affect the senses. Each tool in the Neuroshaping® arsenal can affect the audience in a different way:

- Storytelling - introducing psychology to help attendees learn through imagined scenarios
- Sound - using psychoacoustics to enhance presentations and make them memorable
- Visuals - designing shapes and colours to affect emotional response
- Light - influencing reactions using lighting psychology and design
- Situations - creating environments within an event to promote positive behaviour

When used together in designed combinations the effects can be very powerful.

In a different state of mind, the way people absorb and retain new information changes. We are trying to use experiences to make messages and data more memorable.

In many respects, this is not a new concept. The ingredients already exist every time an event or performance introduces sensory elements to their arena. They may do it without consciously realising or labelling their use of sounds and visuals as Neuroshaping®.

But no other production or event management company is currently using all these methods to design around the senses specifically for the MICE sector.

## **What can Neuroshaping® look like?**

The Neuroshaping® philosophy can take many forms. Here are some examples:

### **‘Snow umbrella’ meetings**

Just one of the many ‘installation-style’ situations devised by the pioneering C2 organisation in Montreal, this transformed the way conference delegates approached a one-to-one meeting.

They set up a red-carpeted walkway onto which heavy snow was falling. At one end of the walkway, each pair of delegates was invited to take one umbrella, which they would have to share to make the journey through the snow without getting cold and wet while they talked.

As a result, the delegates had a very intimate, and far more memorable, meeting than they would have had otherwise.

There was no choice but to share personal space, which changed their positioning and the way they spoke to each other, and at the same time to focus on where and how they were walking. Aside from being visually stimulating, the umbrella walk made an impact both physically and mentally, pushing people out of their comfort zone.

When they reached the end, they had truly shared an experience, not just a meeting - an episode in life they would not forget.

See this and a few other of C2’s innovative methods to disrupt and reconstruct congress environments in [this article](#).

### **‘On the spot’ presentations**

Our own innovation for the meetings and presentations sector, this was a simple, yet surprising and scalable way to change the dynamic of a presentation, both for the speaker and the audience.

Instead of the usual speaker-stage-screen format, we arranged a space where presentations could be made 'in the round'. The area was covered in a light blue or white carpet and the perimeter was draped in thin, light cloth to match.

In the centre of the carpet was a large, red circle (or spot) and the surrounding space was filled with small cardboard 'festival chairs', all facing towards the centre, where the presenter would give their talk.

Four raised screens were positioned equally around an inner circle, facing inwards so slides could be seen by both the audience and the speaker in any direction. The drapes were also perfect for lighting in different colours at key points in the presentation, to affect the mood.

This put the audience in a different state, where they had to adjust to strange circumstances and so receive the information in a different way - a way they worked harder to process and so were more likely to remember.

It also transformed the experience for the speaker, too. No longer thinking two-dimensionally, they had to work harder to give attention to every part of the audience, behave in a more dynamic way as they gave their talk, and think harder about their words as they said them.

Delegates came away enthused and delighted. To see photos from successful sessions, click here [insert link]

### **The 'Sans Forgetica' font**

The cunningly-named Sans Forgetica font was devised by a multidisciplinary team of designers and behavioural scientists at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, with the aim of helping students better remember the key points and study notes from presentations and online information.

Typical fonts are very familiar, so we glance over them without creating deep memory traces. The Sans Forgetica typeface was designed to be different and unique, making the information 'stick' in the memory.

Combining research from design theory and psychological theory, they introduced a 'desirable difficulty' in the form of gaps in the letter shapes. This makes the brain work just a little harder to recognise letters and words, and so engage in deeper processing of the information.

The team used thorough testing to find the perfect level of disruption, where the text was neither too easy nor difficult to read, and created the most lasting memories.

Downloadable and free to access, Sans Forgetica can go beyond the educational world and be of great use to all sorts of people wanting to better remember those things that are important to them in their lives.

Learn more and try it out at the RMIT's Sans Forgetica web page: <https://sansforgetica.rmit/>

## **The everyday connection with Neuroshaping®**

People experience Neuroshaping® all the time, except they would think of it as a natural association or reminder.

We can feel a connection between certain places, sights, sounds or smells with a memory, a person, an emotion or an idea. Like the girl who will always think of her father when she visits a beach on a sunny day, or the man who always remembers a gang of friends when he hears a certain song - the circumstances helped to imprint the memories.

## **Could Neuroshaping® be evil?**

When you are talking about affecting people's emotions and mental states, there is inevitably the elephant in the room: manipulation.

There is a duality to what we do in Neuroshaping®, and other motives could possibly come into play. In the wrong hands, the techniques could be as much harmful as beneficial.

Thankfully, as humans we have little appetite to perpetuate negative memories. Everything around us affects the senses, and we will respond personally to whatever we see, hear or touch. We are more inclined to remember positive influences.

However, individuals can use Neuroshaping® style techniques to influence an audience in other ways than improving learning or enhancing the meeting experience.

## **The Tony Robbins example**

The American motivational speaker Tony Robbins has become adept at using multiple sensory stimuli to motivate his audience and control their emotions while he delivers his message.

He may not create innovative environments, but his production team use a lot of music to enhance emotions at certain times, and introduce dancers, imagery and slogans to drive a greater energy through the audience.

They get people fired up using sounds, light, visuals, movement - he chooses these elements and times them perfectly to enhance the right state, to make people most receptive. This is the case right down to his voice - when saying something people really need to know, he can press the microphone closer to his cheek, lowering the tone, and he speaks more slowly, every move enhancing the impact of what he has to say.

Robbins's events can be exhausting, running for days from early in the morning until late in the afternoon, but he is able to keep his audience highly motivated so they come running to the auditorium every morning.

## **The difference between 'shaping' and 'marketing'**

It's true, the techniques in Neuroshaping® can be used for commercial aims. There are also elements of psychology and psychoacoustics in Neuro-marketing, where the goal is to create a mental association with a product.

But there's a big difference between Neuro-marketing and Neuroshaping®.

Marketing is about manipulating people into buying something, or giving something of themselves in exchange for a product or incentive.

We want to avoid manipulation.

Neuroshaping® is about enhancing experiences and helping people to learn more and take away more from what they have seen, heard and felt. It's about helping people to learn and remember. This is the ethos that we carry through all our projects.

## **How preparation is key**

If you want to utilise all the tools in Neuroshaping® at your event and ensure you get the best results, you need to schedule the right amount of preparation time. This is likely to be at least six months, and sometimes up to a year.

As Neuroshaping® consultants, we first want to design the concept for the event - the overarching mood and narrative that will inform all the discussions, meetings and spaces.

We'll talk to clients about their goals for the event, and what they want to achieve. What kind of information are they putting over? What do they want people to feel? And what memories do they want people to take away from the event?

And of course, a lot depends on the size and nature of the event - a corporate launch is very different to a 3-day multi-hall conference.

## **How do we make sure we get it exactly right?**

Our clients can now experience our designs without anyone having to hire a room, or even hammer a nail.

In an exciting development, we're working with Oculus Rift 3D so you can walk around the design in virtual reality, to 'see' and 'feel' every detail before it is built. In this way, we can fine-tune the environments before we need to pay out for materials and construction costs, saving a lot of time, money and effort.

## **When considering your event, ask yourself:**

- How can we create the right atmosphere for competitive learning?
- How can we optimise the outcome of leadership meetings?
- How can we trigger a debate that gets to the cutting edge of our knowledge?

- Booking a room might be easy, but how can we change the behaviour of our stakeholders?

The answers to all these questions can be found in Neuroshaping® techniques. As participants process information in any form of meeting or debate, it will be infinitely more exciting and memorable in a specially-designed environment.

## **In conclusion**

Using Neuroshaping® to drive a deeper experience of an event and create longer-lasting memories is all about working with people and emotions.

Information given in a designed environment that moves people out of their comfort zone has greater impact because of the emotions stimulated in that setting.

In all designed scenarios, timing is vital. When all the elements are working together, at exactly the right moments, then it happens perfectly. And that's when magic happens.

The ingredients might be old, but developing a speciality in Neuroshaping® for the meetings and conferences industry is new. And the events of the future will be using all the tools in the box to achieve success.

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### **Want to make your event unforgettable?**

**Slidebox**, in collaboration with **Micemedia**, is ideally positioned to put Neuroshaping® into practice, and it now features as the premier service in their design range.

Get in touch with us now to talk about how we can enhance your event to make it truly memorable to all your participants.

Email: [info@slidebox.nl](mailto:info@slidebox.nl)

Visit: <http://www.slidebox.nl/>

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