



SLUSH BRINGS WASTE ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL RECYCLING INTO FOCUS

PRESS RELEASE November 11th, 2015

Slush website: www.slush.org

we³recycle website: www.we3recycle.org

The theme of Slush 2016 is The Next Industrial Revolution - and the program is exploring different challenges that we choose to solve - potentially triggering the next industrial revolution. While glimpsing into the future, Slush also wants to bring into focus the reverse side of technological progress: the rapidly increasing amount of electronic waste.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A CORE VALUE

Sustainability is one of the core values of Slush and therefore Slush actively explores ways to decrease the ecological footprint of the event. Environmental sustainability has been core to the event production from the very start. The production has favoured natural materials such as wood and creatively used recycled materials such as exhibition carpets from the very start. The social aspects are also core to the philosophy of Slush. Over 1500 volunteers contribute to giving visitors an unforgettable experience, and hundreds of these have contributed to making event props in Slush Talkoos - a Finnish word for the community coming together and working on a voluntary basis for a common cause.

This year Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE or WE³) is highlighted as an essential aspect for securing technological progress, and sustainable disposal of electronic devices. All appliances that need electric current to function properly, turn into WE³ when disposed. Therefore, WE³ does not only stand for old washing machines, refrigerators and computers, but also smaller equipment, such as coffee makers, toasters, electric toys, mobile phones, pocket calculators, keyboards, cameras, and even RFID tags.

To bring WE³ into focus at Slush thousands of kilograms of waste electrical and electronic equipment and other recycled items. There are plenty of cool props at the venue built from old washing machines, old computer parts and circuit boards to name a few. Tramel, a recycling operator that collects and processes WE³ has provided waste electrical and electronic equipment for Slush to use as material for the props. In addition, videos enlightening the issues with electronic waste are looping on screens at the venue.



WHAT DO WE LEAVE BEHIND?

Electronic waste is the fastest growing waste stream in the world with up to 50 million tons of waste being produced globally each year. With electronics being embedded into an expanding range of products experts predict that by 2017, the total annual volume of WE³ will grow to 65.4 million tons which is equivalent to the weight of II Great Pyramids of Giza.

Proper recycling is also crucial from an environmental point of view. Electronic waste makes up 70% of all toxic waste, and especially old electronic devices often contain a multitude of hazardous compounds that harms the nature and the atmosphere. Toxic release from WE³ cause liver, kidney, and lung damages to name a few.

WE³ is also important for enabling future technological progress. Electronics contain plenty of valuable materials such as gold, silver and rare earth metals. Estimates claim that are more rare earth metals in land filled electronics than in all known global reserves. Cell phones are the largest and fastest growing electronic waste segment in the world, and yet of only 8% of the billion cellphones sold yearly are recycled.

WE³RECYCLE DAY

The Slush community, consisting of more than 1,500 volunteers, 2,000 founders and 500 event production professionals, will organize WE³Recycle Day in collaboration with SER-kierrätys and Gigantti to raise awareness and to challenge people to reuse and recycle WE³ to slow down resource depletion. In order to get everyone involved, Slush provides together with SER-kierrätys (<http://www.serkierratys.fi>) the possibility to bring WE³ to Slush to be safely recycled.

Slush has also challenged its visitors and Gigantti, which is part of the largest consumer electronics retailer in the Nordic countries, to help enlighten consumers on WE³. Few people know that since 2013 all electronic retailers in Finland are obligated to receive small WE³ charge. Stores are also obligated to accept large WE³, such as refrigerators, in exchange for a new similar product.

There will be a WE³ recycling station at the South Entrance of Messukeskus on November 11th and 12th to give Slush attendees and other people in the vicinity the opportunity to recycle small WE³ in a safe and environmentally-sound way.

we³recycle videos: <http://bit.ly/1OOPmBy>

Slush website: www.slush.org

we³recycle website: www.we3recycle.org

For more information please contact:

Ghita Wallin

+358 40 1990953

ghita.wallin@slush.org