



## PECOS4SMEs – D2.8 Focus Groups THE NETHERLANDS

Work Package 2  
Version 1.0 – 12/08/2013

<b>Project</b>	PECOS4SMEs		
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## Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description	Action	Pages
1.0	12/08/2013	Onno Hansen	Creation of the document	C	

(\* ) Action: C = Creation, I = Insert, U = Update, R = Replace, D = Delete

## Referenced Documents

ID	Reference	Title
1	507562-LLP-2012-GR-Leonardo-LMP	PECOS4SMEs Proposal
2	507562-LLP-2012-GR-Leonardo-LMP	Evaluation Comments
3	D2.1	Country Report - NL
4	D2.8	Guidelines for Focus Groups

## Applicable Documents

ID	Reference	Title
1	FAVINOM Consultancies QMS	Quality Management Procedures

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## 1 Focus groups and the Dutch vendor questionnaire

### 1.1 Introduction

This document forms the short summary of the focus group activities that were instrumental in creating the D2.1 Country Report – NL document in the framework of the PECOS4SMEs Project (henceforth, "Project").

Whereas the Vendor Questionnaire forms the most important basis for the D2.1 document, focus groups functioned as an additional interpretative mechanism to give meaning to the questionnaire answers.

The present document contains information on how Focus Groups were applied in the Netherlands.

### 1.2 Focus groups and the questionnaire

The questionnaire was mainly distributed in a very personal way in order to be able to receive immediate meta-feedback on the theme and the questionnaire. Requests to fill out the questionnaire were either sent to vendors in DMs on Facebook and Twitter or IRL (in real life). A substantial part of the questionnaires was filled out online in presence of OHN's Onno Hansen at OHN's location. In this way very personalized informal focus group techniques were combined with filling out the questionnaire.

The main outcomes of the conversations within the framework of the questionnaire were formal. Overall the questionnaire was seen as much too long, too detailed, too technical, too sales-oriented, too B2C-oriented and aimed at traditional sectors rather than at the creative industries and the ICT sector. Also the suggestion was made to add open questions to establish the avant-garde of organizations and individuals in the field. The majority of respondents indicated that they only reason they (partially) filled it out was because of the personal request by Onno Hansen. All-in-all the vendor questionnaire was a time consuming exercise for all parties involved.

Content-wise the personalized Focus Group techniques showed that Dutch vendors enjoy marketing more than technology. It also appeared that they are more skilled in the field of marketing than in the field of technology. It remained unclear whether the two findings are causally related.

A second finding was that many vendors in the creative industry function in networked groups, both online and offline. For them, online sales are a closing of an offline process, rather than a separate process in itself. Therefore, cross-border sales for this group is incidental. They occur when a cross-border client finds themselves in the networked surroundings of the vendor.

### 1.3 Follow-up

After the Vendor Questionnaire results were written down, the first version of the conclusions were sent to ten of the vendors who filled out the questionnaire. They were specifically asked for feedback. And they were invited to cooperate in the writing of an upcoming article for the Dutch Frankwatching platform in which the results would be evaluated. All politely thanked for the results. Only one of the vendors reacted by jotting formal remarks in the margins of the text.

### 1.4 The market test

Based on the consumer and vendor questionnaire results two articles were written in Dutch: One background article that closely follows the Country Report (<http://www.ohennennoh.com/project-secs-resultaten-onderzoek/>), and one more popular version of the results translated into (potential) cross-border vendor tips (<http://www.frankwatching.com/archive/2013/08/12/e-commerce-8-tips-om-succesvol-over-de->

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[grens-te-verkopen/#comment-281869](#)). It is hoped that vendor reactions will be triggered to put the Country Report results in more perspective.

Both the popular and the background article will be supported by web 2.0 marketing in order to attract readers.

So far (in the first few hours) the article is rather retweeted and shared on LinkedIn. It attracted only one vendor comment: "In your article you describe the big picture well."

If there will be relevant data and more Dutch online (cross-border) vendor reactions this document will be updated.

## **1.5 About the project**

PECOS4SMEs will develop a training programme concentrated on the provision of suitable knowledge and tools, which the SMEs can use to increase cross-border E-Commerce revenue. This includes changing sales and marketing strategies and new types of organisation and knowledge about E-Commerce technologies in a future world dominated by pervasive Internet.

The promotion of useful e-Commerce strategies for SMEs includes transfer of knowledge and practices from top performing countries in e-Commerce to lagers thus bridging the cross-border sales gap between Northern and Southern Europe and helping the economic recovery of the hard hit South. As a consequence of the introduction of new technologies and concepts facilitating cross-border e-Commerce, (e.g. effective link building, search engine user attitudes etc.), SMEs will make their businesses more profitable and improve their ICT and methodological competence for interactive and collaborative learning.

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