

# Expert masterclasses give Europe's online entrepreneurs tools for success at first .eu Day.

Creative thinking and innovation were the watchword at the first edition of EURid's new celebration of online entrepreneurship, held in Mechelen, Belgium on 17 November.



Does AI learn like the human brain?

How can licensing a trademark create value for SMEs?

When might someone be happy to pay 100 euros for a cup of coffee?

Where are companies most at risk from hacking?

How did psychological tricks help Red Bull to become a market leader?

in the field. But it wasn't all hard work – the .eu Day also provided opportunities for networking and fun. After three masterclasses there was a break so the guests could refuel, relax, and ask the speakers questions. EURid had also installed a special photo booth outside the auditorium, where guests could use blue and white flashlights to show off their creativity and create a memorable souvenir of the day.

Belgian DJ Eric Yamazawa was on hand throughout the afternoon to keep energy levels up with a selection of slick beats and grooves and provide smooth transitions as events unfolded onstage. From time to time, guests could even play DJ themselves: they could submit song requests by scanning a large Mentimeter QR code on the screen behind the stage.



**Stefan Kolle**  
Customer centricity expert

These were some of the questions guests were encouraged to consider in a series of expert-led workshops held on 17 November as part of the very first .eu Day, a new event organised by EURid to celebrate the achievements of Europe's online entrepreneurs and equip them for further success.

Participants convened at the waterfront Van Der Valk hotel in the Belgian town of Mechelen for the .eu Day, which was split into two distinct sections. The afternoon was dedicated to the .eu Academy Masterclasses, followed in the evening by the .eu Web Awards ceremony, a celebration of the best websites with the .eu top-level domain.

The .eu Academy Masterclasses gave EURid stakeholders and entrepreneurs the chance to learn more about the use of AI, the importance of intellectual property, the customer journey, cybersecurity and behavioural psychology in business from five experts

## An emotional business

After welcome coffee and croissants, it was time to get down to work. Customer centricity expert **Stefan Kolle** set the ball rolling with an engaging presentation that aimed to challenge conventional wisdom on the customer journey and what constitutes good customer feedback. The emphasis was firmly on helping companies to communicate better by building personalized customer journeys, in B2B and B2C alike.

Using business cases ranging from coffee to barbecues and car manufacturing, Kolle, who represents Futurelab, one of Europe's leading customer experience consultancies, showed that for buyers, value perception often depends heavily on psychological context rather than objective reality. As he showed, it's not always about the price point – customer responses are often irrational and based on their emotional state at a given moment.

By ensuring business cases are focused on an emotional understanding of the customer's position, argued Kolle, companies can make better strategic decisions: *"Delivering the right experience for what that customer needs at that moment determines the price that he's willing to pay"*. This means paying more attention to the emotions of the customer and less attention to pricing and KPIs – and that's just as important for startups as it is for bigger brands.

## Intelligent business

Next to take the stage was **Mieke De Ketelaere**, an adjunct professor at Vlerick Business School and

Strategic Advisor AI at leading Belgian nano research centre Imec. In her masterclass, titled *"AI: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly"*, De Ketelaere explored some of the ethical and practical considerations associated with the use of Artificial Intelligence, and looked at how SMEs can determine its potential value to their business.



**Mieke De Ketelaere**  
Adjunct professor & Strategic Advisor AI

During her talk, De Ketelaere gave the audience an outline of the useful applications of the technology in certain industries, while debunking some of the most common misconceptions about AI. *"People look at AI from a data and technology perspective, and that works fine, but where it doesn't work is when people don't get it right from a process perspective,"* she said. De Ketelaere, whose book *Wanted: Human AI Translators* explores many of the ethical and technological issues surrounding AI, also addressed some of the obstacles the technology has yet to overcome, as well as the risks, and the implications of the ever-growing gap between AI technology and AI regulation in Europe.





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- Ingrid Baele  
Director IP Advisory Services

### Protecting your assets

Another business asset that can bring added value to SMEs is Intellectual Property (IP), which IP consultant and strategist **Ingrid Baele** dealt with in the third masterclass at .eu Day. Baele, who is Director IP Advisory Services at Deloitte Belgium, gave a detailed presentation breaking down the various IP options available to online businesses considering making intellectual property part of their strategy, including patents, trade secrets, protection for graphical user interfaces, trademarks and domain names.

*“If you are in a website business, if you have e-commerce, then it’s important to think about trademarks and company domain names, because you want to be recognisable through your domain name, and you don’t want to have people go to another website while looking for you”*, said Baele.

She showed how adopting an integrated approach can help protect products and services and create the most value from IP, and emphasised the importance for businesses of thinking about an IP strategy from the very beginning.

### The power of influence

After the break, **Tom De Bruyne**, a Belgian behavioural psychologist and consultant and fellow at the University of Leuven, stepped up to share a series of surprising insights on how behavioural psychology can be a powerful tool for businesses ready to take a creative approach. What do Red Bull,

Donald Trump’s election and IKEA restaurant prices have in common? The answer – they are all excellent examples of how organisations have achieved results by using psychology in order to influence behaviour.



Tom De Bruyne  
Behavioural psychologist

*“In behavioural science there’s a lot to be found to excite people for products and services, or to build better programmes, or better marketing. Because once you understand how the brain works and how the brain makes decisions, then it’s much more easy to connect to that,”* explained De Bruyne, who says “choice architecture”, and how we craft it,

can be extremely useful for business: the experience of value is completely determined by the context in which the choice is being presented.

Engaging with the unconscious brain instead of the rational brain, he argues, allows us to focus on – and influence – the human behind the customer. *“We think we can influence minds and behaviour through rational argument and conviction – our default mode for trying to change people’s behaviours is by trying to persuade them, to convince them.”*

### Fake hacks and inside jobs

The last masterclass of the day was delivered by award-winning British security blogger and public speaker **Graham Cluley**, who gave a lively presentation aimed at raising awareness of some of the issues around effective cybersecurity – and why we should never take anything at face value.

Cluley gave a demonstration of the tricks used by ransomware emails and the importance of having unique passwords, as well as examples of how even the best security won’t protect your company if an employee goes rogue. He illustrated his points with a series of surprising case studies, including the tale of a dating site which used false claims of hacking as a PR boost, and the fascinating story of how a U.S. lottery employee cheated the system to get a winning ticket.

While it is impossible to be 100% secure, explained Cluley, there are some fundamental things all businesses should be doing to defend themselves against the hackers. *“We’re all going to take risks, but if you can increase your level of security, most of the hackers will simply go and try and find someone else who’s not done such a good job.”*



Graham Cluley  
Security blogger & public speaker

### Let’s go round again

Participants were extremely enthusiastic about the maiden .eu Day, with speakers and guests alike singling out the quality of the masterclasses and the organisation of the event in particular. *“I very much liked the event, lots of very engaged people,”* said Stefan Kolle. *“It’s worth continuing, because EURid, at the end of the day, is a service provider to those country organisations, and something that galvanises them, makes them happier.”*

Vladyslava Tatarova, from the secretariat of the Youth IGF, found the masterclasses very informative as a guest and praised the event’s approach to detail, from the music to the “top-level” organisation. *“I would be more than happy to attend more events like this,”* she said.

Written by Alastair Gill

