



CityLifestyles

**Methods and Models for Lifestyle-Oriented
Housing Planning**

EXECUTIVE SUMMMARY ENGLISH 20050218

**A Study on Housing by
MICROGIANTS INDUSTRIAL DESIGN GMBH**



MICROGIANTS

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN GMBH WESTBAHNSTRASSE 9/33B A - 1070 VIENNA
FON +43 - 1 - 526 60 66 **FAX** +43 - 1 - 546 800 982 **MAIL** OFFICE@MICROGIANTS.COM **WWW.MICROGIANTS.COM**

CityLifestyles:

Methods and Models for Lifestyle-Oriented Housing Planning

Executive summary / english version

A new model for housing research

How will people want to live in the future? What types of people can be convinced to change flats and move into a new housing project? What do they expect from these housing projects? The present study by Microgiants Industrial Design GmbH was undertaken in the pursuit of answers to these questions by showcasing the development of an urban area in Vienna. The study offers a set of tools and methods that can be used by city planners for better describing, targeting, and understanding of the future inhabitants of the projects.

Microgiants has developed a new model based on qualitative, sociological methods that focus on the description of lifestyles. The model of Microgiants involves four steps, starting with 1) the compilation and interpretation of statistics, continuing with 2) the incorporation of data from the Sinus lifestyle study and 3) interviews with representative members of the different lifestyle segments. The last step is 4) to add data from relevant trend research (in this case trends in housing). With its model, Microgiants presents a new “bottom-up” approach to housing research.

The authors of the study include industrial designers, architects and a psychologist specialized in marketing research.

Aims of the study

The present study has been conducted by Microgiants for the City of Vienna. The general aims of the study were defined at a workshop that took place in the autumn of 2004, with the participation of representatives of the office of Deputy Mayor Faymann (Mag. Martin Ortner), a housing researcher (Mag. Daniela Piegler) and a member of the Vienna City Council (Mag. Andreas Schieder). The aims can be summarised into three points:

1. The definition of a target group that is, presently or in the future, “mobile” and that can therefore be interested in moving into new housing projects.
2. The design of an “urban scenario” for certain areas, to exemplify the Microgiants model.
3. To review recent research into the contemporary housing trend “sensual living”.

Contents

The study is divided into three parts. The first part is concerned with the definition of lifestyles and a description of methods of lifestyle segmentation. It shows how social prototypes can be developed and used to improve housing planning and research. The study also looks at how architects could be reached and incorporated into the search for better targeted housing planning. The second part looks at the specific needs and desires of three chosen target groups, and also gives an overview of general contemporary trends that influence these groups. The third part focuses on how different target groups may be addressed in advertising and marketing campaigns.

Social Prototypes - Bottom-up approach with the use of lifestyle segmentation

In the study, Microgiants describes new possible methods and instruments for planning and research in the area of housing. Microgiants suggests a mixture of new social science methods and traditional marketing tools.

In traditional market and opinion research, the world is described with the help of socio-demographic data. This top-down approach uses quantitative data such as living area, income, gender, and age. These quantitative data or “hard facts” then decide the design of marketing campaigns and the definition of target groups.

During the last few years, a type of social research that relies on qualitative methods has been integrated into marketing research. These methods could be described as “bottom-up”. They put the individual user or consumer and his or her needs, desires and aspirations at the core of the research. Out of this soft data “social prototypes” are generated, that stand in for the real user or consumer. The “social prototype” of a group helps to develop solutions for individuals not for undefined “masses”. The methods proposed in the study are intended to enable a more detailed definition of target groups for housing projects. The methods can be used to obtain information on the emotional and psychological needs of specific target groups. With this information, social prototypes can be constructed and better-targeted marketing campaigns can be designed. The qualitative, bottom-up methods offer a whole range of new possibilities for housing research and marketing.

Focus on three mobile lifestyle segments

The results of the study are obtained through a combination of the target group model of the Sinus study on different social groups (chapter 5) and the “Early Adopter Model” (chapter 6). These two methods combined are used to predict and describe the willingness to adopt new ideas and technical innovations among people in three different social segments. In addition, Microgiants has conducted a field study in three living areas, with a number of interviews of people belonging to the different social groups.

The Sinus study defines ten different lifestyles. In co-operation with representatives of the City of Vienna, three of these groups were chosen as focus of this study and to construct “social prototypes” for them: the “consumption-oriented base”, the “bourgeois middle-class” and the “modern performers”. These are the three social groups that are most “mobile”, that is, most likely to be interested in new housing projects. Additionally, the three chosen groups present various different lifestyles that should prevent the creation of social ghettos.

Global and individual trends

A look at social mega trends: from the amusement to the sensual society
What general trends influence the tastes, desires and aspirations of the chosen target groups? The Study points out that the amusement society is slowly being replaced by a new mega trend that leads to a “sensual society”. In an amusement society, focus is on “here and now”, on

enjoying life and maximizing pleasure. In the “sensual society” people look for the meaning of things, they try to find answers in an increasingly complex world. Often, the search for sense and meaning leads to esoteric explanations and beliefs.

The micro trends for specific target groups

Beside the description of the social prototypes, the work of microgiants shows the strong request of all three targeted segments in five matching points.

1. A green neighbourhood is most important for quality of life
2. Moving to another living area affords high incentives
3. Moving to another living area affords a good infrastructure
4. “sensual living” is more important to people than “Smart Homes”
5. Families whose situation changes due to new-born children, are most willing to move to new areas

In order to describe the three social prototypes, the study offers a “lifestyle matrix” where the different groups are visualized and compared through their eating, sleeping, spare time and hygiene habits, and through their furnishing preferences.

Analysis and Scenarios

Microgiants developed certain scenarios in order to work with the social prototyping toolset and the trend analysis. These scenarios allow different viewpoints on city planning. First, from the standpoint of architects, the study highlights a given living environment and shows the planning process towards an individual and its surroundings. Second, from the designers’ focus, the study takes a look at the users’ needs and demands in their flats..

Work with social prototyping - a toolset for Wiener Wohnen

Working with social prototypes provides a new way of planning and working. This bottom up approach helps in the decision making process for new projects to know more about the “User Experience” and the needs and demands of coming residents

Microgiants presents a number of conclusions on the housing needs and desires of the three social prototypes. The difference between the three groups can be illustrated with a number of keywords:

The “**bourgeois middle-class**”: harmony, comfort, social norms and conventions. Quiet neighbourhoods close to green spaces. Gardening and walking. Pets and children. XXXLutz or IKEA. 50+.

“**Consumption-oriented base**”: Social status through shopping and gadgets. Living here and now, trend sensitive. XXXLutz or Ludwig. Little identification with job-status. Little choice of living location, dreams of a house in the Lower Austria country side. Housing subsidies decisive. Under 40.

“**Modern performers**”: Flexible, mobile, ambitious. Trendsetters. Lives to work. Outdoor sports. Furniture from IKEA or Internet. Infrastructure (transportation, late-night shops, etc.) is essential. 20-40 years old.

There are also similarities between the groups: All three groups find green spaces important, but whereas the “bourgeois middle-class” could afford to realize its dream of a house in the countryside and the consumption-oriented base cannot, the modern performers nurture a vision of combining the city with nature. There are also similarities when it comes to mobility. None of the groups are particularly interested in changing city districts. Young couples are, however, more likely to move than others. Public transportation is important to all three groups, and “sensual living” is more appreciated than “smart homes”.

The study concludes that whereas the traditional division of a flat into kitchen, living room, bathroom and bedroom(s) will remain, the group of “modern performers” would like the bathroom to be increasingly incorporated into the living room in a kind of “wellness-area”, whereas the “consumption-oriented basis”, who want to eat in front of the TV and likes to boost with kitchen consumer objects, want to see the kitchen connected to the living room.

Targeted communication strategies

The best way to reach all segments is by addressing the “modern performers”, who have a peer group role to the “middle class” and to the “consumption-oriented base”

The study closes with some conclusions, derived from an ORF-study on media consumption of different social groups, on how the different target groups can be reached with advertisement and marketing. The “bourgeois middle-class” can best be reached through traditional

channels such as daily newspapers or spots in the local TV news. The “consumption-oriented base”, the most mobile segment of the three, are easier to reach with ads in the cinema and through on-line offers. The group of “modern performers”, lastly, can be convinced to move with offers that include an element of spirituality

To sum up, Microgiants proposes a new set of tools and methods to research the interests and desires of people concerning living and housing. The lifestyle-oriented model of Microgiants is based on quantitative and qualitative market research data and provides a set of social prototypes that allows a better understanding of the consumers. This better understanding helps city planners, architects, and marketers to make ends meet.