

# Digital Economy Month - May 2025

## Three podcasts



A total of three episodes were recorded, covering the following topics:

1. From smart social media campaigns to anti-DDoS solutions: this is Rotterdam's digital economy (May 6).
2. From VR to merchandise: young digital pioneers in Rotterdam (May 7).
3. How Rotterdam entrepreneurs support each other and the city (May 28).

Alderman Simons spoke with six representatives from various innovative businesses. Guest speakers came from sectors such as technology, simulation, and digital manufacturing.

The episodes were published on [May 6](#), [May 7](#), and [May 28](#) on [Ondernemen010.nl](#). Also available on [Spotify](#) and [Apple Podcasts](#).

*\*Note: the podcasts are available in Dutch only.*



**Photo:** podcast recording with alderman Simons.

📷 Sandra Weerdenburg.

## TwitchCon Europe



May 31 & June 1

- TwitchCon Europe took place at Rotterdam Ahoy, attracting over 12,500 international visitors from the world of online streaming.
- Over 100,000 people followed the live broadcasts via Twitch.tv.
- The City of Rotterdam and Rotterdam Partners hosted a joint booth featuring 11 (inter) national organizations, including the Dutch Police, Ministry of Defence, KNVB, and local initiatives such as Stichting Levels (non-profit organization).
- A live-streaming coffee bar at Zuidplein drew global attention, reaching over 700,000 viewers.
- 'Rotterdam Onbeperkt' once again made the event one of the most accessible events in the world.
- Watch the TwitchCon aftermovie [here](#).

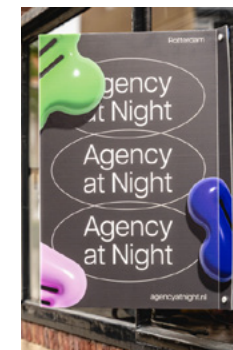


**Photo:** TwitchCon attendees. 📷 David Rozing.

## Agency at Night - Open House

May 16

- Agencies displaying latest in marketing, video- and graphic design.
- Sectors ranged from video, graphic design, marketing to development.
- Over 5,500 visitors attended the festival.
- 750 students from the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences participated in the student program.
- 1,000 visitors attended the closing party.
- The Agency at Night aftermovie can be viewed [here](#).



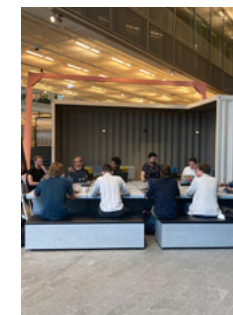
**Photo:** Agency at Night window sign.

📷 Guus van der Aa.

## XR Creators Connect

May 16

- Over 160 participants from creative, scientific, and policy sectors.
- Four organizations showcased their applications of XR (Extended Reality).
- Workshops and lectures explored the possibilities of this technology.
- The City of Rotterdam supports this through [SHINE](#).
- Watch [here](#) for an impression by Jan Verwoerd.



**Photo:** creative session with the visitors.

📷 Josefina Nonell Lopez.

## INDIGO

May 27 & 28

- 750+ attendees from the game development industry (a 27% increase compared to last year).
- 590+ business meetings took place via the Meet2Match platform, resulting in multiple investment deals.
- 20+ game studios were present and a total of 26 games showcased on the show floor.
- 12 pitchers presented to 30 international publishers and investors.
- 36 international speakers.



**Photo:** visitors at INDIGO.  
📷 Arno Landsbergen.

## Creative Talent Award 2025 (Agency at Night)

May 12

- Focused on celebrating young creative talent in the city.
- 75 young creatives submitted their portfolios.
- 145 applications, 40 semi-finalists, over 13,000 votes on portfolios.
- 5 finalists presented live in front of 250 attendees at LantarenVenster.
- Award: more visibility, networking opportunities, and a €1,000 cash award.



**Photo:** atmospheric impressions of the Creative Talent Award 2025.

📷 Aldwin van Krimpen.



## CIIIC Annual Meet-Up

May 26

- This event in Rotterdam was the first CIIIC Meet-up.
- Theme:** The position of the Netherlands in the global immersive experiences landscape.
- Over 250 attendees from a wide range of sectors participated.
- The event positioned Rotterdam as a leading hub for innovation and creativity.

## Day 1: Upstream Festival 2025

May 22

- Upstream connected start-ups, scale-ups, investors, and policymakers on the topic of tomorrow's key transitions.
- Over 3,100 visitors, including 40% startups/scale-ups and 13% investors.
- More than 45 side events across the city, focusing on digital innovation and sustainability.
- 40 exhibitors participated.
- An average of 14 new connections per participant
- €5 billion in economic value and investment potential.
- 73% of the start-ups were active in software and digital sectors.



**Photo:** expedition hall at Annabel (Rotterdam) during the Upstream Festival.



**Photo:** winners of the NL Startup Competition.  
Both images originate from the [Upstream Impact Report 2025](#).

## A.I. for Good Challenge

May 20

- The A.I. for Good Challenge, an Upstream side event, was hosted by the Unknown Watertoren Campus.
- 40 talented students worked on challenges presented by a housing corporation and the City of Rotterdam.
- Organized by the Unknown Group in collaboration with the City of Rotterdam's Department of Economics.

## Awareness Day against Cybercrime

May 21

During this day, digital security took the center stage. An advisor from The Platform for Safe Entrepreneurship of the region of Rotterdam was present at the Dutch government's central information platform for entrepreneurs, offering free cybersecurity consultations to Rotterdam-based entrepreneurs.

Watch the aftermovie [here](#).

## Unconference

May 21

- An official side event of Upstream Festival 2025.
- Free format program: participants defined the topics within the theme of Healthy Digital Cities.
- Focused on interactive knowledge exchange and networking between startup and public innovation networks.
- 35 participants, including 16 entrepreneurs from the Upstream and Dutch Societal Innovation Hub (DSIH) networks.
- Popular among entrepreneurs, investors, and changemakers.



**Photo:** participants in action during a session at Unconference.

📷 Jan de Groen.

## Ekip Policy Lab

May 30

- A policy lab organized by the European Cultural and Creative Industries Innovation Policy Platform.
- **Theme:** Inclusivity in the video game industry.
- Developing policy recommendations at the EU level.
- Focusing on access, representation, and diversity.
- Connecting creators, developers, and policymakers from across Europe.
- Strengthening Rotterdam's position as a leader in digital culture and inclusive innovation.

## TwitchCon Community Dinner

May 31

After the first day of TwitchCon, a dinner and stage show took place at Café Dox (Nieuwe Luxor Theater). Over 50 attendees, including international relations and staff from the City of Rotterdam's partner organizations.

## Regional officials meet-up at Rotterdam's Immersive Tech Hub (Katoenhuis), M4H District

May 21

- Inspiration Session on XR and Education
- 16 aldermen from the Rotterdam The Hague metropolitan region attended.
- Introduction to XR and its impact on vocational (MBO), applied (HBO), and academic (WO) education.
- Showcased examples of how XR strengthens both education and society.
- Provided policymakers with fresh insights and inspiration.



**Photo:** impression inspiration session at the Rotterdam Immersive Tech Hub.

📷 Josefina Nonell Lopez.

## Live broadcast from the Radiofabriek

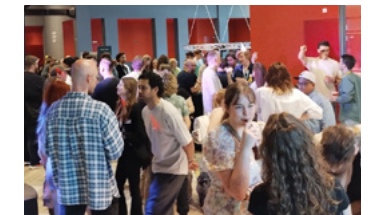
April 29

- **Theme:** Digital connectivity as a basic need.
- The live broadcast took place via: [www.deradiofabriek.nl](http://www.deradiofabriek.nl)
- Top experts discussed digital infrastructure from the residents and policymakers' perspectives.
- Focus on connectivity as a service as essential as water and electricity.

## Network Event Creator Economy

May 30

Business-to-Business networking event at 'Theater Zuidplein', marking the start of the TwitchCon Europe 2025 weekend in Rotterdam.



**Photo:** guests at the networking event.

📷 Martijn Peltenburg.