

Preparing a Sports Event in Finland

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<p>This is a project-based thesis. The main idea of this thesis is to cover all the aspects related to preparing a sports event (in this case, football) in Finland. The commission company has had issues with their sports events in the past, related to the venue, its suppliers and services offered, as well as overall perception of the event. Leading them to ask the author to create a new venue plan that exceeds last year's results. The objectives of this thesis were well aligned with the commission company's objectives.</p> <p>Using a variety of sources, from authors of different areas that combined with the knowledge of previous events, support the concept of the optimal event. Adjusting this ideal event to fit into this specific case, where the new concept is the pillar stone and all the actions are aimed to accomplish this concept. Feasibility, finance and forecast were the main issues discussed throughout the process, each adding crucial elements to the planning phases.</p> <p>Finalizing the plan in time to carry out all the necessary actions was of great importance, as there were many changes to be made. Once again, the actions were divided into main categories; new concept, financial planning and forecasting. The creation of a system, that serves as a guideline for each individual event, is presented as the best solution to increase profitability and reduce any waste. This system is based on how much attendance is expected, and how that effects supply, working personnel, security, etc. Each event (total of 11) was allocated into a different category, going from 1 to 5. Each category has the optimal actions to be carried out.</p> <p>This project's system was put to test, as there was time to deeply analyse 2 events and their results. The results were similar to what was expected percentagewise, as the attendance suffered badly from unfavoured weather conditions. Another point that is analysed, besides the financial figures, is customer satisfaction, which was extremely positive, showing that despite the low attendance, due to outside interference, the venue had surpassed last year's overall outcome.</p>	
Keywords Sport Events, Management, Forecasting, Analysis, Supply Selection, Company Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Financial Control, Feasibility	

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1 Introduction

This chapter is the first impression of this entire thesis. Starting with the background, it goes on to several points and aspects that will help understand this project. It contains important information such as the project objectives and its respective tasks and the defined thesis key concepts.

1.1 Background

A normal football season in Finland has, approximately, 33 games. Half of those (16 or 17) are played in each team home field, leaving to each club the task to prepare a sports event that fulfills safety requirements and spectators' expectations. Esport Honka (commissioning company) is one of those teams, and the main focus of this project is to prepare and implement a sports event plan for them. Having failed to have satisfactory game events in the past season (2018), Esport Honka is urging for a new concept that engages the audience and delivers a high-quality experience. The author of this thesis was selected by the case company to build a new plan for the next season (2019), giving the author the chance to implement all academic learning into a real-work experience.

1.2 Project Objectives

The project objective of this thesis is to prepare a sports event in Finland. Focusing on the company's objectives and budget, as well as the legal requirements in order for the event to be allowed to happen. The successful implementation of the project will benefit the author and any person that may need guidance when planning and implementing small-scale events, regardless if it is sports-based or not. The company is also a beneficiary, as the project should increase its finances and recognition.

The Project Tasks (PTs) were defined as:

PT 1: Analysing Theories that Support an Optimal Sports Event Plan

The first task established the theories that will be used in the project plan.

PT 2: Implementation Planning

The second task is used to determine all the operational strategies.

PT 3: Supplier and Services Assessment and Selection

The third tasks use theories to assess potential supplier and services.

PT 4: Implementing Event

The fourth task uses the outcome results of previous PTs to implement the plan into a concrete event.

PT 5: Final Event Version

The last task consists of the outcome of all PTs, and after consultation with the commissioning company, the design and implementation of the plan are ready to be used. Evaluation and feedback should also be included.

Table 1 shows the overlay matrix of the project tasks, their respective theoretical framework, project management method, and outcome.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Project Task	Theoretical Framework	Project Management Methods	Outcomes
PT 1. Analysing Theories that Support an Optimal Sports Event Plan	Strategic Planning Event planning process SWOT analysis	Desktop study Meetings with case company	Description of goals, objectives and concept Initial event plan with clear steps to follow
PT 2. Implementation Planning	Strategic Planning, needs assessment, feasibility	Desktop study Consulting with case company	Operation strategies Path to follow and performance indicators
PT 3. Supplier and Services Assessment and Selection	Needs assessment Supplier segmentation, Kraljic Matrix	Desktop study Cold calls to suppliers/services Negotiations with case company	Supplier/service selection and negotiation Add supplier/service to plan
PT 4. Implementing Event	Event planning process finalization	Working with plan model and design Evaluate results vs initial objectives	Final plan is concluded Pending case to company's approval
PT 5. Final Event Version		Working with case company to correct final issues and finalize project plan	Evaluation and feedback Sports event plan is ready

1.3 Project Scope

According to the title, this project will take place in Finland, considering the rules and requirements of the Football Association of Finland (Suomen Palloliitto, SPL) and Finnish

football league, Veikkausliiga. As the event is a small-scale sports event, the steps presented in the event plan will not include bidding, environment or social impacts and hand-over following the event, as they do not apply in this specific case. While suppliers and services evaluation and selection are crucial to any company, they can not be used to its full potential in this project, therefore, the focus will be mainly in fulfilling the legal requirements for the event to happen. The event planning considered the size of the event (small-scale), the type of event (sports) and people included on it (performers, spectators, security, medical personnel, media, etc.) in order to have the optimal design to fulfil the case company's goals and objectives.

1.4 International Aspect

The author is a Brazilian professional football player currently playing for the Finnish Veikkausliiga team FC Honka, that is administrated by the case company, Esport Oy. As the author is also head of the project planning and implementation, its international aspects are the massive international experience he has on the topic, as a performer and spectator in such events. Bringing a unique concept for the project, only possible due to his international understanding of a sports event, small and large-scale.

1.5 Benefits

Not only the obvious benefit that the company will have with the successful implementation of this project but also the benefit to the author and anyone that seek guidance when planning and implementing events.

The company will benefit as the project aims to increase revenue and customer satisfaction, as it decreases costs and probability of issues during, before and after the event.

I, the author, see this project as an opportunity for personal and professional gain. As this thesis is a combination of theories learned throughout the academic years and the actual "handwork" of planning and executing a project. The outcome, positive or negative, will serve as an unprecedented learning experience.

Searching for literature on planning sports event, I realized that there are not many articles or book about this subject. Making this thesis a valuable source of information for anyone interested in planning and implementing events, of sports nature or not. As the steps used should be clear enough to be easily followed by anyone.

1.6 Risks

As this project will happen, regardless of the outcome, there is no risk of being cancelled in case it does not reach its goals. However, if the case company decides to lower the efforts and the budget for the project, it may have a severe impact on the results. The lack of trust and clear communication channels are also risk factors in the project development. To avoid those, the author intends to be as clear as possible and keep the motivation and workload always high, so that the company will not show “cold feet” and can trust that the only way to reach the objectives (set by both company and author) will be working together.

1.7 Key Concepts

Event (in this context) is any gathering of people for a specific purpose. Events can be of various forms and can be undertaken for a variety of reasons (Laurence 2017, 14).

Sports event: Any event that has, as a form of entertainment, some type of physical activity involving performers that are competing, or not, against each other. It is known that sports event had a great impact on the development of society and are dated since ancient Greece. Nowadays we have the mega-scale sports events and they move billions (of dollars and people), making the sports event industry impact almost unmeasurable (Masterman, 2014, 4).

Event planning: By definition; Event planning is the process of managing a project such as a meeting, convention, tradeshow, ceremony, team building activity, party or convention. Event planning includes budgeting, establishing timelines, selecting and reserving the event sites, acquiring permits, planning food, coordinating transportation, developing a theme, arranging for activities, selecting speakers and keynotes, arranging for equipment and facilities, managing risk, and developing contingency plans (IITEM, 2018).

Supplier in a sports event is not simply those who produce sporting goods and products to be sold at an event. But also, the sponsors, media and broadcast channels and any agent or facilitator that is somehow connected to the happening of the event (Masterman 2014, 19). Suppliers are also “the finest opportunity for the buyer to improve his(her) company’s profit and obtain recognition” (Lysons 2012, 526).

Consumers of a sports event are its spectators, and it can be either corporate or individual. The first one is related to the implementation of the event, it usually has a role or is investing in the event (sponsors, TV, etc.). Individual spectators are the one that buys a

ticket and consumes the event (either physically or digitally), it is the main source of income of a sports event (Masterman 2014, 21).

1.8 Case Company

Founded in 1980, Esport is the largest indoor sports center in the Nordic countries. Located near Tapiola in Espoo, the Esport Arena is the largest of Esport's facilities, having over 20,000 square meters. It has a 400 meters racetrack, a normal-size football field, and over 50 small size courts (for tennis, floorball, basketball, squash, badminton, etc.), it has 2 fitness areas with the newest gym materials. Esport also has other 5 facilities with similar characteristic spread around the Helsinki area. (Esport 2018.)

Esport is home for several elite competition teams, such as Esport Oilers (Floorball) and Esport Honka (Football).

Since Esport is responsible for the management of Esport Honka, it must provide the venue for the home games, fulfilling legal requirements. Esport has an outside stadium with capacity for 3,000 spectators. Having an average of 1,500 spectators/game and an approximately 18 games/season, it is a constant improvement and fixing problems work. In the 2018 season, Esport has received a high number of complaints from the spectators involved in the game. The most common ones are long queues in the entrances and bathrooms, unsatisfactory products and services in the food shops, spectators have a hard time "moving around" and the layout of the stadium lowers the quality of the event. In the legal part, security has failed to achieve its duty, resulting in fines to the home team.

These factors have contributed, together with a new finance balance where Esport hopes to improve revenue, to a need for a change. This thesis project main task is to present to Esport a plan that satisfies all the new goals and objectives that the company has, and, at the same, gives to the spectator a new experience that will make them come again and bring more people, resulting in an increase in the club's finances.

2 Project Path

The event planning process does not have a flawless-perfect template to be used, as literature discuss the many ways and outcomes each and every process can bring (Sven 2012, 65). For each event, an adaptation must be made in order to fit the organizers' objectives (Masterman 2014, 46). For this project an event planning process with academic background has been modified to perfectly fit the company's objectives.

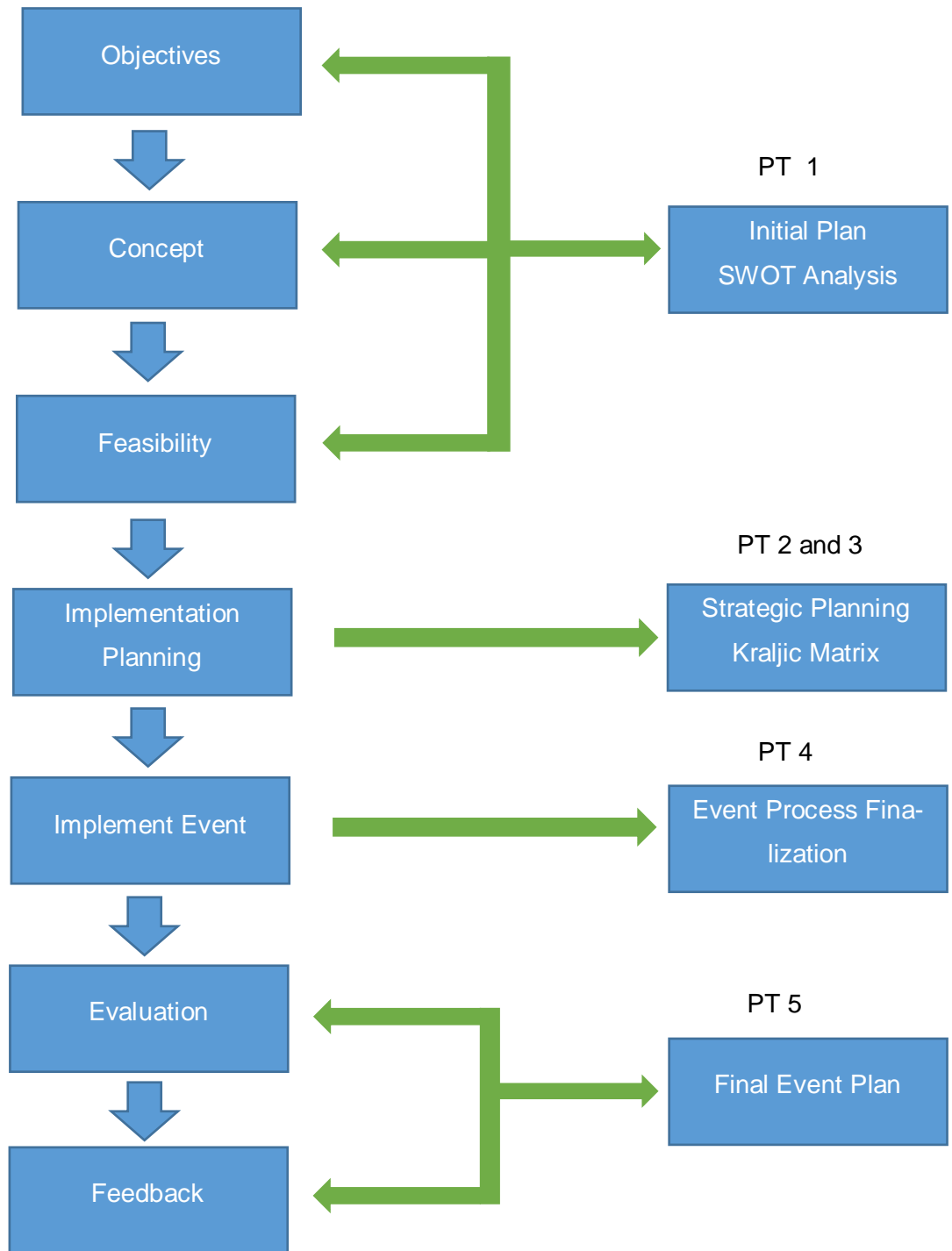


Figure 1. The event planning process (Masterman 2014, 71) modified to fit the company's project and help understand where each project task fit.

The original event planning process by Masterman (2014, 71) had steps that are not relevant in this event plan. Such as; Social impacts, Bid procedure, Handover, and Legacy. Those apply to the cases where a city (country) or organization is considering hosting an event for a period of time, annually or a one-time event (for example the Olympic Games). As mentioned before, each organization must find its particular planning process, the author and case company have agreed on using and follow the steps of the model above.

Getz (2015) recommends that “in order to maintain efficiency in both time and finance, it is advised that each stage is completed prior to progression to the next”.

The model uses 7 concepts, here is a brief explanation:

Objectives: Setting the objectives prior to the concept and finances is crucial to determine the nature and scale of the event. The objectives, regardless of the event size, are “concerned with what the event itself is to achieve” (Masterman 2014, 75).

Concept: The concept is the plan that is designed for the event to reach its objectives, key questions to be answered are, what is the event and what does it look like (Bowdin 2011, 45).

Feasibility: Allen *et al.* (2010) state that after the concept is completed, it is time to test the concept and consider whether it will work or not. Usually using a rehearsal event or previous events experiences. Larger events may prove quite difficult to be staged, in this case, the feasibility should be concerned with the finances and provide a cost-benefit insight to facilitate the budget plan.

Implementation planning: This stage includes the assurance of methodologies that can accomplish the targets previously decided. The methodologies that are required to convey the event should be integrated with the further improvement of the critical path. (Allen & al. 2010, 189.)

Implementing event: The successful delivery of the event involves the implementation of the strategies which ensure that the short-term objectives of the event are met. The success of these short-term objectives is also of critical importance for the success of any long-term benefits. All the aspects of the event should have been covered by now and the planning is replaced by actions. (Masterman 2014, 221.)

Evaluation: The evaluation of an event does not necessarily happen after the event, it can be used throughout all the key steps leading to the end product. The evaluation serves the purpose of measuring the results and, therefore, compare them with the initial objectives (budget, delivery time, expectations, etc.), to identify whether the plan is been successful or if there are corrections to be made. (Masterman 2014, 378-340)

Feedback: Evaluation is only of use if the results are fed back into the decision-making process, making it possible for future plans to understand why and how previous strategies and decision worked or failed. Feedback can come from a variety of sources, either in the short-term activities or in the long-term, these answers, added to evaluation, give the plan organizers the tools for future improvement. Thus, evaluation is conducted at all stages and therefore feedback is also continuous throughout the process. (Getz 2005, 278)

3 Project Plan

3.1 Project Management Methods

Sports event planning and management do not have a wide range of literature. Therefore, the amount of theoretical background is limited. However, using higher knowledge from other similar areas and adjusting it, seems to be the best solution for this project. The main source of information is provided by previous events (case company's experience and literature on global events) and books and articles on event planning. These books contribute with guidance on how to do it, but there are so many aspects in each project that make the theory distant from reality. That is why the author choose to modify an event planning template (figure 1).

Among the steps leading to the end product, SWOT analysis and Kraljic Matrix were chosen for their purpose to identify the company's assets and liabilities and the position of its suppliers in relation to the business. The knowledge of where it stands, and which are the crucial suppliers, should enable the planner to make critical decisions that will benefit the company. In this case, being able to speak freely (not only meetings) with the members of the company and assure that they will provide any request information, are the best practices to acquire data.

Each project task is set in a way that it supports the next task. For instance, in order for task 2 to start, task 1 must have been completed. This is, according to Bowdin (2011), the correct way to proceed throughout the project plan.

Figure 2 shows, in a simplified way, which are the sources of data and project management methods. It also predicts the minimum outcome of each task, so that the project can move forward. Task 1, 2 and 3 need an academic background to support their importance in this project, as well as provide information on the necessary actions that will lead to the best possible outcome. They rely mostly on desktop study and communication with the case company. Task 4 and 5 are the result of the previous work, combining the end-product of the previous tasks to make the final version of the project to take form. Task 4 requires a great amount of exchange with the case company, having in mind that there will not be much time to make big changes. Task 5 is the final version ready to be tested. Small adjustments can still take place and problems assessed, but if everything goes well and the company is satisfied, task 5 is the project outcome.

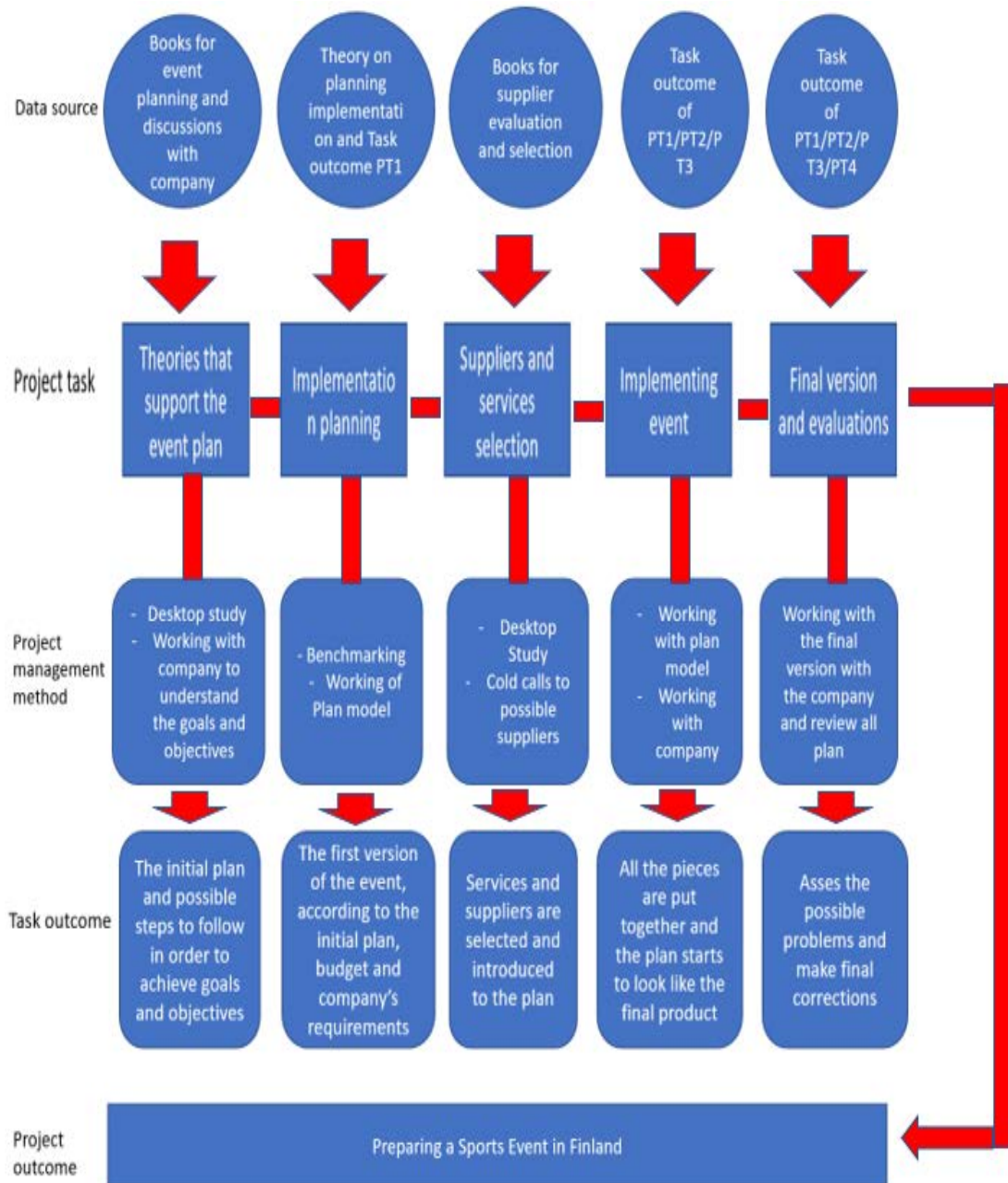


Figure 2. Project management methods and data sources.

3.2 Objectives

Masterman (2014) emphasizes the importance of understanding why the event is being held prior to deciding what it will be or look like. As mentioned before, the objectives are the pillar to start any project and what the project is expected to achieve. Regardless of what the objectives are, they will be the shadow of which the event itself will be evaluated to measure its success. Literature discuss that most sports event lack clear objectives (Bowdin 2011), the reasons for that goes from poor management, high number of stakeholders (each having individual objectives), unpredictability of sports events success and the avoidance of failure once there are no plain objectives (Masterman 2014, 81; Bowdin 2011, 206).

Setting objectives provide the planning team clear direction and execution (Koster, 2010), therefore, this project will have a set of comprehensive objectives to guide it towards success.

Esport Honka objective is to surpass last year's home game overall results (attendance, revenue, etc). The ways to achieve that were discussed with the CEO, board members and marketing director. The objectives were decided as;

- improve customer experience
- increase profitability
- effectively forecast and plan each game

Each of these objectives comes with a set of smaller actions that need to be carried out in order to accomplish them.

These objectives are directly related to the Project Tasks of this thesis. Allowing the writer to stay on track of his thesis objectives during this project plan, in a manner that the company's objectives do not mislead this thesis objective, as shown in Figure 1.

3.3 Who Benefits?

Every sports event has its distinct stakeholders (Masterman 2014, 76). Here we can identify them as customers, suppliers, partners, investors, staff and external influencers, that are all, somehow, connected to the successful implementation of this event. Being the host and the financier, Esport Honka is the main character to be benefited. The obvious relation between customer satisfaction with the amount of money spent in the event, combined with a greater possibility to return for the next event and bring more consumers with them, shows how much the company depends on a prosperous outcome.

Customer satisfaction in a sporting event is not only related to the outcome of the “sports dispute; if your favorite wins, you are happy”. Studies have shown that the spectators, in sports events, spend more time observing and interacting with other activities than with the main event. Therefore, costumers will also be strongly benefited by a satisfactory experience in the venue. (Taks 2018, 191.)

Partners and sponsor also a have direct connection with the success of this project implementation. As more spectators come to the event, more visibility the partners and sponsor will have, resulting in an obvious mutual benefit.

Performers and club staff are also gainers, as a larger crowd creates an optimal atmosphere for the competitiveness of a sports event and enables improvements in all sectors of the club, as it generates more income.

3.4 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a framework used to identify business Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. “Strengths and weaknesses are internal issues unique to the firm conducting the analysis. Opportunities and threats are external issues that exist independently of the firm conducting the analysis” (Ferrell 2012, 70). An optimal SWOT analysis gives an advantage when it comes to fast response and adaptability of a business, as well as the knowledge of its capability to do so. (Wetherly 2014, 23.)

The correct usage of SWOT analysis consists of an honesty analysis of a business and an understanding of its internal and external environments. SWOT should focus on main characteristics to avoid being a long list of issues and, therefore, not useful (Ferrel 2012, 72). A clear-dynamic view of a company’s SWOT is key in the planning phase of this project.

It is important to notice that this SWOT analysis, as shown in figure 3, was used in this case focusing on the factors that are related to the event this project is covering. All the aspects taken into consideration are somehow connected to the overall result of the sports event the company is producing, and not necessarily in the company itself.

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FC Honka youth base • Partners • Stadium location • Brand 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Capacity • Inventory • Vulnerability in game-day services • Venue's display
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The city of Espoo • 17 events • Word of mouth • Unique experience • Finnish Champions 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Unpredictability of sports events • Replaced by other events • Loss of interest • Suppliers do not fulfil obligations

Figure 3. Esport Honka SWOT analysis (adapted from Ezpa)

Strengths

- FC Honka is a traditional club in Finland, known for its competitive junior teams. Having approximately 2,000 youth players gives the adult team (the main event of this project) a strong base of local supporters. Considering that every youth player brings their parents for the games, has a crucial impact on attendance.
- Companies see FC Honka home games as a marketing opportunity, providing the club important partners that reinforce the financial situations and enable big investments. FC Honka has now dealt with 5 big companies and approximately 25 medium/small size companies.
- Tapiola Urheilupuisto or Tapiola Sports Park, the venue for the events, is located between the center of Espoo and West-Helsinki. Very easily accessed by bus and with a new metro station just 3 min away, it is an attractive location. It also possesses a wide, free of charge, parking area.
- Honka has many faithful supporters in a variety of sports. As Honka has a women football team, a floorball team, basketball and track and field teams, there are many people involved with the club and Honka represents the city of Espoo and it represents it with top quality (Finland standards). In addition to that, Honka has been involved with sports for over 70 years, it is a known club and people from all over come to see it perform.

Weaknesses

- Advertising was not being used by FC Honka, people did not know when the next game would be played, or against who, or what time. Those mistakes are crucial, once there are a lot of football lovers that do not know that Espoo has a football club. Advertising was mostly placed very near the game venue, however, the people that went near the stadium probably already knew about the season's schedule. Social media channels were also very inactive.
- The event venue does not possess an inventory, making it very difficult to prepare the supplies. The entire logistics of delivery time and amounts must be very precise, to avoid losses. Making forecasting a crucial element of preparation.
- Regardless of how many people would like to attend a game, only 3,000 would be able to get in. For a club with aspirations of becoming one of the biggest in Finland, a stadium with 3,000 seats is simply not good enough. This capacity undermines the finances in many ways, fewer tickets sold, fewer goods sold, less money from advertising companies and partners, etc.

Opportunities

- Espoo is one of the greatest cities in Finland, with enough resources to support a top sports club. If Esport Honka could make the city understand its importance as a core pillar for the club's success, it could be one of its greatest strengths (Taks 2018, 189). The challenge, so far, has been the connection between club and city. One of the marketing plans is to create a "rivalry" between Espoo and Helsinki, instigating the feeling that the people that come to the games will be supporting their city against the "rich, win-all Helsinki", giving the fans an extra factor.
- Regardless of how the season goes, Esport Honka will host 17 games. That gives many chances for improvement and opportunities to form a bond with spectators.
- Word of mouth is commonly known as one of the best advertising methods a company can have. Considering the event provide a satisfactory experience, people that attended may speak well about it and next event shall gather more spectators.
- Being the only club from Espoo in the Finnish top division, Esport Honka has the chance to provide something no other club from Espoo can. Strong investments in the venue, together with the prospect of being Finnish Champions, can be the ideal combination to break the predictions and have a high average spectator during the entire season.

Threats

- Weather in Finland can be quite unpredictable, and since the games are played outside, bad weather will have a negative influence on the number of spectators. At the same time, very good weather will also have a negative effect, as Finnish people tend to prefer enjoying the higher temperatures in their cottages or abroad. During summer, it is preferable that the games are played during weekdays, to avoid losing costumers due to weekend activities.

- People may feel discouraged to attend sports events due to its unpredictability. Most families like to attend to events that the end is “happy”, that can not be guaranteed in a sports event, in addition to that, bad results may lead to angry fans, that leads to aggressivity and perhaps some violent acts. All those are bad for the club and most supporters.
- During the summer months, Finland has several activities and Fans end up with many options, leaving football behind. If the club is unable to provide an outstanding experience and the team itself is not performing well, the number of spectators will drop a lot. Not to mention they may rather go watch other sport games in different venues.
- The lack of inventory makes the organizers vulnerable to mistakes in game-day deliveries. That has happened in the past and it is crucial to be fixed for this year’s events.

3.5 Event Concept

After objectives have been determined and the path to achieve them has started to take shape, the concept for the event can start to be discussed (Mastermann 2014, 81). Scholars argue the involvement of all parts in the design phase of an event, as most sports events (Olympics, World Cup, etc.) require new facilities and great investments so that the investors can see their investment return in either short or long term. Note that investors are, in many cases, government sectors (Mackay 2012). [Insidethegames.biz](#) ADD

This is the stage where all aspects of the event should be considered; the scale; its operation stages; timing; facilities and equipment required. All these phases should be individually analyzed but how they fit in the bigger picture will determinate their final form (Mastermann 2014, 82). It is also important to remember that sports event is an entertainment, therefore, there should be other activities when the main attraction is not performing, even though these extra activities may seem as extra cost, the long-term benefits should be considered, as the view of the customer must be taken in perspective to evaluate the event experience and how it will attract them a next time (Getz 2005, 147).

Figure 4 shows the concept of last year’s events. This old concept was the target of several complaints, from spectators, performers, and staffs involved in the event. It can be easily noticed the lack of entrances to the venue, the small number of bathrooms and the difficulty in moving from one area to another. Poor display and a limited number of sale stands can also be noticed. The red arrows show the entrances available (1 and 2), blue squares mark the position of bathrooms (7), the yellow squares are the selling areas (food and drinks) and the black area is unused spaces.



Figure 4. Old concept (Adapted from Google Maps)

This year's event concept aims to effectively correct past mistakes and present the audience and any attendance to a more smooth-pleasant experience. Avoiding long queues, the new concept focusses on better usage of the space with better distribution of services. Adding new entrances gates, new stands for spectators, more and well-distributed bathrooms, introducing new services and products.

New features:

- Added 5 more bathrooms
- Added 4 more sales stands, including 2 food trucks and 1 Honka shop
- New stands that combined added more 2,400 seats to the capacity
- Added 2 new entrance for spectators
- Staff; security and sales personal are now better distributed and can increase the amount depending on the forecasted demand
- VIP area and VIP Lounge are now available

Figure 5 shows how these new features will be used in the upcoming events. The blue boxes (6) are a pair of bathrooms. The yellow squares show where we the selling stands

will be positioned (same place sale beer and small food). The yellow squares with red borders are the two food trucks that should be at every event for larger food portions. The yellow box with a black border is the new FC Honka shop, for the team's merchandise. The purple box is the VIP lounge, with a restaurant and a balcony. The red arrows and the entrance gates for the game (with the exception of the one on the top right, as that is only for staff and players).

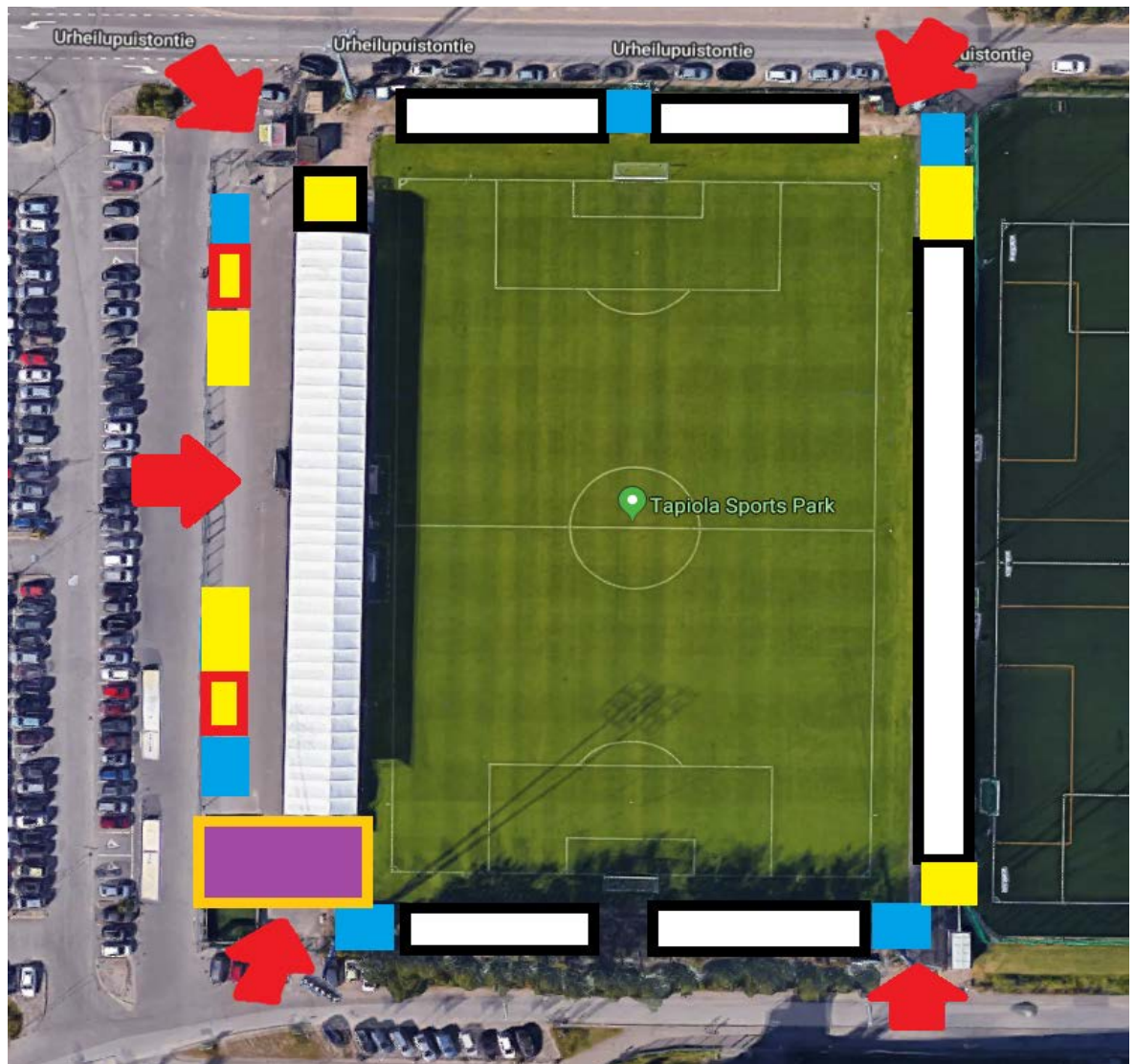


Figure 5. New concept plan (Adapted from Google Maps)

As mentioned before, the operation stages and timing are of extreme importance. All the facilities, with the exception of the food trucks, should be ready prior one day of the event, all equipment inside these facilities should also be ready for use. Security gates and barriers should be set by security personal at least 1h prior to the event. In the morning of every event, the facilities should be inspected once more to ensure everything is in order if not, there should be time to fix small issues. Working staff such as; sales, security and op-

erations should be at the venue 2h prior to the event, as they are responsible for organizing their workplace and move supplies to sales stands. Working staff will also stay 1h after the event for cleaning, dismounting and closing of the facilities.

Supplies (products) should be delivered in the morning of the event, as Esport has no inventory the capacity to keep products fresh is limited, therefore suppliers must be reliable. In the eventuality of suppliers failing to deliver (time and/or amount), a large fine has been added to the contract made with these suppliers and a possibility to end the contract if the problem persists. The backup plan would be to buy the necessary products in the near supermarkets and simply re-sell, lowering profitability but giving the certainty of providing enough for the audience. Hartwall will be responsible for providing cold drinks. Coffee and small portions of food are brought from LIDL, prepared at the venue and sold.

Food trucks have no time of arrival or departure, as Esport contract simply offers the venue in exchange for 20% of the profits, the time of opening and closing is completely up to the "truck" choice. Naturally, we demand that the trucks are there at least 1h before the event and do not leave before the end of the event, as replacement is easily achievable.

The extra entertainment, for when the main stage is on pause, has not yet been decided, but it should be cost-free. As said in the SWOT analysis, FC Honka has a large junior academy and the idea is to use some of these youth players to perform some sort of activity during the main event breaks. This way, not only the audience will remain entertained, but also family and friends of these young players will attend the game, generating more sales. An end game activity with the main performers is also a possibility, but for security reasons, it may be difficult to execute. One way or another, the attempt will be to create a stronger bond with the spectators and give them the sentiment that they belong there as part of the show.

3.6 Event Feasibility

Writers of event theory emphasize the importance of doing the feasibility stage. It is when the event is tested to measure its compliance with objectives (Getz 2005; Masterman 2014; Allen *et al.*, 2002). The testing process can be produced in a variety of ways, rehearsals, small-scale events, analysis of other similar events, etc. For instance, the Manchester Commonwealth Games of 2002 had 42 test events performed in order to optimize the final event (Masterman 2014, 85).

One key element of the feasibility process is financial evaluation as a budget assistant. This helps organizers forecast benefits and expenses, adding the financial numbers into the decision-making process. The setting of a budget needs to be realistic with the event expenses and feasibility provides that, as well as being a performance indicator for future evaluation (Getz 2005, 176). Naturally, if an event is still facing opposition, feasibility may be used to decide whether to move forward or not (Chase 2013, 1337).

For this project, the use of feasibility must be based on previous events held by the company and in a simulation. The event design/concept may suffer changes depending on the results of the feasibility simulation. Costs should be used at a higher margin (10%) to avoid surprises at the real event.

Another point to be considered is that Esport Honka will have 17 events during the year. Therefore, feasibility does not need to be 100% precise, as each game may help develop the next event, cutting waste and cost to a minimum while enhancing customer experience.

Fixed costs as a yearly amount:

- New features - **35,000€**
- Rent of the field - **8,500€**
- Field maintenance - **90,000€**
- Medical personal - **2,500€**
- Fire department - **3,800€**
- Insurance - **2,000€**
- Tiketti (ticket provider) - **600€**
- Advertising - **15,000€**

Total FC **171,640€** (10,097€/game)

Variable costs per game, assuming 2,000 spectators:

- Security staff 30€/h, average 23 members working for 5h = **3,450€**
- Security manager 35€/h, average 2 members working for 5h = **350€**
- Sales personal 24€/h, average 16 members working for 5h = **1,920€**
- Alcohol sales personal 27€/h, average 12 members working 5h = **1,620€**
- 1 Chef 30€/h and 2 assistants 20€/h, working 4h = **280€**
- Event information pamphlet 2€ each 100 pieces, average of 2,000 pieces = **40€**
- Extra entertainment 0€

Total VC 7,660€ + 10% = **8,426€**

With fixed costs = **18,523€/game**

PROFIT

Fixed profit as a yearly amount

- Season tickets 41,721€ (01.04.2019)
- Sponsors for in-game advertising 180,000€ (01.04.2019)

Total 221,721€ = ~~13,043€~~game

Variable profits per game, assuming 2,000 spectator's average consumption:

- Ticket sales: 40% buy ticket at the gate, other have season card or some sort of junior ticket, providing an estimated of **8,000€**
- Food sales; **1,300€** in consumption of pizza, makara, popcorn and sweets.
- Cold drinks sales - **8,200€**
- Warm drinks sales - **3,760€**
- Merchandise sales - **0**

Total **21,260€**

With fixed profit = **34,303€**game

Presuming that the assumptions are correct, and all the aspects that may affect the feasibility were taken into consideration, this event should be carried out, as the profit for each game is of **15,780€** and the season's profit is of **268,260€**. Naturally, issues may arise and expenses increase, however, there is a high-profit margin to deal with these situations, and at the same time that expenses can increase, so can profitability. Therefore, the event should be carried out.

Considerations:

- Cost for delivery and transportation were not added, as they are provided by workers under Esport agreements, not Esport Honka.
- Cost for new features is not 100% precise, as some work was done under Esport supervision and the exact cost was not shared. The correct margin would be between 27,000€ and 35,000€. We decided to use the higher amount in the same idea as we added 10% on the overall cost.
- Extra entertainment has a 0 cost. As explained previously, we will use Honka's youth players to provide this entertainment in exchange for the promotion of their team.

- Profit calculations were done assuming last year's consumption and using a simple mathematic equation, where the product sale price is diminished by the product cost, resulting in the profit. Example, cold drinks have a 0,90€ cost per unit, and a sale price of 5,00€, meaning that every sale has a 4,10€ profit, assuming that 2,000 units (1 per person) will be sold, it equals the 8,200€ profit.
- Cold drinks have an average consumption of 1,27 drink per person, in this project this number is rounded to 1.
- Warm drinks have an average of 1,62 per person, in this project this number is rounded to 1,5.
- Food sales have different prices from product to product, making it hard to assess their consumption individually, as previous data only gave the general revenue. The final revenue number (22,200€) was simply divided into the amount of games, giving the average that will be used in this project (1,300€).
- Food truck sales were not included, as their agreement is with Esport, therefore not benefiting Esport Honka.
- Merchandise has never been sold before, therefore the feasibility is not considering its likely profitability. It will be recorded and later on assessed.
- Some games will have different campaigns to boost sales, those were not added to this list, as their calculation differ from this basis. Only the "normal" games, with normal sales and prices were considered and are able to comply with this feasibility.

3.7 Event forecasting

"All forecasts are wrong, some are useful" (George Box)

The forecast of an event is similar to forecasting demand, it is essential to be as accurate as possible to be able to balance it with supplies, avoiding higher costs or loss in sales (Gilliland 2015, 51). Paul Goodwin highlights the necessity to add a margin for uncertainty, as any forecast may be incorrect. In addition to the margin, Goodwin states that "there should be guidance on what contingency plans you should make to cope with errors in the forecast". Therefore, any forecast report has to be reliable, comprehensive and practical to aid the decision-makers, at the same time that provides secondary options (Gilliland 2015, 51).

Scholars argue on the need to add "range of values" in the forecasting phase, that provides a more realistic view on the demand, however, there is no consensus on how to extend this margin should be, giving to each forecaster the chance to decide this range accordingly.

When it comes to events, the number of people attending is the most important figure for managers, the industry is driven by the number of attendance, making it the key measurement of success. Researches have shown that the total number of sold tickets has no correlation with the amount of time these tickets are available for purchasing, but, ideally, events should give 1 month selling period. Every event consists of different variables that affect attendance, making a forecast model unreliable, however, Suher mentions some factors as important guides regardless of the event type; "Industry experience, human intuition, and historical references". (Suher 2008.)

Last season, FC Honka was unable to successfully forecast the audience for each game. Creating a large gap between what was supplied and what was consume. Besides, there is no warehouse or inventory storage which caused all the extra products to be returned with no refund. There were cases where not enough products were available for purchasing, causing extremely poor event experience and loss of revenue.

For this year the commission responsible for the planning of the events has analysed all games considering who will be playing, the date and time of the game, the importance of the game, other happenings that may occur simultaneously, previous games at the same date, games against the same team and the project team expectations (human factor). After that analysis, 5 categories were created to divide the events:

1. Unattractive game, approx. 1,000 spectators. Range of values 750-1,500
2. Moderately attractive game, approx.. 1,500 spectators. RV 1,250-2,000
3. Attractive game, approx.. 2,000 spectators. RV 1,750-2500
4. Very attractive game, approx.. 2,500 spectators. RV 2,250-3,000
5. Extremely attractive game, approx. 3,000 spectators. RV 2,750-3,500

Table 2 shows the date, time and with who every home game is played.

Table 2. Regular season schedule

April	May	June	July	August
Monday 15 18:00 X IFK M. (Åland)	Saturday 11 15:00 X VPS (Vaasa)	Sunday 06 17:00 X KPV (Kokola)	Saturday 6 17:00 X KuPS (Kuopio)	Saturday 10 17:00 X SJK (Seinäjoki)
Tuesday 25 18:30 X FC Inter (Turku)	Monday 27 18:30 X FC Lahti (Lahti)	Tuesday 25 18:30 X RoPS (Rovaniemi)	Saturday 13 13:00 X HIFK (Helsinki)	Saturday 24 13:00 X HJK (Helsinki)
			Saturday 27	

			17:00 X Ilves (Tampere)	
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3.8 Financial planning and control

The successful simulation of the event feasibility gives a clear idea of probable expenses and profits (Getz 2005, 301). However, financial planning is much more than simply analyzing rather an event is profitable or not. The finances must be aligned with the objectives set at the beginning of the event plan and ensure the affordability of an event. To achieve that there are certain points to be considered, such as; strategic decisions; operation decisions; monitoring and correction; budget; revenue targets; expenditure targets; financial control and financial risk management (Longin 2016, 102).

When planning the finances, the idea of a budget is greatly accepted as the core stone of any financial phase of an event plan (Pennington 1996, 3). However, scholars argue that a budget may limit the possibilities of an event, as once the limit has been reached, the event will cease to develop, crippling future higher revenues. To avoid this from happening, the plan has to rely on more factors and adjust the budget according to necessity. Getz (2005) argues that a budget should, like the plan, have phases, allowing a more concrete forecast and minimizing the effect of the budget over one part of the event to compromise the entire structure. (Mastermann 2012, 137.)

Naturally, every event must have some initial cash flow to allow its development (Suher 2008, 12). At this stage strategic partners can be critical, as they can generate revenue and reduce expenditure, reducing the financial risk. Tickets sold in advance also contribute to the initial boost of an event, and they help predict attendance and consumption. Some events rely on joint ownership as a way to generate investments, but scholars believe that there are more negative aspects in this strategy and the uncertainty it creates, due to multiple “bosses” and their distinct objectives, has an uncooperative effect over the event plan. (Mastermann 2012, 141).

The financial control ensures the ability of an event to pay its bills. For that, it is crucial to understand the need for cash flow at all stages of an event plan, as there will be requirements for payments prior to the start of the event. Financial control can be also used to identify extra costs or simply reduce overall costs, by limiting the range at which variables costs will increase and likely achieve to reduce or eliminate fixed costs (Longin 2016, 192). It is important to understand that cash-flows shortages may occur, but must not be seen as innumerable problems, as there are many ways to tackle this issue. Having key-

loyal partners is seemed as the principal way to overcome hard-times, as their involvement in the event (and their expectation on its success) can make them sources for a continuous cash-flow, however, new agreements may have to be made, possibly reducing the long-term revenue, but ensuring the concretization of the event (Mastermann 2012, 143).

Supply-in-kind agreements can also act as key players in financial control. The ability to supply only the essential services, goods and equipment as opposed with the non-essential, results in fewer expenses, thereby reducing the financial risk. It also creates the possibility for the supplier to become a sponsor of the event, reducing costs even more, therefore allowing expenditure in other areas. This type of decision allows the risk to be covered by a third party, which grants the event gains through added promotional value and/or achievement of other's objectives. (Mastermann 2012, 145-146)

3.9 Kraljic Matrix

Introduced as an article in *Harvard Business Review* 1983, the Kraljic Matrix provides key information in developing both purchasing and supply strategies. It aids the companies in understanding the relationship of power between themselves and the suppliers, having two main variables: Purchasing's impact on the bottom line to the company and the supply risk. In order to correctly categorize the suppliers, there are a high number of criteria to be considered (this thesis will not deeply cover all the characteristics of the Kraljic Matrix, there is plenty of literature available on the subject). (Weele 2014, 161-64.)

The main idea of the matrix is to divide your suppliers, after great consideration and analysis, into 4 different categories. Figure 6 below, shows, in a simple way, those 4 categories and their respective applications and/or characteristics.

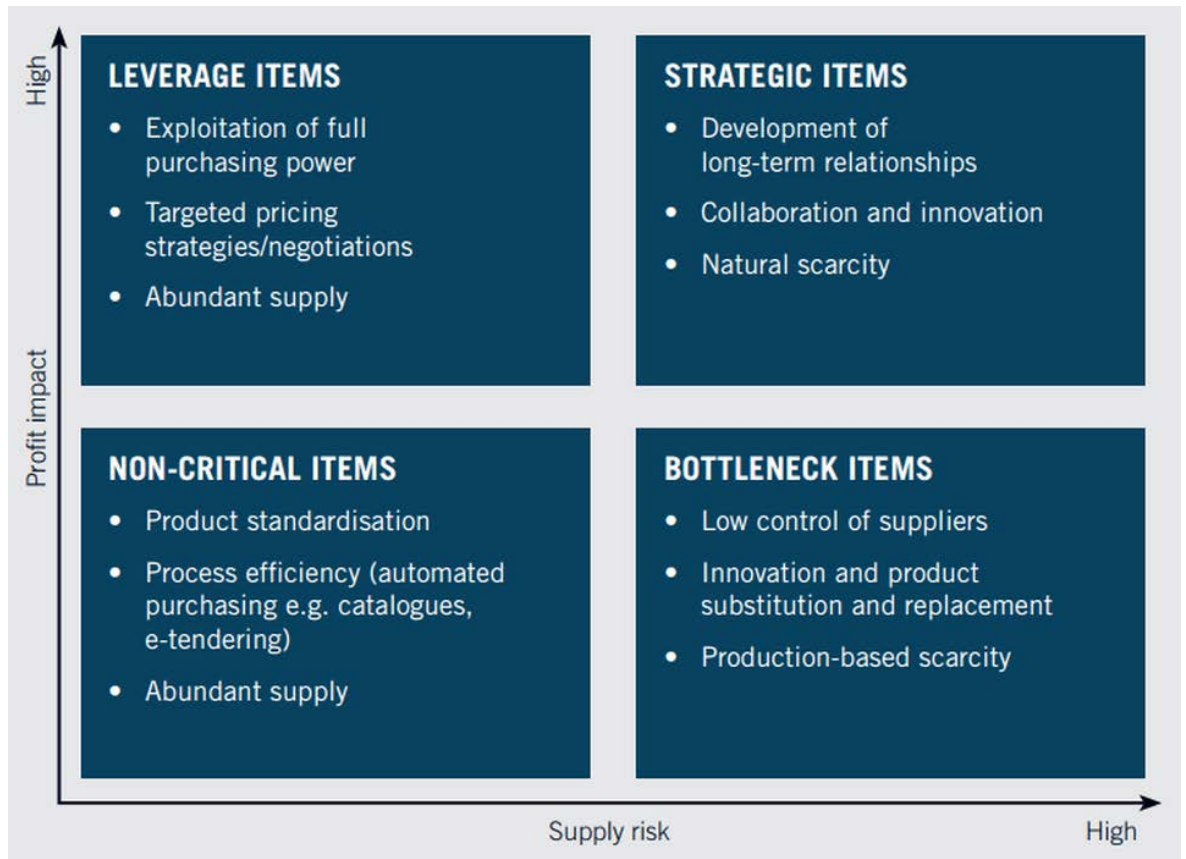


Figure 6. Kraljic Matrix (Forbes)

Side by side with the financial decisions, the assessment of suppliers is key to establish a solid base in which an event can rely on (Laurence 2017, 164). Esport Honka's matrix has segmented the suppliers, as shown in figure 7. The amount of suppliers in any sports event varies according to the size, objectives and budget of every event (Mastermann 2012, 168). As mentioned before, this is a small-scale sports events, therefore, the amount of suppliers is small. Nevertheless, the correct assessment of each and every single one of them is recommended for any businesses, to manage the risks involved in the supplier relationship, identify important areas of spent, crucial suppliers, like hood of replacement, etc., all these risk factors affect the buying company, leaving it vulnerable (Webb J. 2017).

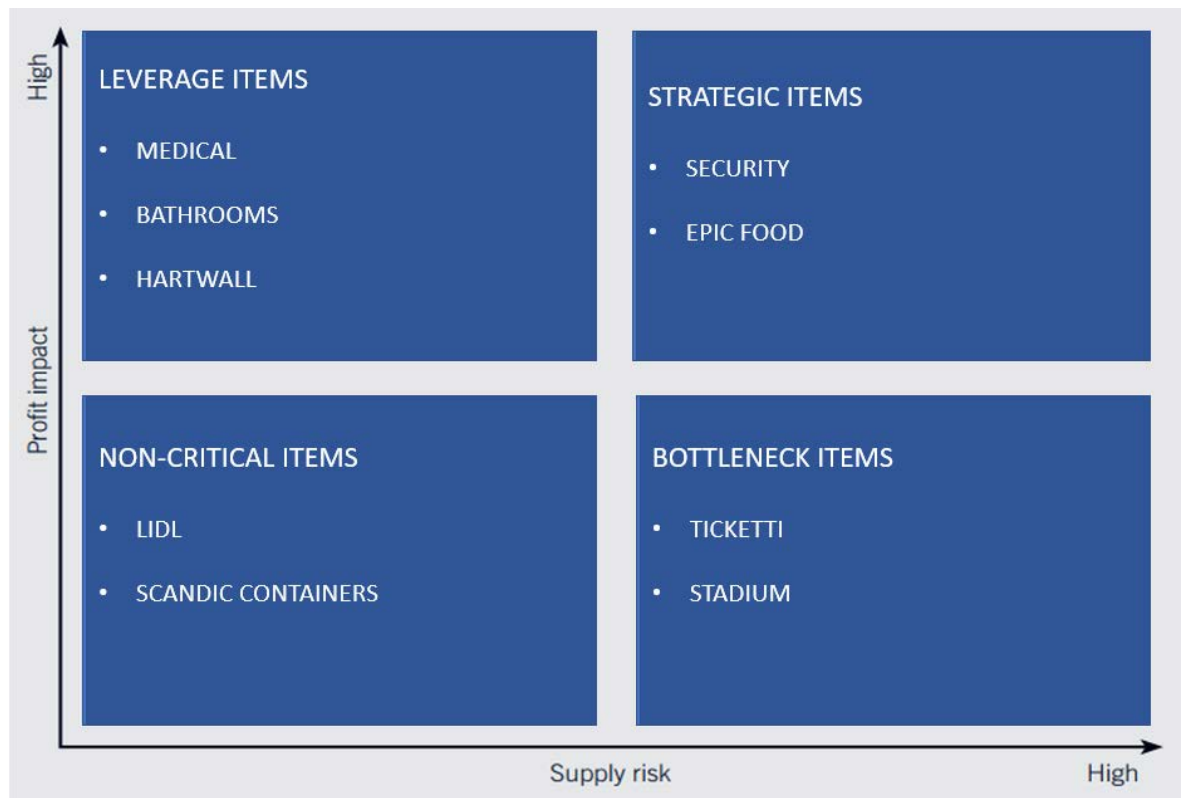


Figure 7. Esport Honka Kraljic Matrix (Adapted from Forbes)

Figure 7 shows how Esport Honka's suppliers fit in the Kraljic Matrix. It shows the vulnerability the company has on their most important service providers; Epic Food and Security. These two suppliers are crucial in their own specific way:

- Security is required for the event to happen, and any incident that happens in the host's area is Esport Honka's responsibility and punishable by Finnish laws and Pallollito (Finnish Football Association) laws. Esport Honka has had problems with security in the previous year.
- Epic Food is a new food supplier and provide all the high-quality meals in the VIP area and in the VIP Lounge. These two areas have the most expensive tickets and are expected to provide extreme quality to their customers. Failing to do so, will result in a terrible experience for high-end costumers.

To avoid complications, Esport Honka has implemented contractual obligations over these suppliers, and an expected contract extension in case the year's outcome is positive.

Hartwall could also be considered a "Strategic Item", however, there are numerous drink providers, and, for now, Hartwall has the best prices, but pressure has been made for them to lower their prices even more or they may be replaced. Surprisingly, the bathrooms used during the events are provided by the city at a very low price, however, they can also be replaced at any time, if a better deal comes up.

Tiketti and Stadium provide services that have low impact in the cost/profit equation, however, replacing their services would be costly and a slow process, as there are not many companies that offer those solutions. These companies have been working with us for more than 2 years, maintaining a good relationship is key for a long-term stable partnership.

LIDL and Scandic Containers provide easily replaced items, therefore, the managing staff has made only side deals with them, nothing too binding, allowing us to change supplier at any point.

4 Project actions

4.1 Concept

Figure 8 shows the venue in the morning of its first event of the season. The changes in comparison to last year's concept (figure 5) are clear. The addition of new stands and the VIP area are perhaps the biggest innovations. Bathrooms are kept together on the left side of the picture, only closer to the beginning of the event that they are placed in their positions. Food trucks had not yet arrived, although there were 2 food trucks in this first event. On the bottom right, an additional entrance for "away" fans has been created, and their space is marked by a fence, avoiding any type of contact with local fans which facilitates security work.

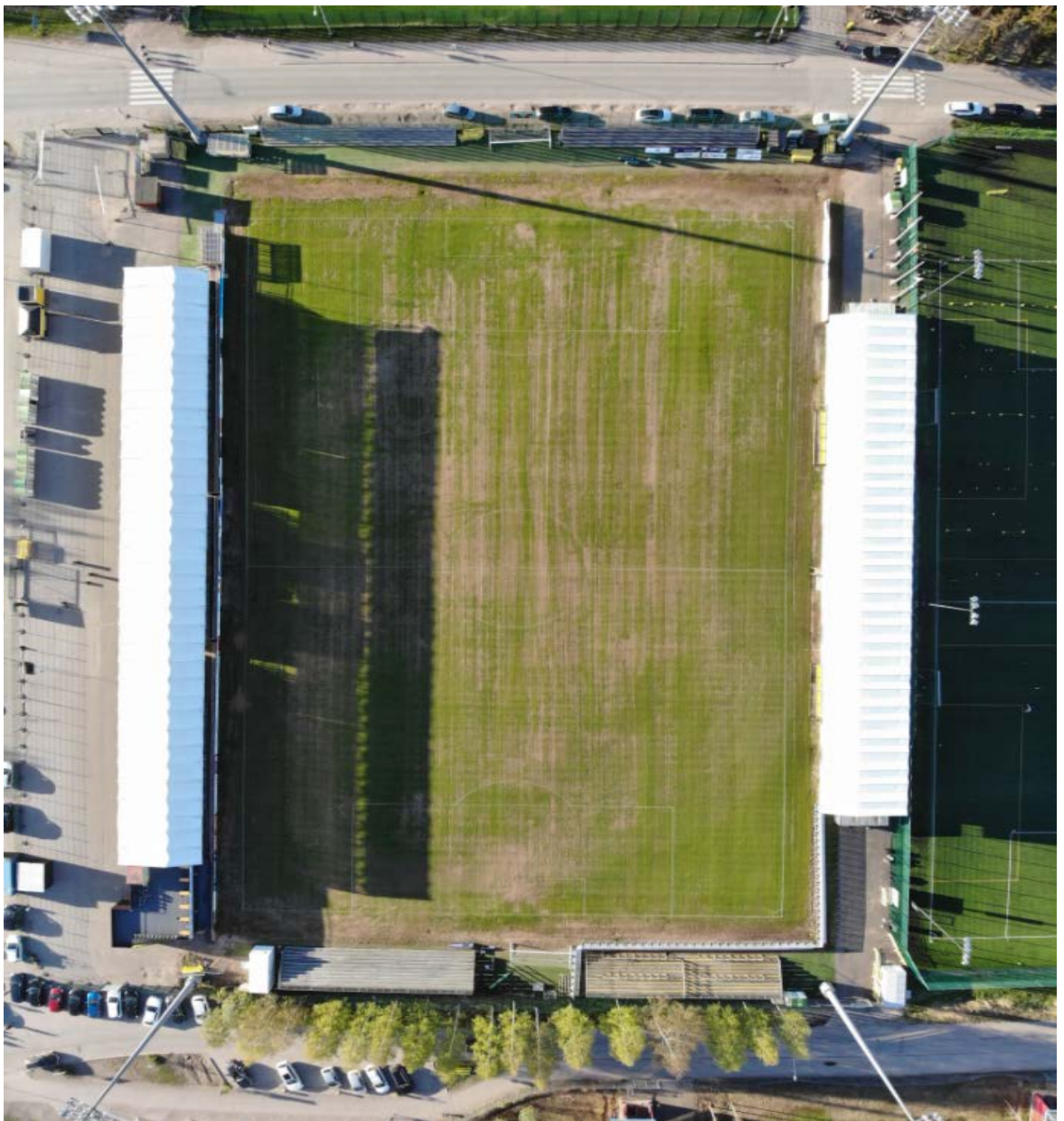


Figure 8. Tapiola sports park in the morning of the first event (Author's collection)

All changes were successfully accomplished in time for this first event.

In the appendix there are more pictures available for better visualization of the venue.

4.2 Financial planning and control

As mentioned previously, the budget is a key element of financial control. However, Esport Honka has no budget, as Esport can provide the cash to cover any extra expenses. Nevertheless, the project team has set a budget for the entire year, to help on financial control and to serve as a performance indicator in future evaluation. Based on the costs predicted on the feasibility phase, the set budget for each event was 20,000€, for the first 11 events, which should cover the variable costs and fixed costs for the year. Adding the off-season events (6 playoff games) variable costs, set as a “category 5” game cost, will add an approximately 60,000€ cost, resulting in a total budget of 280,000€ (fixed costs plus the 17 variable costs).

The cash-flow is made through tickets sales and partnership. Tickets have been available since the end of 2018 and have gathered 42,000€ so far (01.04.2019). New deals of partnership have been agreed and old partners have remained by our side, which will give 180,000€ throughout the year (the information about payment dates and how much has been paid by 01.04.2019 has not been given by Esport).

Financial control uses the cash-flow gains to pay for all services required to the installation of the new features and the development of the event venue. Suppliers have been re-evaluated in order to increase performance, therefore the costs did not necessarily decrease in comparison to the previous year. Supply-in-kind is being used for the supplier of food, which allowed us to reduce the overall price in the supply processes. Cold-drink supplier remained the same, as the new agreement has now clauses that protect Esport Honka in case of poor performance, and they have refused to participate as a sponsor, which could ultimately reduce costs by a large margin.

Esport Honka project team keeps a clear track of all expenses and due payments, as well as all the cash that comes in. Each phase of the planning process is reviewed during execution and after the conclusion to ensure the goals have been reached and the financials remained within the limit range. We believe that these practices enable us to efficiently control the finances of the event and successfully identify extra costs.

4.3 Event forecasting

After analysing the games, they are divided into a specific category, which then serves as a basis for the actions to be carried out for that specific category. Table 3 shows the games divided into their respective categories, according to forecast analysis. Each category has different impacts on the expected sales and audience, also affecting the number of working personnel necessary to satisfy the demand. It is important to understand that these forecasts may be completely wrong, and it is the duty of those managing the event to reevaluate and do the necessary adjustments for the next events. As it has been mentioned before, Esport Honka has the opportunity to learn and perfect its performance with each upcoming event.

Table 3 displaying all regular-season games and their respective categories.

CATEGORY 1	CATEGORY 2	CATEGORY 3	CATEGORY 4	CATEGORY 5
	06.07 KUPS	25.04 FC Inter	15.04 IFK M	13.07 HIFK
		11.05 VPS	02.06 KPV	24.08 HJK
		25.06 Rops	27.07 Ilves	
		10.08 SJK		
		27.05 FC Lahti		

The event organizers take measures depending on which category will the next event be. This serves as a guidance on how to prepare for the upcoming event; necessary number of personal, supplies, etc. It is a very useful tool for future evaluation and in the case of new workers, as they can use this categorization as a basis for the upcoming events.

Each category changes the amount of workers in a game day and the quantity of necessary consumables to be available for selling. The basis used in the feasibility phase was of 2,000 spectators, which is category 3. The adaptations are made as shown below:

Category 1: 1,000 expected spectators.

- 40 hired personnel (17 security, 20 sales and 3 VIP cooks)
- 1,500 cold drinks
- 2,000 warm drinks
- 1,000 food units (sausages 600, popcorn 100, pizza 100, 200 other)
- Expected profit: 12,756€
- Expected cost: 5,740€

Category 2: 1,500 expected spectators.

- 48 hired personel (21 security, 24 sales and 3 VIP cooks)
- 2,250 cold drinks
- 3,000 warm drinks
- 1,500 food units (sausages 900, 150 popcorn, 150 pizzas, 300 other)
- Expected profit: 17,008€
- Expected cost: 6,535€

Category 3: 2,000 expected spectators.

- 56 hired personel (25 security, 28 sales and 3 VIP cooks).
- 3,000 cold drinks
- 4,000 warm drinks
- 2,000 food units (sausages 1,200, 200 popcorn, 200 pizzas, 400 others)
- Expected profit: 21,260€
- Expected cost: 7,660€

Category 4: 2,500 expected spectators.

- 64 hired personel (29 security, 32 sales and 3 VIP cooks)
- 3,250 cold drinks
- 5,000 warm drinks
- 2,500 food units (sausages 1,500, 250 popcorn, 250 pizzas, 500 other)
- Expected profit: 25,512€
- Expected cost: 8,770€

Category 5: 3,000 or more expected spectators.

- 72 hired personel (33 security, 36 sales and 3 VIP cooks)
- 4,500 cold drinks
- 6,000 warm drinks
- 3,000 food units (sausages 1,800, 300 popcorn, 300 pizzas, 600 other)
- Expected profit: 29,764€
- Expected cost: 9,880€

Warm drinks and popcorn are prepared on demand, allowing re-usage for the next event. There must always be 2 security managers and 3 VIP cooks.

During this thesis, it has been said that Esport Honka will be playing 17 home games, however, the table 3 shows only 11. That is due to the playoff season. After the 22 regular games are played, top 6 teams and bottom 6 teams will face each other in a play-off manner, adding more 6 home game to be played. Due to the importance of this off-season games, they are all considered to be of category 5. Dates and time have not been selected. Therefore, a reevaluation and categorization of these new games will be required.

5 Project Assessment

5.1 Evaluation

5.1.1 Key Result Indicators

Performance measurements have several positive effects that are supported by scholars' studies and theories and corporate examples. Throughout any organization, performance indicators and measurements can assist daily activities in many ways. Such as; making progress more visible; create motivation; focusing the attention on what matters; increasing objectivity; makes feedback easier; allow a clearer view of results, facilitating changes in strategy; etc. (Parmenter 2017, 7.)

Key result indicators are the result of all actions that were done by different teams. Although these indicators do not necessarily focus on work team performances, they provide enough information to evaluate if the organization' strategy is going in the right direction. Result indicators will focus on the end result, it is a simple way to evaluate the outcome, by comparing it with early objectives.

It is important to understand the difference between key result indicator (KRI) and key performance indicator (KPI). In a very simplified way; KPIs measure the actions and events that lead to a result, while KRIs measures the results from your business actions (Parmenter 2017, 18). KRI was chosen over KPI for the reason that Esport Honka has not overseen all the operations done for the events, therefore, it can not evaluate all the activities and work personnel involved. However, Esport Honka can evaluate all the outcomes using KRI, and, after analysis, adjust the strategy and make the necessary changes.

For these events, the chosen KRI were:

- Number of attendances
- Food sales
- Beverages sales
- Merchandise sales
- Variable Costs
- Revenue

The KRIs for the first 2 events were used as a basis for evaluation in this thesis.

Game 1: Monday 15.04 at 18:00.

Esport Honka x IFK Marienham (Åland)

Forecasted as: Category 4

- Number of attendances – 1,436
- Tickets sold at entrance – 546 (7,035€)
- Food sales – 632€
- Beverages sales – 1,652€
- Merchandise sales – 238€
- Variable Costs – 8,750€
- Revenue – 807€

Game 2: Tuesday 25.04 18:30.

Esport Honka x FC Inter (Turku)

Forecasted as: Category 3

- Number of attendances – 1,121
- Tickets sold at entrance – 348 (4,725€)
- Food sales – 280€
- Beverages sales – 3,216€
- Merchandise sales – 85€
- Variable Costs – 7,200€
- Revenue – -2,548€

5.1.2 Evaluation and Analysis

Scholars across all industries agree on the importance of evaluation and result analysis. It is usually performed against the original objectives and feasibility forecast. Most sports events have short-term and long-term evaluations, as their impacts are perceived at different times. Long-term evaluations are usually focused on the legacy of these events, their effect on the cities that hosted it and in the community, and in the event's sustainability and durability (its success). It is also crucial that a continuous evaluation is carried out throughout all stages of event planning and execution, allowing alignment with the desired objectives. (Masterman 2012, 72-75)

For this thesis, we will be using short-term evaluation, which was the KRI mentioned before, and compare these results with the ones predicted at the feasibility phase. Tables 4 and 5 shows us the differences between what was expected, and the results achieved.

Table 4 showing the result comparison for **Game 1**

Category 4	Game 1: Forecast	Game 1: Results
Attendance	2,500	1,436
Tickets sold at entrance	1,000 (40%) – 8,000€	546 (38%) – 7,035€
Food sales	1,300€	632€
Beverages sales	11,960€	1,652€
Merchandise	0	238€
Variable costs	8,426€	8,750€
Revenue	25,512€	807€

Table 5 showing the result comparison for **Game 2**

Category 3	Game 2: Forecast	Game 2: Results
Attendance	2,000	1,121
Tickets sold at entrance	800 (40%) – 6,400€	348 (31%) – 4,725€
Food sales	1,040€	280€
Beverages sales	9,568€	3,216€
Merchandise	0	85€
Variable costs	7,660€	7,200€
Revenue	21,260€	-2,548€

Game 1:

Needless to say that the results were disappointing from a sales perspective. Mostly due to weather conditions, the attendance was nearly half of what was expected, crippling all the other results. Ticket sale at the entrance was correctly assumed (approx. 40%) and the profit was higher than anticipated (in ticket sales), due to the success of the VIP area sales that have the highest ticket prices, which boosted profitability. Beverages, mostly cold drinks, suffer tremendously if the weather conditions do not favor its consumption, however, preferable weather may also contributed for extra sales, therefore the sales during summer should cover the negative "autumn" sales. Costs were within the margin and did not surprise. Revenue simply shows the negative result of the first game.

Game 2:

The financial results from this event show how dependable on optimal weather conditions outside sport events are. The temperature was 8 degrees with light rain and strong winds, resulting in the worst attendance of the season (until July 22). This type of condition sabotages all likely profits, as expected sales drop drastically. The VIP area and VIP Lounge

still were positive points that held the finances to a recoverable amount. Weather conditions according to the time of the year have to be added to the forecasting phase to more precisely adjust the financial expectations.

5.2 Event feedback

Unlike evaluation, feedback concentrates on people's view of an event. Feedback is well accepted as unprecedented aid for future practices, as the understanding of how and why previous plans have failed or worked is key in improving performance (Getz 2005, 186). Timing of feedback must be aligned with evaluations throughout all the stages, only then adjustments can be made in time to achieve the objectives. Sports event industry fails to provide correct evaluations report, making it difficult for future event managers to analysis mistakes and success from previous events (Masterman 2012, 91).

Despite the attendance being lower than expected, the event had very positive feedback. The main issues from previous years were corrected. Waiting queues were small, as a consequence of additional better-distributed bathrooms, 2 new entrance gates and more efficient ways to move inside the stadium. The new stands and VIP area have made the venue look more professional, providing the spectator with an amazing atmosphere to enjoy the show. VIP lounge area was sold out and all attendees were amazed by how good the service was.

Security has had no problems during the event, and all professionals involved could perform their tasks with no trouble. Esport managers and Esport Honka director all agreed that the event went perfectly, even though profit goals were not achieved. The success of this first games makes it possible to achieve the expected profits in the near future.

Perhaps the most important point of the evaluation and feedback is to determine if the objectives there were set by the company were successfully met. Early in this thesis, the objectives were:

- improve customer experience
- increase profitability
- effectively forecast and plan each individual game

We, the project group, believe that all the objectives were successfully accomplished. The improvements made in the new concept of the venue definitely surpass last year's display, hence, improving customer experience in all aspects of the sports event we provide. Profitability may have not been as expected, however, the same amount of spectators in last year's events would have caused a negative revenue, we have managed to keep lower

costs in order to achieve profit even in small attendance. The forecast may be the one objective where we were not most successful, as the attendance was roughly 60% of the expectation, however, we forecasted more attenders in the first game than in the second, and we were correct. We understand that the forecast is a learning process that can be adjusted at any time, therefore, the idea was successfully implemented and every event serves as an informative platform and learning tool for the next event.

5.3 SWOT analysis

After conclusion of these 2 games, a re-evaluation of Esport Honka SWOT was done to comprehend if any aspect has changed from the previous SWOT analysis. Figure 9 shows the new SWOT for Esport Honka. Threats were cut down to only 2, however weaknesses remain playing a big negative role in the club's finances. The stadium, that before was the centre of critics, now highlights itself as one of the strengths points. The success of the VIP lounge opens a door for amplifying its area and create more options for these exclusive tickets. Suppliers are no longer a threat, as the new agreements proved to be effective. Partners are still of extreme importance and a major player to maintain the sustainability of the club's cash flow. Since advertising has failed to influence the community to attend the events, the city of Espoo is still a great opportunity that needs to be addressed.

<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stadium • Partners • Brand • FC <u>Honka</u> youth base 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Inventory • Field
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIP Lounge • 15 games • Finnish Champions • City of Espoo 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Replaced by other events

Figure 9. Esport Honka's latest SWOT analysis (Adapted from Ezpa)

5.4 Extra analysis

This thesis covered games 1 and 2 into a deeper analysis. However, as there was time to receive the information about 5 more games, it is interesting to see the results, under normal conditions, and compare it to the expectation.

Game 3, 11.05 – Honka x VPS

Cat. 3

Expected – 2,000

Result – 1,826

Game 4, 27.05 – Honka x Lahti

Cat. 3

Expected – 2,000

Result – 2,341

Game 5, 02.06 – Honka x KPV

Cat. 4

Expected – 2,500

Result – 2,132

Game 6, 06.07 – Honka x Kups

Cat. 2

Expected – 1,500

Result – 1,915

Game 7, 13.07 – Honka x HIFK

Cat. 5

Expected – 3,000

Result – 3,512

These results show that, under normal conditions, the expected attendance was very close to expectation. Therefore, the entire plan for those games was successfully implemented.

(All results were taken from Veikkausliiga Official Website.)

6 Conclusion

6.1 Thesis Process

Throughout all the stages of this thesis, the author has kept contact with the commission company (which gave all the information and assistance necessary), allowing a clear alignment of the company's objectives with the thesis development. The stages of the thesis had a clear path towards the end-goal and every deadline was completed in time, resulting in the final plan being accomplished a week before the first event. The scale of the event has also contributed to the smoothness of the thesis, since a small-scale event has limited alternatives, it facilitates the decision-making process.

This thesis had its own project tasks, regardless of the ones decided by the commission company. Luckily enough, these tasks were all related to the ultimate goal of the commission company, allowing the author to successfully fulfil its own project tasks while developing a project plan that was satisfactory for the company. Through research, planning and implementing, all the project tasks were completed in the given timeframe and were crucial for the end-result.

6.2 Thesis Result

The result of this thesis is a practical approach to a small-scale sports event. It considers all the aspect requires for the successful planning and implementation of this type of the event. It shows the importance of completing all the necessary steps, in a certain order, allowing every stage to have the correct background information for the proceeding actions.

Feasibility and forecast chapters can be of use for anyone interested in how events managers predict their costs and likely profits. Even though the actions used may not be of much help, as every event has it own particularities, the theory behind can certainly be useful.

Literature does not provide much information in sports event management, finance and forecast, therefore I do believe this thesis is of great help for those in search of such subject. As the results, in the long run, were close to what was predicted.

6.3 Recommendations

Esport Honka is strongly dependant of its community to enchant profitability. The engagement with this community must be of primal importance. Considering the average attendance of these 7 games the thesis was able to gather, Honka has a 2,040/game, meanwhile HJK (the football biggest club in Finland) averages 5,540/game, that is more than double. One can argue that HJK is from Helsinki which is bigger than Espoo, however I disagree with that argument, as attendance to an sport events is not related to the amount of people in the city, but to how connected these people are to their home club. Therefore, marketing and entire club need to work together to create ways to bring Espoo citizens to support their local club.

During the thesis process, there was lack of clear communication between Esport workers and Honka employees, leading to chaotic pre-game preparations. As tasks were not clear designated and there was no “centre” in the command chain, organization was extremely confusing, wasting resources and time. For this case, one single person responsible for controlling all operations and receiving the notifications of completion should be sufficient to smoothen the processes.

Build a new stadium. Regardless of costs and time issues, Esport Honka needs a new stadium. The organization has the ambition to be the biggest football club in Finland. To achieve that, one of the most crucial steps is the stadium they will use to host the games. The stadium that is been used now does not have any massive problem, however it does not feel like a proper football stadium, it is similar to making the Olympics’ swimming competition in a backyard plastic pool; you can, but it is wrong in every way.

6.4 Self-evaluation

The initial idea of this project was to carry out a very detailed plan, focusing a lot of effort in the supplier assessment and selection, reducing costs throughout the entire supply chain processes and control all operations that were happening in the venue. The reality was much more practice and less theory, therefore, the project tasks may have been left a-side while the company’s work was being done. Considering that the company’s objectives were similar to the author’s project tasks, the author believes that the extra theoretical researches that were done in this thesis have managed to accomplish the author’s project tasks without diminishing the importance of the company’s objectives.

Most of the new concept agreements were done through Esport itself, not giving Esport Honka any participation, that crippled Esport Honka's ability to maintain track of the costs and all the changes that were being made. We have managed to present Esport with the design we believe was the most appropriate for the upcoming season (Figure 5) and they did follow our advice, however we could not keep record of who was doing the work and at what cost. The numbers used in the feasibility stage were all given to us later, with no specific details.

This different reality has helped the author to understand better how workplaces can be. Even though I was given an important project, there were decision that I could not make, letting me no choice but to follow the "bosses" decisions and work it out from there. The author has had great help from the other workers engaged in the same project and the author have contributed with many of the ideas used in the final version of this event. The benefits and experience taken from this opportunity were unmeasurable.

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Appendices

All pictures belong to author's own collection, taken by a drone.

Appendix 1. Picture showing the area that is used by Esport Honka during game days.



Appendix 2. An areal picture displaying how the game venue is presented in the morning of the 2nd game.



Appendix 3, 4 and 5. Giving an idea of how the stands look like and the VIP area and Lounge.



VIP Area and Lounge

