

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Business and Culture, Imatra
Degree Programme in Tourism

Alina Serous

Creating an Event: Case “Spring Festival” in Imatra

Thesis 2014

Abstract

Alina Serous

Creating an Event: Case "Spring Festival" in Imatra, 42 pages, 1 appendix

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences

Faculty of Business and Culture, Imatra

Degree Programme in Tourism

Thesis 2014

Instructor: Mr Ilkka Lehtola, Senior Lecturer, Saimaa University of Applied Sciences

The purpose of the project was to create a new event in Imatra, Finland and to see how theoretical approach to event management is applied in practice. The event was designed to be public non-profit event for local families. The work was carried out in co-operation with Imitisi, the local association of town businesses, which aims at improving business environment and developing the town centre of Imatra to be a lively place.

Theoretical background for the project was gathered using various sources, including books, articles and Internet webpages. The gathered information was applied to create an event in Imatra. The process ran from developing the concept to running the event and evaluating it. The event took place on 25 May, 2013 on Koskenparras, the main pedestrian street of Imatra.

The results showed that there are opportunities for organising new events in Imatra. Also, it was proven that different approaches described in the literature give best results when combined together. As a recommendation for developing a new event several important points are highlighted in the conclusion. The main findings underline the importance of finding the right partner, the major role of networking in the process, the commitment of volunteers and the need to be flexible.

The results of the project may be useful when planning a new event, especially in Imatra, and for those interested in event management and its practical application.

Keywords: event, event management, festivals

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Typology and classification of events	5
3	Event planning	6
3.1	Event concept	9
3.2	Event objectives and the potential impact on host community	10
3.3	Stakeholders	11
3.4	Human resources	12
3.5	Budgeting and finances	13
3.6	Sponsorship	15
3.7	Marketing	16
3.8	Production schedule and programme planning	19
3.9	Safety and security	20
3.10	Evaluation	21
4	Project partner - Iimitsi	22
5	Case "Spring festival" in Imatra	23
5.1	Concept creation	23
5.2	Event objective and possible impacts on Imatra community	27
5.3	Stakeholders	28
5.4	Human resources	30
5.5	Budgeting and finances	31
5.6	Sponsorship	32
5.7	Marketing and marketing communications	33
5.7.1	Product	34
5.7.2	Place	34
5.7.3	Price	35
5.7.4	Promotion	35
5.8	Programme and production schedule	36
5.9	Safety and security	36
5.10	Evaluation	38
6	Results and conclusions	40
7	References	43

Appendix 1 Production schedule for Spring festival event

1 Introduction

This work describes the process of creating and implementing a public event in the city of Imatra. The idea for the project came as a result of comparison of the number of events held in La Rochelle, France, and in Imatra. The author of the thesis noticed that in Imatra there are fewer events than in La Rochelle. Local companies and the marketing organisation of the region, GoSaimaa also mark the need of more events, in particular, to attract more tourists from different regions (Grevtceva 2013). This fact posed a question whether the situation could be changed and to what extent it was possible for volunteers to initiate a completely new event for a local community.

The purpose of the project was to go through the process of creating an event step by step, from developing an idea to the implementation of the planned event. That would give the chance to apply the theory, studied on the lectures and during the preliminary research, to practice in real-life environment. In this case one of the possible results of the study would be the comparison of the practical outcome with the one described in theory. The work on the project included not only event management, but also productization, project management, marketing, budgeting, as well as HR management and many other areas of knowledge. Such project would allow to see how they can be integrated and combined for achieving better results on the project. Further on, this work had a purpose to reflect the main factors that could influence event organising and explore the opportunities for creating the event from the start, allowing to study the environment for further possibilities for similar projects in this area.

The event was supported by the partner of the project, the representative of Imitsi, the local organisation, which was in charge of the chosen event venue. During the work on the project all the stages of project management were passed: initiation, planning, implementation, event and shutdown (Allen et al. 2011). The planning and the implementation, as it was expected, took the most time in the described project. During the implementation phase the initial plan had to be changed several times, being influenced by such factors as limited time, resources and the response of stakeholders. The final outcome of the project was the pet parade and face painting for children that were held during the bigger festival, Summer Opening, on 25th of May, 2013.

As the result of combining theory and practical implementation, there were identified several stages in the event management that can appear most challenging and may require additional attention. The results can be useful for those planning to introduce a new event, or those interested in event management and its practical application.

2 Typology and classification of events

There are numerous ways to classify events, such as by size or by form and by content. For example, Wagen and White (2010) note that the events can be categorized by size, the goals managers have for the festival, or by event characteristics. They also mention such ways as differentiating public events that are open for everyone from private, which are for a certain audience only, and profit events from non-profit ones. While the public/private and profit/non-profit seem to be clear and require no additional classification, the first three can be looked at more closely.

When talking about the size of an event, many authors name four major categories, which are mega events, hallmark and major events and local or minor events. While the first three types are normally the ones known internationally, most of the events fall into the last category. (Allen et al. 2011.) They are organised for the local communities and are "staged primarily for their social, fun and entertainment value".

As for event characteristics, there are different variables that can be used for classifying an event. Those can be, for instance, the audience, marketing and distribution channels, event scope, stakeholders involved or staging. While assessing and evaluating an event it is good to define all these variables, as well as have a primary objective for an event to facilitate further work on the plan.

At the same time, Shone and Parry (2010) suggest to build a typology of events on a 2-axis basis, where the two axes are Complexity and Uncertainty. The latter one means the level of planning needed, so that wedding reception and a private dinner stands on different ends of this axis. Complexity, in its turn, is divided by the authors to a range of individual, group, organizational, multi-organisational, national and international. This typology must be regarded cautiously, bearing in mind that the size of an event matters a lot. The same authors split events into four different, but, as they mention, overlapping categories: leisure events, personal events, organisational events and cultural events.

One of the forms of the cultural events will be festivals. (Bowdin et al. 2003.)

Festivals are regarded as a universal form of event, and an activity that contributes much to social and cultural life (Allen et al. 2010). One of the definitions that can be given to a festival is a “cultural celebration...created by and/or for the public, scheduled alone or in conjunction with other events” (Berridge 2007). Festivals, according to Getz, are one of the three main categories of touristic attractions, along with ambient and permanent attractions (Crompton & McKay 1997).

Festivals, in their turn, can fall into one of the seven categories, described by South East Arts (1998) in Bowdin et al. (2007): general celebrations of art, celebrations of a particular area, art-form festivals, celebrations of work and hobbies, calendar celebrations, amateur festivals, and commercial festivals. In addition to that, according to New Leisure Markets, festivals can be considered single-theme and multi-theme.

All these classifications can come to be quite useful, as they help to identify features that would be specific for a certain group of events, which, eventually, will simplify the event planning, leaving out the unnecessary issues and focusing on those that are important for the chosen type of events. (Shone & Parry 2010.)

In this work the focus will be on the local events, as this is probably the starting point of all events, and since the idea is to create an event starting from the beginning, the most approachable way to do it is to start with the small one. The category to which the planned event would belong to most probably lies between leisure and cultural, being a festival. It is thought of as a public event, open for everyone. The complexity of the event would be best defined as a group event, according to the definition proposed by the authors of the typology. Also it is worth mentioning that profit is not one of the main aims for this project, so the event will be non-profitable.

3 Event planning

The event planning and implementing process can be seen from two different points of views, applying two different dimensions: domains structure and project management (EMBOK 2013).

According to the Event Management of Body Knowledge (2013) five different domains

can be distinguished, which are called knowledge domains. They are administrative, design, marketing, operations and risk. Those stages, although regarded individually, do not necessarily go one by one; on the contrary, they often are implemented at the same time, and it can be guessed that they are interdependent. Those domains are separated into several different classes each, which gives an idea about what it includes and what has to be dealt with, when talking about a particular domain. This system is also meant to show different knowledge, skills and expertise that are required for delivering an event. Thus, for every event these classes, or subcategories of the domains, will have different priority and importance.

This approach has its benefits when it comes to documentation and developing a rigid system that can be thoroughly studied. It ensures the overall image of tasks and knowledge area is clear and may be analysed with an efficient transfer of knowledge. The outline that is a result of such approach might appear inflexible and formal, but it is predictable and open for diagnostics, especially in a long-term perspective of a repeated event. This may be the reason, why most of the large-scale events, at a first glance, seem to apply this approach. (Rutherford Silvers 2004.)

As opposed to this, a project management approach seems to be more suitable when talking about small, one-time events, as they are the events, which can be seen as projects. What can define event as a project is that they are limited within resources, are not regular and have a final result, which should meet some goal requirements. Having this similarity in mind, project management techniques are employed by event managers more and more often. There can be listed several benefits of doing that. Firstly, the project management can be applied for any kind of event and for any stage of event production: from planning to post-evaluation. Secondly, it gives helpful tools for communicating with and reporting to stakeholders; as this type of management is universal, the terms and ideas will be clear even to those unfamiliar with the event industry. Thirdly, it makes the management process more visible and helps to divide the tasks according to the level of expertise in all the cases: it makes event less depended on one person and more stable. Lastly, it requires taking as granted that the project, or event, has limited resources, and happens once only, so it pushes the managers to do their best as there will be no chance for improvement. (Allen et al. 2010.)

The use of project management, according to Bowdin et al. (2003) suggests five

different stages for creation and implementation of a project, or, in this case, an event plan. The first stage is to detect all the factors that can influence an event, for which it's important to study the environment and turn to stakeholders and their needs. The second stage would be the altogether planning and the definition of milestones. At this stage the question "what should be done" is answered, to see where the event is going.

The third stage is the detailed project planning, where work-breakdown structure is applied. Work-breakdown structure is a technique used in project management to divide the whole amount of work into the small parts, each of which can be seen as a small separate project with its own time, resources and management. This allows to evaluate the resources needed, helps managing plan and coordinating the project. (Larson & Gray 2011.)

The fourth stage means the execution of the event according to the plan and preparations, and monitoring the outcomes. This stage will be different based on the nature of each particular event. Finally, there is one more stage, but it would be technically incorrect to call it the fifth one, as it includes control over the project throughout the whole process. Controlling the project, however, is not the peculiar feature of a project management approach, as it is necessary for any event in any way of delivering it. Other sources (EMBOK 2013) mention shutting an event down as the last stage, but it can be as well included into the event operation and implementation as part of that process.

These two dimensions are interrelated and interdependent, which can be seen throughout the whole process. While everything starts with the initiation phase, when the concept of event is developed, and the aims are defined, all the domains are dealt with on each stage of project management, and vice versa, for each domain there can be identified all the stages of project management.

In this work, the joint approach is used: after the concept creation and goals identification, the needed domains are identified and described, and the evaluation and monitoring are done continuously throughout the process, covering all the areas of work.

3.1 Event concept

The first step in event creation is to design a concept. A concept is a basic idea for an event, which will be detailed and expanded further on the following stages of event design. According to Goldblatt (1997) in Allen et al. (2010) the whole process of creating a concept is about asking questions that he calls 'five Ws'. Those would be about why the event should be held, who will be the stakeholders, when and where it will be held, and finally, what will be the content.

While thinking about the concept it may be appropriate to choose the theme of the event, which should reflect and support the message that the event wants to deliver to its participants. The theme will influence such elements as venue, catering, entertainment program, light and sound effects, as well as decorations. The important thing here is to make sure it goes along with the purpose of the event. (Allen et al. 2010.)

One of the tools to evaluate the idea for an event would be SWOT-analysis, which is quite popular among the managers. The SWOT-analysis contains the description of the main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the event, thus taking into consideration both external and internal factors and giving a clear picture of what the event represents.

Although it is considered to be an important tool, SWOT-analysis still, however, has its limitations, which are described by O'Toole (2011). For example, it is mentioned that the SWOT-analysis can be subjective, as it includes the points of view of those who provided the information and were involved in the making of it. Then, this type of analysis might lead to think it is easy to eliminate all the weaknesses and use all the opportunities, while, in fact, it may not be true. So, if these directions are given a priority during the planning, it may lead to serious mistakes and waste of the resources. Finally, O'Toole is warning, that this analysis is just "a poor substitute for a competitive commercial environment". For a profit-oriented company SWOT is part of daily operational routine and is usually not seen as something outstanding or requiring more attention.

Based on the concept the following parts of the event are usually introduced and developed: event theme, event decorations, programme and artists for it, venue

selection, attendees, stage, technical issues, special effects, if they are needed, workers and their attitude, the production schedule and allowances for unpredicted scenarios (Allen et al. 2010).

3.2 Event objectives and the potential impact on host community

The event objective can be defined as a “statement that encapsulates the reason(s) for running the event”. Examples of event objectives can be business promotion, fundraising event, having fun, socialization and many others. (Conway 2009.)

One of the ways to describe the objectives can be to decide whether the event is profit or non-profit oriented, and then go further into details. Since this work is aimed at creating a non-profit event, the goals for the event can derive from the impacts the event can possibly make on the host community and the stakeholders. Shone and Parry (2010) suggest choosing one or two major goals and then breaking them into smaller ones to help planning.

Any event will have certain impacts on the host community, both negative and positive ones. During the planning it is important to forecast, evaluate and manage these possible impacts as they may influence the planning process significantly. Moreover, the impact of a small-scale event can be as valuable for the community, as the one of bigger events, given the fact that smaller events require less investment to develop. (Alves et al. 2010.)

According to Alves (2010), the event can bring several benefits to the host community, such as attracting tourists, especially during low seasons, promote attractions and infrastructures, and attract more investments to the community and participants. All the possible impacts can be divided, for easier monitoring, into socio-cultural, political, environmental and economic. Within this division, the socio-cultural impacts can be valued highest, especially for small scale local events.

The study made by Alves (2010), indicated that both suppliers and participants noted “building community pride” and “enhanced community image” as the major benefits from the small festival taking place in their community. Other impacts can include the improved profile of the community and organizers (political impact), infrastructure legacy (environmental benefit), commercial opportunities (economic benefit) and some others

(Allen et al. 2010).

3.3 Stakeholders

Stakeholders, according to Allen (2010), are people and organisations with a legitimate interest in the outcomes of the event. Reid (2011), in her turn, writes that stakeholders are identified by three attributes, which are power, legitimacy and urgency. She points out in her research, that a stakeholder should possess at least one of those, not necessarily all three. She also refers to Clarkson (1995) who explains that it is important to know and take into consideration the aims of the stakeholders, and involve them into all the activities to maintain their interest and prevent them from withdrawal. This will create a bigger satisfaction with the event and may result in increase in competitiveness. This is one of the main reasons why it's considered to be important to identify all the stakeholders in the beginning and understand their objectives for the event. However, the network of stakeholders is a dynamic structure that changes overtime, thus it is also required from an event manager to notice those changes in time and to react correspondingly.

Reid (2011) proposes two different ways to classify the stakeholders in order to simplify the managing process. The first one is to divide them to primary and secondary stakeholders based on the degree of the risk they take. In this typology the first group would consist of employees, sponsors, suppliers, attendees and participants. Another group would include, for instance, host community, authorities, media and tourism organisations and local businesses. The second model was adopted from Geitz (2003) by Reid (2011) and it differentiates between external and internal stakeholders. External stakeholders, according to that model, could be further sub-divided to such groups as collaborations, regulators, facilitators, suppliers and audience. Internal stakeholders, in their turn, are those directly involved in event creation, such as organising committee, employees and sponsors, and they are not divided further into any sub-groups.

Managing the stakeholders of the event could be a challenging task. In fact, there can be identified two controversial strategies of managing the stakeholders: external and internal managing processes. The external process requires the maximum transparency

for stakeholders in an event organisation process. The important part of this process is discussions with stakeholders to hear their opinions and facilitate their participation in the decision-making process. It can be enhanced by putting a certain amount of responsibility to the stakeholders, so that they are longing to achieve good results in the same way as organisers are. However, if the event relies mostly on volunteers, the degree of letting stakeholders to consultations and decision-making is limited due to the lack of resources for that. (Reid 2011.)

The internal process, on the contrary, is aimed at decreasing the involvedness of the stakeholders into the event organisation. Some organisers claim it to be necessary to ignore the instructions of stakeholders in order to proceed with the event properly. This, undoubtedly, requires from event organisers high diplomatic skills and a certain level of manipulation. The need to apply this way of managing can indicate the lack of legitimacy of stakeholders. (Reid 2011.)

3.4 Human resources

The right human resources management is important in events for several reasons. Firstly, the staff would create the atmosphere and the mood of the event, so it's important to find motivated people; secondly, in events, and in service industry in general, the staff should be flexible, as there are normally a lot of last-minute changes; and lastly, the staff can be the largest sum of expenses in the event budget, so the human resources management can play an important role in reducing or increasing costs. (Boxall & Purcell 2011.) Therefore this part of event has to be planned very carefully.

According to Shone and Parry (2010), the factors influencing the decision on the amount of workforce needed, commonly include the following factors: the size of an event, the types of staff, the planned actions, methods of providing services, and skills and knowledge required for the event. By regarding them, the approximate number of needed workers can be identified, as well as it can be decided upon whether to use paid staff or volunteers.

Getz (1997) in Bowdin et al. (2003) suggests three steps on deciding on the team

needed for the event: using work-breakdown structure to estimate the workload, determining the amount of people needed for each task, and seeing whether some tasks can be done by same employees, and, finally, determining the skills needed for successful completion of the tasks. According to Bowdin, the hardest step would be the second one, especially if the event is held for the first time and no previous data is available to correct the estimation. In this case it is important to make sure enough staff is available to perform all the tasks.

While it might appear wise in terms of the budget to use only volunteer workforce, especially for small scale events, there will undoubtedly be a need to outsource more experienced staff for those tasks where the technical and professional expertise is crucial. Damm (2012) names catering and security being two of the aspects that would most probably require hiring professionals.

When the necessary staff is found, it is often useful to create an organisational structure for everyone to clearly understand their role and responsibilities. The organisational structure of small-scale events is usually quite simple, which means the absence of clear differentiation of work domains, and the very simplified hierarchy. The most common options for this scale are simple, functional, and network structures. The last one describes the network of independent companies working together to achieve a specific goal, so it would not be suitable for the purposes of the described project. The difference between the two others is in task division. Within the functional structure the person is responsible for one domain only and focuses on similar tasks. The simple structure suggests that there is a manager responsible for overall performance and the team, where there is no permanent definition in functions. (Bowdin et al. 2003.) This model is the most flexible and thus the most common in small businesses.

3.5 Budgeting and finances

The financial management for events has some specific features, which reflect the unpredictable and fast-changing nature of events. First of these features is the fact that the accuracy of the budget is changing all the time, even for large, well-planned events, because there are always unexpected costs, less often – unexpected revenues. Yet another point is that financial management is closely connected to other areas of event management, and still, it is always a high-level responsibility. It should also be noted,

that the event manager is meant to reason the spending for the stakeholders. (Allen et al. 2010.)

According to Goldbalt (2002) in Wagen and White (2010) there exist three types of targets for event budget: profit-oriented, break-even and hosted events. The first type seems to be quite clear, as it is the event, which has a profit gaining as one of the objectives. The example of that would be any ticketed event, such as a theatre performance or a concert. Second type of event most often refers to community and charity events. The third one is represented by events where the costs overcome the revenues, such as promotional events or personal parties, and those events would normally have another long-term goal in mind, unless they are private events.

This leads to the fact that it is useful to set objectives for budgeting in a same way it is done for the event in general. Shone and Parry (2010) suggest the differentiation between a primary objective of an event and its financial objective. So, three types of events, mentioned above, will have different financial goals, but similar within one type. The first type would be aiming at the surplus, while the second one will consider a break-even, just enough revenues to cover the expenses, its primary goal. While it may seem that for the third type of events the financial goal is not very important, technically speaking there will be an objective as well, as financial resources are always limited. This, in its turn, means that there is always a ceiling for expenditures for an event of the third type. The authors specify that the financial objective should be specific and linked to the primary goal of the event.

Essential part of any financial management is budgeting. Budget, as described by Allen et al. (2011), is a “quantified statement of plans”, which includes the estimation of incomes and costs, as well as the distribution of finances within the project. Most of the specialists warn that the estimation of the budget and actual numbers rarely, if not never, match perfectly, thus there should be an allocation in budget for unexpected costs, which normally is recommended to be 5-10 % of the overall budget.

According to the definition given, the budget will have two major parts: expected incomes and needed expenditure. The sources of income can be different and vary a lot, depending on the type of event. Some of those may be subsidies, sponsorship, ticket sales and participation fees, rents and merchandise, as well as catering. The list

of costs can include program organisation, technical services, infrastructure building and security issues, marketing, fundraising and office costs, such as salaries and office rents, for example. (Iso-Aho 2013.)

3.6 Sponsorship

First of all, it is important to make a difference between sponsorship and donation, or patronage. The main difference is that an organisation or a person, who make a donation, are not expecting any commercial advantage from these actions. Sponsorship, on the contrary, expects to result in some benefits for a sponsor and normally means that a sponsor wants to be associated with the event. (Wagen and White 2010.)

Having said that, it can be understood that potential sponsors will pay attention to the event only in case it is similar to their area of interest, be it a target market, promoted values or marketing plans. Thus it is generally important to find the right approach to the potential sponsor, and there is usually some research needed, to understand the values and goals that can be shared. (Wagen and White 2010.)

Among the potential sponsors may be individuals and companies, as well as government establishments and educational institutions. There may, however, be a certain difficulty in trying to reach big corporations for asking to fund a small event, as they normally already have marketing plan and established links with those organisations whose sponsoring would be the most beneficial for them. (Wagen and White 2010.)

The sponsorship, as it was already mentioned, should be mutually beneficial. The areas, where the sponsors may help are very various and broad. They may include the coverage of the expenses (fully or partially), providing different items, like prizes or decorations, helping with the workforce or arranging a programme, giving technical support, preparing food and beverages and many other things. (Wagen and White 2010.)

As for what the event can give in return, for example, Allen et al. (2010) list several options. Among those are the agreements for purchase from sponsor, merchandising and event name rights, networking opportunities, media coverage and signage, free

access to the event for sponsors, product demonstrations and some others.

3.7 Marketing

Marketing is important for any area of business, but, as it can be understood, in every area it will have its own specific features, although, there are similarities as well. When it comes to event marketing, the term itself can be understood from two different points of view. The first one is marketing done to promote the event, and the second one marketing done during the event to promote goods or services for the attendees and/or the participants of the event. (Ferdinand and Kitchin 2012).

Both of these approaches require preliminary market research and establishing contact between organisers, participants and attendees of the event. This work, however, will focus on marketing the event itself, as it is more relevant from the point of view of event management, represented in the work.

Ferdinand and Kitchin (2012) mention that events are similar to services and this similarity would reflect on preparing and deciding marketing activities. They list four major similarities, which note that events, as well as services, are intangible, variable, perishable and inseparable from those who produce them. These features will put some limitations to marketing, such as, for example, the impossibility to adjust marketing strategy to the demand, as the demand is seen when the event is already ongoing and marketing strategy has been decided in advance. This leads to assume that preliminary marketing research plays more important role in marketing events. Another example would be the necessity to consider the objectives of all stakeholders and focus on that in the marketing plan, while for tangible products the primary goal would be to reach success with the brand. Among the peculiarities of marketing an event is also the fact that event can be profit-oriented, as well as non-profit, and thus the importance of marketing mix parts will vary.

When doing marketing, it is important to have a clear marketing plan, for several reasons. First, it will help to see what has to be done, set the goals and the criteria for evaluation. Secondly, it will allow all the others working on the project check that everyone is committed to the same goals. Thirdly, it will become a tool for co-ordination and efficient allocation of the resources. Lastly, it will allow to regard all marketing activities as one single process, not isolated tasks. (Briggs 1997.)

Briggs (1997) recommends checking that marketing plan includes the following information: analysis of the present situation and marketing objectives, SWOT-analysis and market research, marking target groups and situation with competitors, market tools and ways to monitor and evaluate the activity. In different sources about event marketing the same elements are listed in one form or another, so it can be said that this scheme for a marketing plan can be used by event organisers as well.

The planning usually relies on data collected during market research. This research can include C-PEST analysis, which helps to analyse the environment from different perspectives: political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological, as well as evaluating the level of competition in the area. Segmentation would be another step in planning, and that step is of high importance, as it will give the grounds for setting the objectives. An event cannot be targeted to everyone, so there is a need to find the right target segment for whom the event would seem the most appealing. There are several conditions that should apply to any chosen group: it should be checked that the target group is measurable, big enough to target it, and accessible and actionable within existing resources. (Allen et al. 2010.)

The following step, choosing the marketing tools, to a certain degree depends on which marketing mix is chosen to follow. Some authors (Ferdinand and Kitchin, for instance) take it that the traditional 4Ps marketing mix, which includes product, place, price and promotion is enough. Others may follow 5 Ps, where promotion is replaced with positioning and public relations, 7Ps, which adds to traditional four elements physical evidence and process, or 8 Ps approach, which divides all elements into two groups – experimental (product, place, programming and people) and facilitating (promotion, partnership, packaging and price) (Ferdinand and Kitchin 2012). The author chooses here to follow the traditional model to underline the differences and similarities between marketing of events and tangible products.

Product, i.e. the event itself, can be divided into four elements, or attributes. Core attributes reflect the reason and key messages of the event. Tangible attributes are everything that can be seen and that creates the right atmosphere and serves to deliver the core element to the attendee. Augmented attributes are the added value for the event, including entertainment and atmosphere. The last ones, potential attributes, are the elements that are or can be used to adapt the event to quickly-changing

environment. It is also worth mentioning that product in event marketing often includes promotion, that to be sponsorship packages, broadcasting, public relation opportunities and some other elements, which sets it apart from marketing other products or services. (Wagen and White 2010.)

Place is another important part of marketing mix for events, as the choice of the venue and geographical location will certainly influence the overall experience delivered by the event. It can also put limitations to the program arrangement and the number of attendees and participants, thus it has to be selected with care. However, place also refers to the distribution channels of tickets, whether it is the Internet, cash desk, or via intermediaries. In the case of this project, there will be no tickets issued, but it is worth noting this to underline the dual perception of this component of traditional marketing mix in event marketing. (Wagen and White 2010.)

Price part of the mix can vary in significance, as it was already mentioned, depending on the objective of an event. When it is a profit-oriented event, the price decisions will be made based on practically the same issues as in other businesses, but when it is non-profit, the price does not matter much. However, it can still be worth considering what it would cost attendees to participate, and whether it would be affordable for them. (Wagen and White 2010.)

Promotion of an event can include such activities as advertising, corporate image, personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion or public relations (Ferdinand and Kitchin 2012). The marketing plan should contain marketing and promotional activities that would correspond to the overall plan and its objectives. All the communications used must be integrated, e.g. deliver the same message to the target audience. Also, it is important to remember what was already mentioned: in event business promotion creates expectations, part of experience thus being part of the product. (Wagen and White 2010.)

In promotion, or marketing communications, there are a lot of various tools available nowadays that allow to select suitable ones for any marketing campaign. The list of these tools includes media advertising, interactive advertising, place advertising, signage, trade-oriented promotions, event marketing, public relations, and personal selling. To choose those suitable for a planned campaign, the decisions about targeting,

positioning, objectives and budgeting should be made. The first two points go hand in hand, as positioning should be suitable for the targeted audience. While setting objectives, the important question would be not only “what to communicate?”, but also “which tools would help most to communicate the idea?”. The budget is also to be taken into consideration, and there are two major ways to do it: to decide top-down, when a certain amount of money is given to promotion, or bottom-up, when objectives define the amount of money needed. (Shimp 2010.)

In fact, budget, along with time, will be one of the limiting factors when creating a marketing plan. While some of the activities would not cost much, especially if volunteer help is used, the other may take vast sums of money from event budget. For example, personal contacts and internet marketing would cause little costs, if any, while using radio and TV most probably will be expensive. However, many, if not all marketing activities take long time, and it should be considered when doing the planning. (Shone and Parry 2010.)

3.8 Production schedule and programme planning

To the co-ordination and following the program serve two main documents: programme and production schedule.

The programme is a schedule for the whole event. While developing the event program, it may be useful to take into consideration such factors as the creativity and the experience of the event team, the expectations of the target groups and main stakeholders, the limitations that are put by the chosen venue and existing infrastructure, and the relationship between different staging elements. Some managers point out the importance of the innovations included in the program to create new experience for the audience every time. (Allen et al. 2010.)

The timing and directions for the event in general are provided in the production schedule. This is the description of all the tasks for employees at the event with precise timing. It is recommended to use Gantt chart for visualising the production schedule, by allocating for each activity the timing, the place and the person responsible. The bigger the event is, the more detailed this plan should be. It starts from bump-in – the time of beginning to assemble the equipment – and finishes with bump-out – its demounting after the event. Based on this schedule, the run sheets and cue sheets – the order of

specific jobs and the indication of time of changing for technicians, correspondingly – are made, so it has to be very accurate and comprehensive. (Allen et al. 2010.)

3.9 Safety and security

Every event is subject to risks, which are regarded as part of the process of event preparation and implementation (Bowdin et al. 2003). The risk management, as described by Bowdin et al., suggests five steps for minimizing the risks: identifying, deciding on who can be harmed and how, evaluating and controlling, noting the observations and constantly reviewing them.

There exists a wide variety of techniques to identify and assess possible risks, such as using work breakdown structure, organizing test events, accessing incident reports, evaluating internal and external risks and some others. To identify internal and external risks SWOT analysis can be used. By taking weaknesses as internal risks and threats as external risks, it is possible to see overall picture and minimize possible negative impacts of weaknesses and threats. This technique would be the easiest one to use, as it would rely on the data that had already been collected and analysed, and does not require many resources, as a test event, for example, would. (Allen et al 2010.)

When deciding on who can be harmed and in what way, Bowdin et al. (2003) recommend to think about the participants and attendees of an event, including into the group of risk young people, visitors who may not be familiar with the venue, and members of public.

Bowdin et al. (2003) list several specific event risks, which may occur when big crowds of people are gathered together. They include crowd management, alcohol, communication problems, environmental issues and emergency situations. While the alcohol and environmental issues will most probably not be the problem for the event in question, the other three definitely have to be considered.

The identified risks are recommended to be written down to make a plan of risks minimizing based on that and be constantly reviewed to be able to react quickly. That is to be included to the safety plan of the event, which is to determine how the safe

environment during the event will be provided and what the staff is to do in case of an accident. The safety plan also should include evacuation and rescue plans to provide the staff with clear instructions for emergency situations. (Lehtola 2014.)

The local authorities try to minimize the risks by setting legal regulations and demanding insurances and permits to allow the event. The number and the purpose of permits are different in each country, and, understandably, depend on the nature and the scale of the event. In Finland within the past few years the conditions for obtaining the permits have become stricter and professional staff with corresponding licences is needed to receive the permission for an event (Iso-Aho 2013). The licences that may be needed to obtain permission for the event in Finland from the local authorities can include the notice of public event, permission of the owner of the venue, rescue plan or safety and security plan, security steward certifications, noise notification, licence for selling alcohol, permits for the use of music in a public event, liability insurances and some others (Iso-Aho 2013).

3.10 Evaluation

Event evaluation is the final step in the planning process that lets the managers define the criteria for evaluation, comparing the initial goals to the resulted outcome, and also to communicate the information to the stakeholders.

The process of evaluation is continuous, e.g. the event is being evaluated throughout the whole organising and implementing process. This allows to determine three stages of the evaluation that require different tools and have different measures. The first stage is pre-event evaluation, or feasibility studies, which have been discussed earlier in this work. The second stage, monitoring and control, is part of project management and covers all the preparation and implementation processes. The last stage is the post-evaluation process, which compares the actual results to the initial plan to see the outcome of the event. (Allen et al. 2010.)

The post-event evaluation stage can include the event outcomes, analysis of participants and event audience, suggestions for improvement, and the evaluation of a managerial process in general. In total it should show the results of the event, the critics

and the experience learnt during the process. The evaluation can also serve as a base for the report to stakeholders if such a need arises. (Allen et al. 2010.)

There are numerous approaches to the evaluation of an event. Some of them are, as listed by Forrester and Adams in Conway (2010), goal-based approach, goal-free approach, and the CIPP model. While the latest is considered to be the most complete and systematic, allowing to evaluate the whole process through assessing content, input, process and product, it would probably be too complex for a small event as the one in this project. The goal-based evaluation, being one of the most common ways to evaluate the event, requires clearly formulated objective and easily measurable goals. The opposite of this one, the goal-free approach, explores the outcomes of the event as they are, regardless of whether the results were planned, and is a good tool for further in-depth analysis.

For this project, the goal-free approach seems the most practical, as the goals, although being stated, are hard to measure, and the initial purpose of the project is more to explore the results than to achieve specific goals. The recommended method for this evaluation will be talking to people, specifying issues and problems, overviewing the programme and using case studies, if necessary (Conway 2009).

4 Project partner - Imitsi

Imatran Kaupunkikeskustat ry, or Imitsi, is a local association in Imatra, which unites various town entrepreneurs and organisations, and aims at development of the centre of Imatra, improving business opportunities in the town's centre and encourages co-operation between its members. The association co-operates with property owners, contractors, and local community in order to make the town centre a lively place for everyone to enjoy. Imitsi is in charge of Imatra's walking street, Koskenparras, and the market place in the centre. They also offer help in organising events in the town centre to ensure that everything goes smoothly. (Imitsi 2013.)

The association was asked to be a partner primary because Imitsi owns the supposed site for the event, but also because of their expertise, experience, and network of partners and providers working with them. Thus, this partnership was to be undoubtedly

beneficial for the author of the thesis, and the suggested event would correspond to the aims of the association by attracting people and entertaining them in the town centre, which can be considered as a benefit for the partner.

The representative of Imitsi kindly agreed to help with the whole process of creating an event, from advising on the concept, to providing the event site and helping with the needed licences. Further on, when the event was at the risk of not happening, Imitsi agreed to combine it with their bigger festival, “Kesänavaus” or Summer opening.

5 Case “Spring Festival” in Imatra

The preparation period started in November 2012. The event itself took place on 25th of May 2013 on the pedestrian street of Imatra, Koskenparras. It was eventually held as a part of “Kesänavaus” festival, and included a pet parade and face-painting activity.

5.1 Concept creation for Spring Festival event

The initial idea was to plan a cultural event aimed at Russian tourists who visit Imatra. The idea derived from the fact that Russians visit Imatra often, and visits even increase during Russian holidays. Besides, from the interviews with Russian tourists, conducted during the course of “Consumer behaviour”, it was discovered that Russians would be interested in cultural events happening in Finland.

By assessing the time that was needed for the project, and comparing Russian and Finnish holidays, it was decided to choose the 1st of May, or Vappu, as the theme for the event. The further research, however, showed that it would not be the best option for a cultural festival. As the result of further discussion the idea transformed to more of a spring festival, celebrating the upcoming of warm time of the year.

The discussion with another partner, the representative of Imitsi, led to the ensemble of the new ideas for the event, as some were rejected as ones with little possibility to attract participants, some were added, and some were transformed. This, in turn, had led to the shift in the target group, as new ideas fitted more families, and, with the help of the partner, it was easier to orient the event to the local population of Imatra, and those living close to the Russian-Finnish border from the Russian side, i.e. towns like Svetogorsk and Vyborg.

The ideas that were chosen were aimed at entertaining all members of a typical family, i.e. parents and children. They were pet parade, flower market, children's entertainment facilities, like face-painting, and candy vendors. These ideas were to be developed and discussed with possible participants to see whether there would be someone interested in participation. All of them needed to be checked, and then the plans would be corrected according to results.

Flower market

The first part of the idea was the flower market, and the primary objective here was to find the participants, as all the other actions would depend on it, so it was set as a first milestone in the project. The place was promised to be organised by the partner, the representative of Imitsi, from the beginning of discussion of the event planning, so there was no need to arrange it separately. So the first tasks for the flower market would be defining the possible vendors and partners, contacting them and negotiating. Depending on the result the programme was to be designed.

Pet parade

At the early stage of development of the idea, benchmarking was necessary to see how such activities are usually done; what could be borrowed from existing models and what could be adapted, changed or replaced. Mostly international examples were used for benchmarking; however, there were some common parts that allowed to assume the idea would fit the event in question.

By going through some examples, it was determined that most of the parades run 45 minutes – 1 hour, there is usually a preliminary registration open and the fee to collect from the participants, the gathering takes up to half an hour, there are prizes to attract the audience and the registration on the spot is also available. The fancy dressing of pets is common, but not necessary, and there are judges to select the winners on the given criteria. (Burlingame Pet Parade 2012; Los Altos Kiwanis Pet Parade 2012; Heavenly Hoofs' Pet Parade 2012.)

These ideas, gathered together gave a plan of action for the parade. Most of them were taken straight from the examples; some, however, had to be changed or eliminated. An example of this would be the entry fee, which would represent another source of

income, but, as it was indicated by the partner, there existed little possibility that people would pay to enter the unknown competition, so signing in was decided to be free of charge. However, the idea of prize giving and choosing a winner for that remained unchanged, with a back-up plan of random distribution of prizes in case of little choice of fancy-dressed animals. The preliminary registration was to be announced to be done by email in free form, and last-minute registration was part of the plan as well, to gather more participants.

The route was designed together with the partner, and it was decided to use the pedestrian part of the street, in order to avoid extra application to the police to block the road. The time estimation checks were held, and three versions of the route were developed, as well as it was decided in what case which one was applicable. There was a route for an event with organised flower market, which would take the parade all around the market, and two shorter versions, in case the parade was held as a separate event/less time would be available. The prize giving was to take place at the finish of the parade.

Children's entertainment facilities

Face-painting was chosen as a children's entertainment after considering the existing resources. For this activity, which was designed as an added value to introduce more fun for children, there arose no problems in organising. In fact, it was the least complicated part of the plan. It was agreed with the partner from the beginning that the artist would be provided with the place for the activity, including a table and chairs. The price was set based on estimations of what people are ready to pay, and the expectation to cover the costs of the materials.

So, initial concept could answer all five basic questions, which were: why it's organised, who are the stakeholders, when and where it is to be organised and what is the content. The event was decided to be held on Koskenparras, the main pedestrian street of Imatra, on the first weekend of May. The content was described above, and all the other questions, namely the aims of the project and the stakeholders will be regarded separately further in this work.

SWOT analysis

The table below represents SWOT-analysis that was made to check the feasibility of the idea and see what problems might arise on later stages.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Designed according to targeted group needs	New event, involves too many risks
Specific target groups – easy to find stakeholders	No profit/little profit planned
Support from Imitsi	Lack of knowledge of operating team
Volunteers team ready to help with various skills	Language barrier
Different range of activities – if one is out, still something to proceed with	
Small budget – no need for big money	
No aim at profitability	
Opportunities	Threats
Participants from theme clubs or organisations	Weather conditions
Attracting international participants (Russians)	Lack of interest
Getting media coverage	Not enough resources
Using networking – Imatra is not a big town, people know each other	Not enough participants

Table 1. SWOT-analysis of Spring Festival concept.

As it can be seen from the table, the event has many strong points, which looks promising. However, the same point, which is the non-profitability of the event, is regarded both as a strong and a weak point: on the one hand, it makes the event less demanding and the goals easier to achieve, but on the other side, it means that if extra sources of income, e.g. sponsors are not found, the event can turn out to be a loss, or would not have a chance to happen without enough money to pay to the outsourced staff.

The weakest point at this stage is that the event is newly organised, without any previous data to rely upon. It can be regarded as a disadvantage when finding sponsors

and participants, and also will result in need of more planning and probably lots of changes as the event will be being developed. It is closely connected with another weak point – the lack of knowledge in the organising team, which consists mostly of volunteering students.

Most opportunities derive from what was discovered during the analysis of the host community. While it is relatively small, this fact has advantages for planning a new event, such as close relationships between clubs and organisations. The host town is also located near the Russian-Finnish border, which results in a big number of visits of foreign tourists and possibility to use them as another target group.

The threats are quite common for any event, which is organised for the first time and is held outside. Despite this fact, there seem to be no universal way of handling these threats, so careful planning is needed to try to avoid those. This will be further considered in the risk management section.

5.2 Event objective and possible impacts on Imatra community

The main objective of the event was to provide people with a new experience and possibility for a family entertainment during the weekend. The initial strategic goal was to raise enough interest to make this event annual. However, as a result of discussion with stakeholders, risk evaluation and review of existing resources, the goal appeared unachievable and it was decided to check how many people would be attracted and see the possibilities for development of this kind of events rather than aiming at making it regular.

The impacts of this event on Imatra were mostly determined as socio-cultural, as the event was not big enough to create any significant political or environmental effects on the local community. The economic impact, in its turn, could be noticeable only in case local entrepreneurs would be willing to co-operate, so this part of planning would be questionable. Achieving some of the positive impacts was also regarded as a goal, as it went along with the main objective of the project, supporting the idea.

The possible socio-cultural benefits for Imatra would include community participation, opportunity for socialization and building new relationships with like-minded people, as well as new experience and, hopefully new ideas for further development. The event

could also enhance the positive image of the town perceived by international tourists, as there will be people from abroad, observing, and maybe participating.

From the economic point of view, the planned event would give opportunity for promotion to local businesses, both to participants of flower market and those acting as sponsors. In addition, it would hopefully help to build closer co-operation between participating organizations, profit and non-profit, such as pet clubs. For flower vendors it could be a chance to try a new form of sales and promotion and in case of success apply this model (flower markets) in future.

Although the main objective of the event is hardly measurable, the division of the workload to smaller work breakdown structures can set smaller goals, where the criteria for evaluation of the success can be found. As an example, getting enough income to cover the expenses for the event can be considered one of such intermediate goals. In this case the success is defined by whether the amount of money was sufficient. Another goal would be to attract enough participants to make the event happen. The result here can also be expressed in number of participants – the more the better. These goals, in turn, would be divided into even smaller ones and turned into work tasks to be completed. The specific goals and the results will be discussed in each section separately.

5.3 Stakeholders

The common stakeholders were listed in the theory part, and would normally include employees, sponsors, suppliers, participants and attendees, host community, authorities, media and local businesses. For this event it would remain the same: volunteers who would be the organising team, partner, namely Imitsi, local authorities, town of Imatra, local families and pet owners, flower vendors, pet associations, possible sponsors, and local businesses, especially those belonging to Imitsi, located on Koskenparras.

Right at the start, finding the vendors for flower market did not go smoothly. Local small enterprises, private sellers and big companies were contacted to offer the participation in flower market, but no final positive reply was received. Most of the contacted

companies admitted that the idea was good, and approved it, but were unwilling to participate. Among the reasons were named the unlucky season for flowers, which was too cold spring and late summer, the impossibility to work on their day off or, on the contrary, to get distracted during the busiest day, the late notice and the lack of support from other flower vendors. Approximately one third of all vendors contacted expressed interest in receiving more information, if such an event would be organised next year.

This result made changes to the original plan, eliminating the flower market, so the further work was done on the other two options, and excluding flower vendors from the list of stakeholders. The other stakeholders were divided into internal and external ones, as this approach would allow to see who has the primary interest and is able to help, thus needs to be listened to.

Internal stakeholders, which were the organising group, the partner, and sponsors, were interested in making the event happen and thus were willing to co-operate and give the resources, such as time, knowledge and supplies, to organise the event. It means the whole process of event creation was influenced by the expectations and resources of this group of the stakeholders. The sponsors expected publicity and promotion, so this had to be reflected in marketing materials and in the event programme. The partner had its own vision of an event and was taking legal responsibility of it, so the programme was adjusted to fit the partner. The organising team was willing to undertake only the responsibilities they were sure to be able to handle, so their opinions also influenced the event design and flow.

The group of external stakeholders included local authorities, the town of Imatra, families and pet owners, pet associations and clubs, and local businesses. While the interests of this group had undoubtedly to be taken into consideration, for example, the requirements of local authorities to obtain the permit for the event, they did not have much influence on the development of the event. Their expectations were taken more like general directions, than specific guidelines, and they were not explored closely for this reason.

It can be noticed that a different managing approach was applied for each group of stakeholders. While the internal stakeholders participated in discussion and influenced the decision-making, the impact of external stakeholders was minimized to save the

resources and ease the whole process of event development. The combination of these two approaches worked quite well during the project, allowing to concentrate the effort on those directly involved into the organising process.

5.4 Human resources

In this project, as the budget was limited, it was obvious from the very beginning, that there would be a need to attract volunteers to organising and operational process. As there was no ability to pay to volunteers, it was necessary to think of motivation that would encourage people to help with the project. The possible benefits for volunteers, as taken from O'Toole (2011), are opportunities to learn new skills and gain experience, desire to help a friend or a family member, work experience and references, acting together with a group of friends, and fun. Different benefits were offered to different volunteers to get their interest in the event. Most of them joined the team to help a friend, but, for example, a designer, who dealt with posters, was encouraged by the possibility to enlarge the portfolio and practise the professional skills.

By having considered the approximate tasks that were to be completed, the needed skills could be defined and, judging by that, certain people could be asked. Most of the initial stage was about negotiation, so it was important to have people with good communication and language skills, who, preferably, knew the potential target groups. In addition to that, there was a need of a designer, who would be able to think of and produce printed materials, as well as there was a need of artists for face-painting, where at least some relevant experience would be necessary. The team of volunteers was gathered by using personal approach to network of people known. And although, with volunteer teams there is always a possibility that the gathered staff would have much motivation, but little skills needed (Shone and Parry 2010), in this case all the required skills were found.

For the team of volunteers a simple organisational structure was applied, for the reason of its flexibility and for convenience of volunteers, who could in this case undertake tasks of each other in case of lack of time, for example. To organise, divide and monitor work in this case, Gantt chart was used.

The paid staff would include the sound and security staff, and for those, as it was noted by the representative of Imitisi, the professionalism was important, that is why there

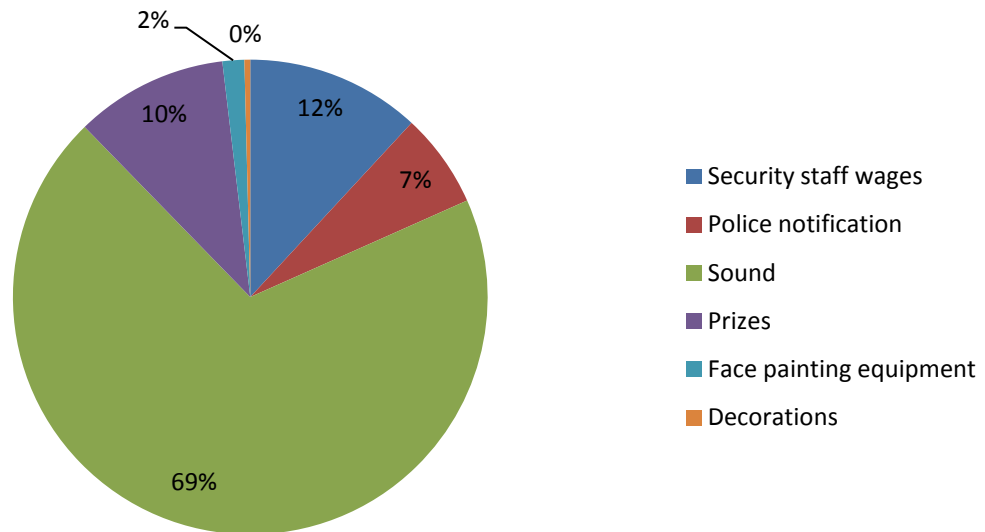
were few possibilities to replace them with volunteers. Security staff is required by the police to give permission for the event, and they should hold the valid licence, which requires a specific training. It meant that unless there is a holder of such licence among volunteers, the professionals should be hired. As for the sound, the high quality is very important to create the right atmosphere during the event and create a positive overall impression, so it would not be worth minimizing the costs here.

5.5 Budgeting and finances

The event was initially planned to be non-profit. However, the goal of the budget was to reach the breakeven, so that there would be no need in putting personal finances to the event organisation. Although the expenses were to be limited to minimum by all means possible, there would still be some costs that are unavoidable. At the starting point, during the planning stage, no financial resources were available, and the main income source was expected sponsorship, with additional small income deriving from organised face-painting during the event.

The partner had promised to provide the venue and take care of printing the marketing materials, so these did not require any costs. The expenses would include security staff wages, event registration fee, sound system, and prizes for the parade, as well as the set for face-painting, and simple decorations, like balloons. The biggest part in expenses would be renting the sound system and a professional to handle it, which would take more than half of the overall budget. However, in general the event promised to be low-cost, with the budget not exceeding €1500.

The pie chart below shows the expected share of expenses, estimated after the discussion with the partner. It can be seen that the biggest share is the sound arrangements, followed by security staff wages. This clearly shows why the event turned out to be on the risk of cancellation when there were no funds found to cover these major expenses, even though the prizes would have been provided. This situation will be further described in the next section.



Pie chart 1. Planned expenses for Spring Festival.

5.6 Sponsorship

As it became clear at the early stage of the idea development, there was a need of the help of some partners and sponsors, as there were costs that were impossible to avoid, such as marketing costs, even if they were to be reduced to minimum, and prizes for participants.

There were limitations to what value this event can be of for potential partners. The main limiting factor was the novelty of the event, as it was to happen for the first time in this region, and there could be no previous data provided for discussion; there were only the assumptions to rely upon. The main benefits that could have been offered to the potential partners were the visibility during the event, and the closer acquaintance with their target market, as the event was built for pet owners.

That was the primary reason why networking became so important during the whole project. It would be highly difficult to reach the potential partners without a word from someone who had trust in the project and who was trusted enough to be seen as an advisor.

So the preliminary plan was made of those who would be interested in the project

among regional companies. The list of the potential sponsors was made using the Internet and networking, as well as the experience of others. As a result, the list contained pet shops, dogs' organisations and pets' breeders, as well as local industries and companies who might get interested in the potential segment.

The task at this point was to get any kind of support from local businesses to help with expenses. Different possibilities were thought of and prepared for discussion: money, or direct funding, giving the prizes, helping with organisation, and marketing the event. A perfect result would be to receive all kinds of support, as it all was needed for a smooth run of the project.

One of the difficulties that were faced when establishing contacts was that the possible partners were unwilling to answer before they knew the answer of others who were contacted. At the same time there was no possibility or will from their side to take part in the joint discussion. The situation could be and was explained by the risks that were too high.

As the result of all negotiations there were found two enterprises that supplied the event with prizes for participants on the conditions that were offered: their logos on the stage, mentioning on loudspeakers and logos on all printed event promotion materials. Thus, all the goals, except one, which had been direct funding, were achieved.

Still, as the sponsors for financing the equipment were not found, the event was to make a loss, which seemed to be quite considerable within the frames of a set budget. With the continuous desire to hold the event, and sponsors for pet parade that were found, it was decided that the parade and face-painting would be held during another big event, organised by the partner, Summer Opening or Kesänavaus. The idea was suggested by the representative of the partner as the back-up plan to minimize the risk of a complete cancellation and was used in order to proceed with the project.

5.7 Marketing and marketing communications

The marketing research for this project was done using the recommended PEST-model, which included political, economical, socio-cultural and technological environments. The

main findings helped to define the target audience, which was, as mentioned earlier, families with children, and find the suitable products to offer to this target audience. The research also showed possible marketing tools. Most of the results were reflected in the SWOT-analysis made earlier.

Then, based on the concept created at early stages, the marketing mix was designed to see the goals for promotion and communication.

5.7.1 Product

The core product of the event would be the activities for family entertainment, e.g. the parade and face-painting. It is suitable for the chosen target group and goes along with the objective of the event, which was to provide entertainment and new experience. It is supported by tangible products, such as prizes, decorations and the paints. The prizes were chosen to suit the targeted group and potential participants, so they included the dog's food bags and gift cards to the fast-food chain restaurant. The unique mix of activities on the event can be considered as an augmented product. In this regard, the parade and face-painting, being part of product mix for Summer Opening, can be regarded as augmented products in relation to the bigger event.

The product was designed to meet the expectation of the stakeholders. For example, the route for the parade and the event schedule were made together with the partner to fit the venue and the time slot in the programme of Summer Opening. The prizes were decided upon and provided by the sponsors within the general request, and their name was to be mentioned during the event. Here it can be seen how marketing becomes part of the product.

5.7.2 Place

Koskenparras, the main pedestrian street of Imatra was chosen as a site for the event for several reasons. Firstly, it is located in the centre of the town and is well-known to the local citizens, so that it can easily be found. Secondly, it usually has a lot of pedestrians who can become observers and possible participants. Thirdly, the street is pedestrian, so it would not require the permission for traffic changes to hold the parade. Moreover, it gives flexibility when designing the route for the parade. Lastly, it is owned by the partner, so it was easy to get the permission to use it, and do it for free.

The place also has other benefits, such as being easily noticeable when arriving from Russia to Imatra, or having parking spots for families arriving by car and a bus stop nearby. These points, although not considered when making a decision about the venue, give an added value to the chosen site.

5.7.3 Price

This part of the marketing mix was not considered significant for the event, as it was not aimed at gaining profit. It was discussed with the partner, whether to introduce participant fees, but the idea was rejected. The reason for that was stated so that the event is new and it would be hard enough to attract the participants even without a fee, as the concept is unfamiliar to them.

For the face-painting, however, it was decided to put a low price of €2 that would be enough to cover the expenses on the paints. The price was considered to be reasonable and not too high to produce a significant income that would have to be reported to the authorities.

5.7.4 Promotion

To decide on the promotion ways and materials, as well as on distribution channels, it was necessary to return to targeted audience and resources to find the best options.

In the case of this project the target audience was described in the beginning as families with children and pet owners, living in Imatra region and in Russian border region. The positioning would correspond to objective of the event, which was to have fun together with the family. It also should be remembered at this point, that the project was now part of a bigger event, so it should not contradict with the general message of the big event. The main goals of the marketing campaign itself were to inform people about the happening and encourage them for participation, for which purpose the chosen tools should reach as many potential participants, as possible. However, the budget would be the main limiting factor here, so, the tools were preferably to be free – top-down approach was used in this case.

Based on this planning, it was chosen to use posters, which could be printed for free thanks to the partner, and interactive advertising, which included contacting pet clubs

and owners of pets who might be interested in the event. Additionally, the local newspaper, Uutisvuoksi, media partner of Summer Opening, agreed to make an article about the parade to attract participants.

The posters were designed to be colorful and bright, with pet-associated images, and clear information about the event (parade and face-painting). Also, smaller leaflets were prepared to be distributed directly to people during the interacting activities. The posters prepared by the partner for the Summer Opening also contained the information about the parade and face-painting. Both types of posters were distributed in Imatra and Svetogorsk, the border town in Russia.

Besides, on the day of event, the system of signs was used to attract attention of visitors to the activities, and help those participating in the parade find the registration place and starting position.

5.8 Programme and production schedule

The parade and face-painting were included into the programme of the event in general, and thus it was important that the activities of this project take the exact time slot allocated to them. In this way, the parade was to start at 11:00 and finish at 11:30, while the face painting activity was to be available for 3 hours, starting from 11:00. The registration for the parade was open from 10:30. The timetable was announced in all marketing materials.

Production schedule was made as soon as the timetable was known, and handed out to all volunteer team. The work on site started with putting signs, decorations, and logos, placing tables and arranging the registration lists, an hour before the event started and finished with demounting tables and taking the signs away, to give place to the following activities, half an hour after the last activity the team was responsible for had finished. The production schedule used can be found in appendices.

5.9 Safety and security

The event was to be taken place in Imatra, where all general Finnish laws apply. According to these laws, any public event, which is defined as “entertainments,

competitions, shows, and other similar events open to the public that are not considered public meetings”, should be reported to the police five days in advance, and the police may require additionally any other documents that it would find relevant. (Police of Finland 2013.)

Imitsi had the insurance and the permit for the music needed, so there was no need to apply for that. No food or alcohol would be involved, so the corresponding permits were not needed either. As the owner of the site, Imitsi did not need any extra permission, and the rescue plan was available, as well as the evacuation plan for the area, as it had been previously used as the event venue.

For the safety issues, the security stewards were hired for the event, as it is also required by the police. Imitsi took care of all the safety issues, as the legal organizer of the event, and gave the directions on the parade route and the tables placing to ensure that no evacuation paths are blocked and there are no safety threats.

For this project, a separate risk assessment was done with possible preventive measures. It was based on the previously made SWOT-analysis and included internal and external risks.

Internal risks

The most important risk was financial – due to the fact that event would not make any significant profit, it was dependent on finding sponsors and partners to support the event in terms of finances or/and equipment and workforce needed. To minimize that risk all the possible costs were reviewed and cut to minimum, so that in the worst case it would be possible to cover it with personal finances of the author of the project.

The other risk would be to miss something important or to make significant mistakes due to the insufficient experience of the organising team. This risk was easily covered by close co-operation with more experienced professionals - the supervisor of the thesis project and partner representative, who would advise on any matter regarding closer attention. Another way to minimize this risk would be preliminary research on the topic, which would allow to see the subject clearly and to build the strategy.

External risks

One of the general risks is improper weather conditions. The entire event is planned to be held outside and bad weather can considerably spoil the impression of the event and the atmosphere in general, and even prevent people from attending the event. Some sources suggest developing an alternative plan for bad weather, but that would not be an option in the case of described project, as the event cannot be held indoors. So the only precautions that could be made would be to monitor the weather and inform participants about it, advising to take umbrellas.

Another risk is not having enough participants for each of the parts, in which case the event would not take place. One precautionary measure was already mentioned: the event was designed in a way that all activities were independent, and if one part fails, another would still be possible to proceed with. Another possibility to eliminate the risk is to prepare good quality promotional material and check that it reaches the target audience. Finally, to estimate the amount of participants, it was decided to ask them to confirm the participation by email, which would create a certain level of confidence that they would appear on the day of the event. In case with flower vendors it would be useful to maintain communication throughout the preparation period to know if the difficulties would appear and be able to offer a possible solution.

There also exists a risk of competitors, and as this event is new, possible participants and stakeholders would choose to support and to attend another event, which is more familiar to them and does not hold big level of uncertainty. This can be handled by monitoring the event schedules, and promoting the planned event, as well as using networks and personal contacts to invite participants to the new event. However, another event could be tried and turned into advantage, instead of a risk, if the managers agree to unite two events to add more value and to reduce costs for the described project. This approach was firstly introduced by the partner, to eliminate the risk of cancellation of the event, and was used in this case, as it was mentioned before.

5.10 Evaluation

The first two stages of the evaluation process have already been described in this work.

This section will concentrate on post-event evaluation. As it was already mentioned, the analysis will be done, using goal-free approach, noting the results and outcomes without specifically linking them to the measuring criteria.

The flow of the event was quite smooth, with a slight delay in the timetable, due to the late arrival of some participants. The face-painting activity surpassed the breakeven, making a small profit, which was more than was planned. The feedback received from the participants directly on the spot was both positive and negative. The positive concerned interesting activity provided, and prizes received, as well as nice painting skills of volunteers, and negative one referred to “messiness” of event, and misleading information about the starting time.

The participants were mostly locals, middle-aged and seniors, while the audience observing the parade was much more diverse. Face-painting, expectedly, attracted mostly children, Finns and foreigners in fairly equal proportions. Most of participation was simultaneous, and, according to the participants themselves, other popular sources of information were friends and the newspaper article. None referred to posters or to social media advertisement.

Several mistakes can be noticed in the planning and implementing process, as well as the ideas for possible improvement. Mostly they derive from the lack of time, but also from the lack of previous experience.

One of the mistakes that was done during this project, and that resulted in the impression of “messiness” from attendees, was the absence of blueprinting. Going through how the model would work in practice would have allowed more order and more organised crowd during the event itself. The rehearsal with volunteers is now seen as necessary, as well as playing out various scenarios, especially if the event is held for the first time. Also, it was mentioned that the programme could have been more rich and more thoroughly thought of, with not only the core product, but some augmented values as well, like giving more information about the breeds participating. That could have also been changed by going through the event with team several times, and perhaps attending several match shows, which are events of similar kind.

Another factor that influenced the preparation of the event in a negative way was overoptimistic time estimation. In this project most was relying on carrying out the

negotiations, and it turned out to be the most consuming part of the project. Besides, it has not been taken into consideration that these tasks were implemented by volunteers who could dedicate their free-time only, not the whole day every time it was needed.

The project would have benefited if a partner organisation had been found that would be professional in pet issues, whether it had been a dog breeding club or any other similar organisation. The partner of this kind would have knowledge useful for developing further the idea of the parade and for having more contacts to attract sponsors and participants.

6 Results and conclusions

The results of this work represent both theoretical research of information gathered and arranged during the preparation phase and the description of the whole process of creating and carrying out an event from the development of the idea to its implementation. The main goal of the project, which was organising a new event in Imatra, was achieved, although not in a way it was initially planned. However, all the steps, described in theoretical literature were passed through and applied to a real-life situation, which was the purpose of this thesis.

As the main point of applying the theoretical approaches to practice, it can be said that rarely only one approach is enough. Although the sources used present different approaches as alternatives to each other, they often have to be combined together to achieve better results. Still, the results most often were corresponding to those mentioned in the literature, and thus the author finds it quite possible to use existing theory for planning.

During the process several points were identified that might be considered worth paying attention to, when starting to develop a new event idea: finding a suitable partner, the importance of networking and established relations, HR as a major asset, and the changing environment. These points are the result of observation and personal experience of the author of the thesis and are not to be taken as determined rules or established facts.

The first point is the importance of finding the right partner, which would be a big assistance from the very beginning. In the described case the partner not only agreed to undertake certain obligations and provide tangible support, which was undoubtedly the beneficial point, but the representative also possessed knowledge of the environment and had experience of organising similar events in the chosen area. That helped to save time and resources on the preliminary research for assessing the feasibility of the idea, as the time was pressing, and to concentrate on the next steps of the project planning.

The second point concerns networking and social capital when organising a new event. Due to the fact that the event is organised for the first time, and there is no preliminary data available on previous results on the event, it seems to be important to have someone who would be trusted to vouch for the project. That can be confirmed by the replies received from potential sponsors and participants during negotiations, who wanted to know other participants or their opinion, before making the decision.

Next it would be worth mentioning the commitment and dedication of all people involved into the event organising. Without this the project would be hard, if not impossible to make real. It can be concluded from this fact, that in event business, as well, as in other service industries, the human resource is one of, if not the most important asset. Even if they are not skilled enough, it can work if the team is motivated.

The quickly changing circumstances, as well as human factor can be necessary to think of, too, when starting to develop a new event. In this case, the risk management and the flexibility of plans become of vital importance. Back-up plans, careful risk assessment and the resourcefulness and the flexibility of the team can help to adjust the plans quickly and keep working on the project.

In general the project showed that many opportunities can be found for introducing new events in the region. The community seems to be interested in new ideas and is open to new suggestions. Not all the possibilities were explored during this project due to the lack of time and insufficient experience of the author of the project; yet, it was enough to hold the described event. On the other side, people were expressing interest in the idea of the event, it turned out to be possible to find a supporting partner and sponsors, and in general the event proceeded according to the plan. Thus the overall results of the

project can be regarded as positive.

7 References

- Allen, J. O'Toole, W. Harris, R. & McDonnel, I. 2011. Festival and special event management. Milton, Qld.:John Wiley.
- Alves, H. Cerro, A. & Martins, A. 2010. Impacts of small tourism events on rural places. *Journal of Place Management and Development* 3(1), 22 - 37.
- Berrige, G.. 2007. Events, design and experience. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann
- Bowdin, G. McDonnel, I. Allen, J. & O'Toole, W. 2003. Events management. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann
- Boxall, P. & Purcell, D. 2011. Strategy and human resource management. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
- Briggs, S. 1997. Successful tourism marketing: a practical handbook. London: Kogan Page
- Burlingame Pet Parade September 29, 2012. Instructions for Judges.
- Conway, D. 2009. Event manager's bible: the complete guide to planning and organising a voluntary or public event. Oxford: How To Books.
- Crompton, J. & McKay, S. 1997. Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(2), 425-439.
- Damm, S. 2011. Event Management: How to Apply Best Practices to Small Scale Events. Hamburg: Diplomica Verlag.
- EMBOK – Event Management Body of Knowledge.
<http://www.embok.org/>
Accessed on 14 November 2013.
- Ferdinand, N. Kitchin, P. 2012. Events management: an international approach. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Grevtceva, N. 2013. Planning and Implementing of an Event:Case “Maslenitsa” in Saimaa Region. Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. Degree Programme in Tourism. Bachelor's Thesis.
- Heavenly Hoofs' Pet Parade, 2011. Information packet.
<http://heavenlyhoofs.org/files/2011%20Pet%20Parade%20Information%20Packet.pdf>
Accessed on 02 May 2013
- Imitsi – Imatran Kaupunkikeskustat ry
<http://www.imitsi.fi/>
Accessed on 4 May 2014.

Iso-Aho, J. 2013. Event tourism. Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. Unit of Tourism. Lecture notes.

Larson, E. & Clifford, G. 2011. Project Management: The Managerial Process
http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073403342/student_view0/chapter4/powerpoint_presentations.html
Accessed on 15 November 2013.

Lehtola, I. 2014. Event tourism. Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. Unit of Tourism. Lecture notes.

Los Altos Kiwanis Pet Parade 2012. Rules and Application to Participate in the 65th Annual Los Altos Kiwanis Pet Parade.

O'Toole, W. 2011. Events feasibility and development: from strategy to operations. Burlington, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann/Elsevier.

Police of Finland, 2014. Notice of Public event.
<http://poliisi.fi/poliisi/home.nsf/pages/5EC1D6BA6502E9B4C2256C290030B98A?opendocument>
Accessed on 13 November 2013.

Reid, S. 2011. Event stakeholder management: developing sustainable rural event practices. International Journal of Event and Festival Management 2(1), 20 - 36.

Rutherford Silvers, J. 2004. Updated EMBOK Structure as a Risk Management Framework for Events.
http://www.juliasilvers.com/embok/EMBOK_structure_update.htm
Accessed on 14 November 2013.

Shimp, A. 2010. Integrated marketing communications in advertising and promotion. South-Western: Cengage Learning.

Shone, A. & Parry, B. 2010. Successful event management: a practical handbook. Andover: Cengage Learning

Wagen, L. & White, L. 2010. Events management : for tourism, cultural, business & sporting events. Pearson Australia:Frenchs Forest

Appendix 1 Production schedule for Spring Festival event

25th May				
time	activity	persons	resources	notes
9:00	arriving at venue	Me	-	
	meeting Pia to collect banners	me	banners	
	take out the tables	me+Anna	tables, chairs	tables at the square, chairs behind the stage
	briefing	all	none	
9:30	decorations and signage	all except Hanna	banners, balloons, signs, tape, markers, scissors	
9:30	collecting prizes from sponsors	Hanna	car	
10:00	preparing equipment	Anna	face paints, brushes, water, tissues	
10:30	registration process starts	me+Tytti+Hanna	list of participants	if not enough, ask people around to join in
10:30	announcements	Katri	mic	no confirmation!
10:50	explanation to participants	me+Hanna+Tytti		
11:00	parade	me+Tytti	balloon, serpentine	
11:00	face-painting opens	Anna+Valeria	face paint, brushes water cups, change	
11:20	prize giving	me+Katri+Tytti+Hanna	prizes, list	don't forget mentioning the sponsors
11:30	thanking the participants	Katri	mic	don't forget mentioning the sponsors
11:30	cleaning the stage	me+Hanna+Tytti		take away the table, decorations and banners
14:00	face-painting closes	me+Anna+Valeria		
14:00	dismounting of tables	me+Anna+Valeria		putting all the furniture back, we take the paints
14:15	taking the signs off	me+Anna+Valeria		
14:30	team briefing	all		thank team, give gifts and hugs :)