Event seeking for sponsors: Case Helsinki Pride

Jaakkola, Johanna

2014 Leppävaara

Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Leppävaara

Event seeking for sponsors: Case Helsinki Pride

Johanna Jaakkola
Business Management
Bachelor's Thesis
November, 2014

Johanna Jaakkola

Event seeking for sponsors: Case Helsinki Pride

Year	2014		Pages	xx

This thesis is done for HeSeTa Ry (Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry) and the goal was to find out how Helsinki Pride could get sponsors more efficiently and how the co-operation could be made more long lasting with the current sponsors. Helsinki Pride is an event organized in Helsinki each year in June. It is also the biggest LGBT event organized in Finland. The biggest event of the week is the Gay Parade and the Party in the Park. In 2014 only these events had over 20 000 participants. That tells about the size of the event. The number of participants is also getting bigger every year. Event is organized by on hired producer and volunteers.

In the theory part of this thesis Helsinki Pride and HeSeTa ry. are introduced. Sponsoring and event sponsoring are also explained. Also the process behind sponsoring is introduced from company's as well as from the sponsor seeker's point of view.

The research was done by using the qualitative research method and the research strategies were theme interviews and e-mail questionnaire for the sponsors of Helsinki Pride 2014. The textual data was analysed using the content analysis and also the findings are introduced based on the analysis. Three members of the organizing team were interviewed for the theme interviews: Chairman of HeSeTa ry Olli-Pekka Koponen, Event Cordinator of Helsinki Pride Senni Moilanen and Janika Niskanen, Responsible of corporate co-operation in Helsinki Pride 2014. The companies that answered to the questionnaire were NRJ Finland, Barefoot Wine, Amnesty International Finland, Danske Bank Oyj, Palveluliittojen ammattiliitto PAM ry. and Hard Rock Cafe Helsinki.

With a content analysis different important themes emerged and the key finding was that the lack of time has been a problem with the sponsor seeking process as well as the fact that there has not been a well-planned strategy behind the actions concerning that. Another problem is that there is not enough organizers and finding the right amount of people for the work is hard since everything happens voluntarily.

Keywords, sponsoring, Helsinki Pride, event sponsoring

Tämä opinnäytetyö on tehty Heseta Ry:lle (Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry.) ja tavoitteena oli keksiä keinoja sponsorointihaun parantamiseen Helsinki Pridelle. Lisäksi tavoitteena oli keksiä kuinka nykyisiä sponsorointisuhteita pystyttäisiin ylläpitämään paremmin jatkossa. Helsinki Pride on HeSeTa Ry:n tapahtuma, joka järjestetään vuosittain kesäkuussa Helsingissä. Se on myös suurin Suomessa järjestettävä LHTB-tapahtuma. Helsinki Priden suurimmat tapahtumat ovat paraati sekä puistojuhla. 2014 ainoastaan nämä keräsivät yli 20 000 kävijää. Tämä kertoo paljon tapahtuman koosta. Lisäksi kävijämäärät kasvavat vuosittain. Helsinki Pride järjestetään yhden palkatun tapahtumatuottajan sekä vapaaehtoisten voimin.

Opinnäytetyön teoriaosiossa esitellään Helsinki Pride sekä HeSeTa ry. Sponsorointi ja tapahtumasponsrorointi esitellään myös omissa osioissaan. Myöskin prosessi sponsoroinnin takana on selitetty niin yrityksen kuin sponsoreiden hakijan näkökulmasta.

Tutkimus on laadullinen ja tutkimusstrategiana on käytetty teemahaastatteluja sekä vuoden 2014 Helsinki Priden sponsoreille lähetettyä sähköpostikyselyä. Tekstuaalinen data on analysoitu sisällönanalyysilla, jonka pohjalta kaikki päätelmät ovat tehty. Kolmea Helsinki Pride 2014-tapahtuman järjestäjistä on haastateltu teemahaastatteluja varten: HeSeTa Ry:n puheenjohtajaa Olli Pekka Koposta Helsinki Pride 2014 tuottajaa Senni Moilasta sekä Janika Niskasta, jonka vastuulla oli yritysyhteistyö Helsinki Pridessa 2014. Yritykset jotka vastasivat kyselyyn olivat: NRJ Suomi, Barefoot Wine, Amnesty International Suomi, Danske Bank Oyj, Palveluliittojen ammattiliitto PAM ry sekä Hard Rock Cafe Helsinki.

Sisällönanalyysissa nousi esiin monia tärkeitä teemoja. Tärkeimmät löydöt olivat että tapahtuman järjestämiselle ei ole varattu tarpeeksi aikaa, jonka lisäksi sponsorihaun taustalla ei ole ollut järjestelmällistä suunnitelmaa. Ongelmaksi Helsinki Pridessa muodostuu myös tekijöiden puute: on hankala löytää motivoitunutta sekä aktiivista tekijäjoukkoa, kun kaikki tapahtuu vapaaehtoisesti.

Table of contents

1   Introdcution

This thesis is made for the HeSeTa Ry (Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry). The basic idea of the thesis would be to improve the sponsoring of Helsinki Pride, which is an event organized by HeSeTa Ry each year. It is a gay pride event that takes place in Helsinki every year during the last week of June. The event lasts all week and during the week there is a multiple choice of events to attend and the week ends with Saturday's Pride parade and the ending party. There is only one person hired to work with Helsinki Pride each year and otherwise all the work is done voluntarily. The lack of resources and time seem to be great challenges while getting sponsors for the event. Also the whole work for making the Helsinki Pride did not start before January this year so that has made it difficult to find sponsors anymore. For HeSeTa Ry is not trying to make profit with the event, the most important thing is not to make loss so that Helsinki Pride can be arranged also in the future.

1.1   Goals and limitation of the thesis

This thesis is a qualitative research and the research strategies are theme interviews with the organizers of Helsinki Pride 2014 and e-mail questionnaire for the companies sponsoring Helsinki Pride 2014. The textual data is analysed by doing content analysis. With the theme interviews the goals was to understand the process behind Helsinki Pride in general and gather information of how the sponsoring process has been made in the past and what are the goals for the future. There is no literature that could have been used to find information about these matters so these interviews were critical for getting the background information and understanding of the process in whole. Interviews were made with the Chairman of HeSeTa ry Olli-Pekka Koponen, Event Cordinator of Helsinki Pride Senni Moilanen and Janika Niskanen, Responsible of corporate co-operation in Helsinki Pride 2014.

The e-mail questionnaire for the companies that sponsored Helsinki Pride 2014 were sent after the event. Questionnaires were also themed to get an insight of the process from the companies' point of view before the event, during it and after it. During the interviews with the organizers it was important to find out what were the most important and critical facts that would be helpful to get from the companies in order to make the process of getting sponsors in the future more efficient. That is also the main focus of the thesis besides pointing out the problems concerning the process. Understanding the faults and giving ideas to develop the actions made in the process of getting sponsors were the most important goals of this thesis

1.2   Introducing the research problem / thesis question

"How could Helsinki pride get sponsors more efficiently and what would it take to make the co-operation more long lasting with the current sponsors?"

Helsinki Pride is an event organized by HeSeTa Ry (Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry). In 2014 the event gathered more than 20 000 people for the parade (which is the main event) and for example the websites had 99 237 visitors (1.4.-31.7.2014). These numbers are here to tell about the size of the event. The fact that the event was organized by only one hired producer with all the other organizers being volunteers, it is already a great achievement to put this kind of event together. It takes a lot of work from all the organizers to make all of this happen. Helsinki Pride is an event organized so that the goal is not to make profit, covering all the costs is the main thing. In the previous years this was a goal that was not achieved so there was a huge pressure for the organizers of Helsinki Pride 2014. While putting the whole event together is a challenge, it makes it more understandable that it is so also when it comes to the sponsors. It was obvious from the beginning that lack of time and resources were the biggest problems within the sponsor seeking process. Also the goals inside the organizing group of Helsinki Pride varied a lot. The lack of documentation from the previous years was also a problem while there is no information about the previous sponsors or any contact list about the companies. This all gave already enough reason to start the thesis process around this subject.

The goal of the thesis is to find useful information for the organizers of Helsinki Pride 2015 and also understand the process behind sponsoring from the company's as well as from the sponsor seeker's point of view. Understanding the process behind the sponsor seeking of Helsinki Pride 2014 (and the previous years) was definitely the first thing to do. After getting a clearer picture of how things have been done it was easier to start developing these processes. If this thesis can help Helsinki Pride to get sponsor more efficiently in 2015, then the goals have been reached.

2   Sponsoring

Sponsoring is one part of marketing, which organizations use to create positive impressions to consumers. Sponsoring is most commonly associated with culture, sports and different kinds of events. Sponsoring is the type of co-operation where it is important that both sides benefit from it. One of the most important goals of sponsoring is to make and impact on a certain target group's vision and thoughts. Sustainability and commitment in co-operation produce benefit for both parties. (Sipilä 2008, 178)
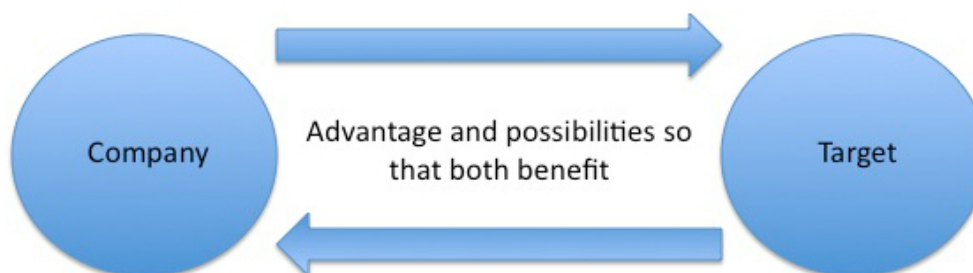
Figure 1: The basis for the sponsoring co-operation (Alaja and Forsell 2004, 21)

According to Alaja and Forssell (2004, 11) the history of sponsoring is rather short. 70 – 80 B.C. during the Roman Empire Maecenas, diplomat and a political advisor of Caesar Augustus, was known for giving economic support for great poets as Virgil. At this time emperors reached for popularity among their people with supporting gladiator fights money-wise.

Sponsoring, as we know it today, started in the USA 1950s where the idea started to spread to Europe and Japan. In 1970s and 1980s sponsoring started to be popular and widespread way of marketing in all over the world. The reason for the growth of sponsoring at that time is easy to understand since technology and media were developing so quickly at that time. It was easier to get publicity and visibility since there was so many new tools for carrying out the outcome of the sponsoring, states Valanko (2009, 29-32) in his book.

Valanko (2009, 35) describes that sponsoring is not more only a replacement for advertising as it used to be. It has become one strong part of organizations marketing communications or on the other words it has become accepted as a new alternative marketing medium. Organizations have more information about the effectiveness of sponsoring and the data gathered can be used more professionally and it gives more value for the company. This is because there seems to be more ambition for creating solutions for problems and needs concerning business in general.

Valanko (2009, 37) questions though if the organizations actually have well-made strategies for sponsoring accomplished according to the values and business plan made for the organization. This all leads to a question whether the organizations proactive mapping or analyzes about the possible partners while considering sponsoring is done well. Goal planning and exploitation of results for the sponsoring should also be really well planned in advance. The Association of Finnish Advertisers has carried out a survey of their member's plans according sponsoring in 2014. There was a question about if the sponsoring has come up to the expectations or not in 2013. According to this, 21 % of the organizations who answered

did not have any goals for the co-operation and 12 % did not get to the expected results. (Sponsorointibarometri 2014.)

Did sponsoring reach the expected goals?

Goals were exceeded
Goal were reached
Goals were not reached
We did not set any goals
Don't know
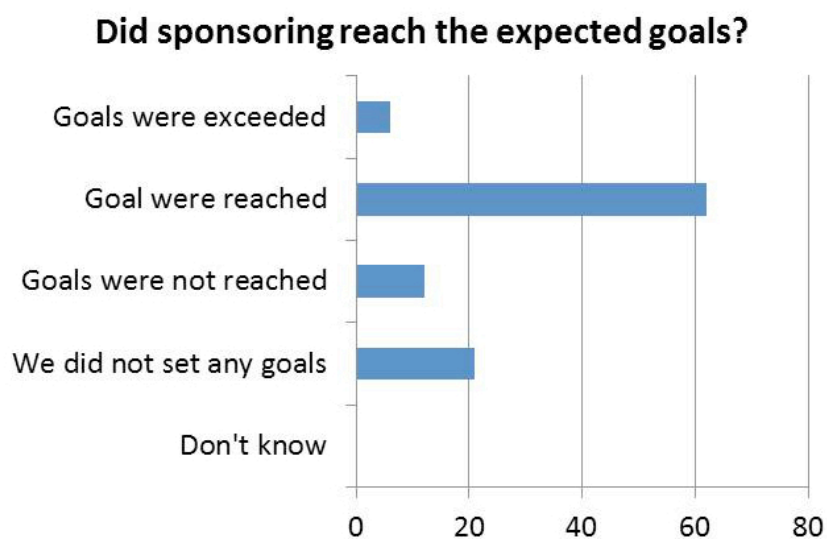
0   20   40   60   80

Figure 2: Did sponsoring reach the expected goals (Sponsorointibarometri 2014)

Reason for adding more information about the survey made by Mainostajien Liitto is because it shows how the sponsoring is in Finland right now. The survey was made in March-April 2014 and had 519 answers from different organizations. It also shows that in Finland in 2014 organizations used approximately 177 million Euros for sponsoring and it was divided so that the part for sports was 104 million, culture 24 million and other sponsoring was 49 million. Only 2 % of the organizations interviewed planned that they are going to grow their sponsoring costs in the following year. 23 % are planning to lower the costs and 75 % are planning to keep the costs as they are. This means that the organizations in Finland are not going to invest more, probably less, than before in sponsoring in the future. (Sponsorointibarometri 2014.)

2.1   Definition

There is many ways and lots of different opinions while defining sponsoring. This is why it is important to gather more than one opinion, to make it more understandable why it is like this. Definition made by Skildium-Reid and Grey (2008) gives a general idea about sponsoring:

"Sponsorship is an investment in sport, the arts, a community event, individual, venue, broadcast, institution, program or cause which yields a commercial return for the sponsor". (Skildium-Reid and Grey 2008, Preface)

Another simple definition is one by Gardner and Shuman (1987):

"Sponsorship may be defined as investments in causes or events to support corporate objectives (for example, by enchancing corporate image) or marketing objectives (such as increasing brand awareness)."

Definition by Roos and Algotsson (1996) gives more precise image about sponsoring as a part of marketing communications and that the goals are clear and oriented with making profit for the organization:

"Sponsoring is a business related method used for communication and marketing, with the purpose of increasing sales figures of the sponsor, both on long term and short term basis. The sponsorship activity should be in favour for all incorporated parts and it should generate a result that is measurable and comparable with pre formulated business objectives."
(Alaja and Forssell 2004, 22)

According to Bruhn (1987) sponsoring is a co-operational process, which consists of planning, organizing, exploitation and monitoring. Precise definition by Bruhn is:

"Sponsoring means planning, organizing, exploitation and monitoring certain actions. These actions consist of the support the organization gives in the form of money or goods for indiviuals or organization in the fields of sports, culture or social actions. By doing this the company expects to to gain their goals in the fields of marketing and marketing communications."
(Alaja and Forssell 2004, 22)

It is easy to get confused in the process of finding out a right definition for sponsoring. The field is so large and the opinions vary a lot. According to Alaja and Forssell (2004, 21) it is important to point out the basic elements according to sponsoring in general. Defining sponsoring is not a simple thing to do since the field of sponsoring is so large. Generating a definition is no even necessary while the basic idea is about sponsoring is clear. Valanko (2009, 60-61) states that there is 20 sponsorship traits that give examples of the nature of the sponsorship and strengths and in this way defines when it comes to sponsorship why, what, where, how, who and when.

Sponsorship Traits
1. Sponsorship has two different parties: the sponsor and the target of sponsorship
2. Both of these are different organizations, audiences or activities
3. Sponsorship is a co-operation between these two parties
4. Sponsorship co-operation is a rental and business contract for both
5. The target owns ther insights and the sponsor rents ther insights for joining
6. The relationship is based on a mutual co-operation, from which both parties benefit
7. Sponsorship effects imagination through association which work both ways
8. Sponsorship involves an input and an output and it provides material and non- material added value for both
9. Sponsorship can be money, a product, material or a service which will have a cost mutually decided by the parties
10. The target of sponsorship involves both materialistic and non-materialistic answers
11. Sponsorship's effects can be long- or short term
12. Sponsorship is based on an organization's strategic needs and is always an investment
13. Sponsorship has measurable goals, which accomplishments are followed
14. The measurable goals are intended for both the organization and its business and the targets operations
15. Sponsorship builds a brand, its differentiation and meaning and is usually part of integrated marketing communications
16. It demonstrates an organization's values efficiently and concretely
17. Sponsorship requires work from both parties; the utilization of both own and shared co-operation solves the success of the co-operation
18. The goal of sponsorship is to increase an organization's sales through short or long-term; an organization's goal is to raise profit and sales. The same goes for the target. Co-operation increase an opportunity for more resources
19. Sponsorship goes to the audience's skin and mind and puts all the senses into use and provides experiences
20. It is a "win win win" situation: sponsor – target - audience

Table 1: Sponsorship Traits (Valanko 2009, 60-61)

Sponsoring is often mixed with advertising and charity and this should be avoided. Contracts for advertising should always be part of organizations advertising and not sponsoring, in which case they should be part of wider and long-term co-operation between two parties. Also giving money for charity is a donation. For this kind of action, to be described as sponsoring, there should always be a contract, the co-operation needs to be long-term and it has to benefit both parties states as stated by Valanko (2009, 54-55). The sponsor wants to get something in return from its sponsorship object. Without that it is considered as a charity not a sponsorship. (Vuokko 2003, 320.)

2.2 Goals

Valanko (2009, 117-118) states that the company and the co-operation partner in sponsoring offer great experiences for the audience and customers taking part of it. For those running, planning and implementing everything it has to be just about making profit and business. Here are examples of how the sponsoring should be seen from the organizations point of view:

1.	Sponsoring should always answer the needs of the company
2.	Sponsoring is always a strategic solution
3.	Sponsoring is a way of marketing communications
4.	The value that sponsoring adds is always brought to company's process of doing business
5.	The goal for sponsoring is to increase profitable sales
6.	The goal for sponsoring is to impact positively to the company's financial outcomes
7.	The goal for all the business – also sponsoring – is to make profit.

Table 2: Sponsoring - organization's point of view (Valanko, 2009)

According to Alaja and Forssell (2004, 81) the goals with sponsoring should always be concrete, possible to achieve, well time-oriented and measurable. It is hard to evaluate afterwards if the co-operation was successful without setting up clear goals.

2.3 Process

According to Alaja and Forsell (2004, 55-56) the steps of sponsoring process are background planning, tailoring the goals and finding potential targets, integration and evaluation. Backgroung planning consists of the evaluation of present state, setting up the philosophy for the co-operation, organizing the resources and budgeting. Tailoring the goals and finding the potential targets consists also of decision of the target group or groups. Integration consists of choosing the targets, making the contract, making the exploitation plan and implementing the co-operation. Evaluation then again consists of analysing the results to the goals, raporting and documenting of all the actions and results and making a decision whether to continue the co-operation or not.

Valanko (2009, 166-167), on the other hand, describes in his book that in every company there should be a detailed operating model for sponsoring. He has listed all the steps of the sponsoring process:

1. Company's needs; where, when and what?
2. Planning starts, conversations inside the company
3. Goals and strategy for the project
4. Target groups, accessibility and ways of action
5. Market review including sponsors and the targets, review of the ongoing situation
6. Competitor analysis and benchmarking
7. Proactive target mapping and analysis
8. Processing offers from targets, analysing and feedback
9. Review of sponsoring practices before, what did we learn from those?
10. Getting more information about the possible targets
11. Reviews of the targets based on company's needs and goals
12. Potential of the targets based on the offerings
13. Planning more, conversations inside the company
14. Prioritising the targets
15. Exploitation plan, preliminary schedule, responsibilities
16. Preliminary budgeting
17. Contacts and getting to know the possible targets
18. Negotiations and decision about the future plans with the preliminary decided target
19. Planning of the possible co-operation (from the company's point of view)
20. Evaluation based on the exploitation plan
21. Possible counteroffer from the company
22. Model, body and content of the contract, considering risks
23. Defining the team for the co-operation and the tasks
24. Approval of the operating model inside the company
25. Commitment of the company management for the project
26. Signing the contract and publishing it
27. Marketing inside the company starts
28. Commitment and activating of the personnel
29. Building a detailed exploitation plan
30. Activities, time schedules, responsibilities, subcontractors, materials etc.
31. Research plan
32. Detailed budgeting
33. Adding the project to company's other marketing communications
34. Implementing the plan, internal communication, presentations and materials
35. Actual co-operation with the target starts
36. Execution based on the stages agreed, time schedule and responsibilities
37. Project meetings, generating more ideas, actions
38. Monitoring and making research according to the plan
39. Colleting all the experiences and analysing
40. Results and conclusions
41. Communication about the results
42. Feedback discussions with the target and inside the company
43. Propositions for changes or adjustments based on the whole process in general

Table 3: Sponsoring process (Valanko, 2009)

3 Event sponsoring

According to Vallo and Häyrinen (2012, 77-79) there are four different levels of doing event sponsoring. First one is taking advantage of the commercial value of the event, for example the company pays for using the logo of the event in marketing their own product. Second on is to make advertising in the place where the events is being held. This means that the sponsor's advertisement is shown as posters, in the tickets or other materials used in the event. Third way is supporting an event so that the event can be organized. Sponsor helps money-wise and for example helps with marketing. In these cases the sponsor can also invite their own stakeholders to participate to the event. Fourth one for the sponsor is to create their own event or participate to some other event with their own individual event. The

whole event can be named with the name of the sponsor or one of the sponsor's products. Good examples of this are Neste Oil Rally which used to be Jyväskylä suurajot or Volvo Ocean Race which used to be Whitebread around the World sailing contest.

Most interesting events for Finnish companies in 2014 were Savonlinnan Oopperajuhlat, Flow Festival and Pori Jazz. (Sponsorointibarometri 2014). In all simplicity it could be easy to think that setting company's logo to a poster or a brochure of an event would be a way to sponsor an event. Most important thing is to realize that this kind of co-operation between the sponsor and an event should be design so that in the end it is a win-win situation so that both parties benefit from it. (Vallo and Häyrinen 2012, 77)

Valanko (2009, 80) states that there is traits which help us to understand a typical event. This includes that the event is lasting for a short period of time but taking advantage and using the full potential of the event consists of a long period of time. The closer the event gets, more use can be taken out of it. It is possible to measure success with sponsoring an event before, during the event and after it. Benchmarking can be made also if the event has other sponsors. Event sponsoring gives huge opportunities when made well since the company sponsoring the event has in the best case so many factors where they can have an effect on.

3.1   Goals

According to Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman and Hansen (2009, 741) there is multiple reasons for sponsoring an event and these can be stated also as company's goals. It is possible to target customers geographically, psychographically or behaviourally according to different events. Thru event sponsoring the company can increase the awareness of company's or products name. Events also have associations that can help to create reinforce perceptions of key brand image associations. Company can enhance their image to be more likeable and prestigious. In best scenario the events are an opportunity to create experiences and evoke emotions linked to the brand. Customers appreciate commitment to the community, green and also social issues from the company. Events usually offer special services or activities for certain crowd, this is something that the company can take advantage of while entertaining key clients or in case of rewarding key employees. Company can also permit merchandising or promotional opportunities thru sponsoring an event. Although all of these actions and expectations are realistic to achieve in a way in every event it is also good to remember that it is always unpredictable and beyond the control of the sponsor how the process will succeed.

Otherwise the goals of sponsoring an event do not differ from any other kind of sponsoring. Sponsoring should always answer to the company's needs and be and effective part of

marketing communication. It should also bring profit on sales to the company and make the image of the brand or the product more desirable.

4   Event seeking of sponsors

While the thesis is conducted for organization seeking for sponsoring it is important to include theory also from their point of view. Idea is to point out the most important factors while seeking possible sponsors for an event.

Sponsoring needs to be seen as a balanced partnership also from the target's point of view and both parties need to benefit from it. Using the word partnership tells more about the real character of the modern sponsoring. As it's best partnership also generates effective experiences for the audience. Partnership is not only about the value or size/amount of sponsoring, taking advantage of the full potential from both parties point of view is what matters. For the target, understanding the sponsor's needs and goals is the key to success within the partnership. (Valanko 2009, 187)

According to Valanko (2009, 189-191) in the modern field of sponsoring there is a trend that sponsors seek quality both from the partnership and the target. Seeking is more proactive and more based on the sponsor's own values. This means that the pressure is harder for the target's to make their brand more tempting. Target also needs to "talk business" so that the values and interests of the possible sponsors would be more likely to be understood. In case the target decides to start seeking sponsoring it is important to have clear vision of what is needed and why, how can everything be created in whole and what are the expected results from the partnership.

While sponsoring started to be more commonly used way for companies to do their marketing the sponsors wanted to be linked to the target (for example an event or sports team). Modern sponsoring works so that the sponsors want to be linked through the target to their own target group. Important fact is to create a win-win-win partnership so that no only the sponsor and the target benefit from it but also the target market. This all means that for sponsors the visibility is not the most important factor anymore, it is the effect they make to the audience. (Skildum-Reid and Grey, 2008, 2-4.) For the target, this means that the target group of the event needs to be well displayed to the potential sponsors while it is their biggest interest. So that no resources would get wasted from either side of the co-operation, the target needs to make sure that all the things promised are going to be possible the achieve. The values and the field of operation of the sponsor need to meet the values and beliefs of the target.

4.1   Step 1: How to get started

Branding the event is probably the first thing to do while starting the process of seeking sponsors. Everybody involved with the process should be aware of all the basic facts and dimensions of the event. According to Skildum-Reid and Grey (2008, 17) most target's seeking for sponsoring define themselves in very general terms and present who they are and what they do always in the same way, no matter who is listening. Generating the brand is important for the target so that the differentiation from the competitors gets easier in every level, marketing message will be more clear and specified and the process of seeking for sponsors will get more effective.

If the event already has a specific and well-designed brand, it is still important to think how it could be improved from the point of view of selling the event for the sponsors. Process for building a better brand for the event should always include the description of the main idea behind the event and it's history, values and politics. Target should also be well aware of the core target group and other target groups. Target groups should be defined as specifically as possible. When the target group is specified it is easier to start seeking sponsors for the event. Also all the marketing done before the event and during it can be targeted more easily and effectively to the right kind of audience, with using the right kind of tools. (Valanko, 2009, 192.)

Making a SWOT-analysis of the event is also a critical step, this could include areas like: finance, marketing, motivation of employees, professionalism inside the target, networks, communication systems, development and future plans. (Valanko, 2009, 195.)

Competitor analysis and benchmarking should be considered done in this stage. It should be defined who are the worst competitors and what is their strategy with selling and marketing their event. What are their unique selling propositions (main message, the way of making themselves special compared to others) and how is their communication done otherwise. What are the biggest differences between the target and the competitors, what are the advantages and in which ways a competitor could be a better option for sponsors. (Valanko 2009, 196.)

4.2   Step 2: Setting up goals and strategy

According to Skildum-Reid and Grey (2008, 50) the goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, results oriented and time bound. This means that if the goal is to obtain media coverage for the event, the goal is not specific enough. More specific would be a goal to obtain a major article in Helsingin Sanomat and a specific amount of stories for example to

Yle news and to the radio with a specific time limit. Strategies are then again the specific actions that need to be undertaken to achieve desired outcomes. After implementing the actions it is important to remember to measure how the goals were achieved.

Most important questions while setting up the goals and strategy according to Valanko (2009, 203) are the following ones:

1. What is the value that the target wants from the sponsors?
2. What are the resources and the advantage the target can give to the sponsors?
3. How many sponsors are needed?
4. What type, size and valued sponsors?
5. On which field should the sponsors operate?
6. How should the value got from the partnership be evaluated?
7. What about the activity, own advantage and functionality?
8. How does this all fit to the goals, needs and actions of the target as a whole?

Table 4: Goals and strategy (Valanko, 2009)

While thinking about the possible goals Valanko (2009, 203-204) states many different variations. One goal could be to get the sponsors activated and innovative with their own marketing so that the target benefits from that publicity also. Other possible goals could be for the old partnerships made stronger, new target groups get interested of the event, making the number of audience bigger, developing and implementing new ideas. Goals could also be focused already on the future by creating new ways to add more planning for the sponsor seeking, by making the processes more long-lasting and also more effective, by making the visual material fit together better, develop pricing and this way also make the work of sales easier.

4.3   Step 3: Sales arguments and offerings

According to Skildum-Reid and Grey (2008, 90) it is possible to start making survey of potential sponsors when target markets and everything that the event has to offer is clear. While doing the survey it is important to keep in mind not just to take a look at the overall corporation but also the specific products, brands and services. This is because of the fact that companies have usually multiple brands, which can be a lot different from each other, this also means that the target markets can vary a lot. Segmentation can be based on target markets, objectives or values. Power is where two or more of these match with event and the sponsor.

Valanko (2009, 221-222) states more specifically important factors while making a contact list and prioritizing (most wanted sponsors, order of taking contact) the potential sponsors. Every single one of the companies that can be found from the contact list needs to be there for a reason. Making the contact list is not an easy task, during time more ideas generate and

innovation is a great value during the process. Making a list of all the possible companies that share the same values or image that the event is a good way to start. After this it is important to create a list of all the potential needs there could be during the event including for example marketing and communications. Try also to find the contact information for the right employees of the potential sponsors right away and include theme in the contact list. Think about the potential companies from the perspective of the shared (or partly shared) target groups. Finding out as much as possible from the potential sponsors in advance helps the selling process while it will be easier to offer the company the right kind of package with using the right kind of selling arguments. Segmentation of the companies according to the field of business can be made in this stage to make the selling process easier.

4.4   Step 4: Sales technique

First task is to call to the potential sponsor and quickly and efficiently by telling the reason for the call, using few of the main selling arguments and stating few of the benefits of sponsoring the event. In case it is not possible to set up a meeting right away the next step is to send more information about the event and the possibilities as soon as possible. It is not necessary to give any budget for the sponsoring in this stage since it is possible to make the package fit the need of the company, which changes the price also. The meeting is the best chance to sell the idea of sponsoring the event for the company. During the meeting a well-designed slide show with the arguments is an important factor. Also the way of presenting is crucial, it is good to be friendly and positive but also confident. Taking the needs of the company in to consideration all the time is also a good thing to remember. When the meeting is over, it is good to have a final response (a signed contract) from the company as soon as possible. (Valanko 218-220)

After getting the sponsors for the event it is important to make sure that all the promises made for the sponsors will be achieved. This is the implementing stage of the sponsoring. After this comes the evaluating part where it is possible to measure how well did the sponsoring succeed and if the goals made for the sponsoring were achieved.

5   Helsinki Pride

Helsinki Pride is a gay pride event that takes place in Helsinki every year during the last week of June. The event lasts all week and during the week there is a multiple choice of events to attend and the week ends with Saturday's Pride parade and the ending party. Helsinki Pride continues Seta's "Freedom day" tradition from 1975 and has been held in Helsinki every year since 2006. Helsinki Pride is an event organized by human rights organization Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry (HeSeta). The goal of the event is to bring the gay community

together with all the different people who want to participate and celebrate sexual diversity and equality. In the year 2013 the event gathered over 30 000 visitors from which over 8000 took part of the Saturday's Pride parade also. Helsinki Pride is an event organized mostly only by volunteers and it is an event that is not meant to make profit for the organization. (Helsinki Pride 2014). In 2014 Saturday's parade gathered 20 000 participants, which is more than in any other year before. There is a theme each year for the event and the theme for Helsinki Pride 2014 was "working life".

5.1 Introducing HeSeTa Ry

HeSeta (Helsingin seudun seksuaalinen tasavertaisuus ry) is an human rights organization which operates in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The goal for HeSeta ry is that all the people could live equally part of the finnish society regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or the way of expressing ones gender. Organization gathers and gives information about sexual orientation, gender identity and the variety of expressing ones gender. It also helps and supports lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders and intersexuals. HeSeta ry co-operates also with Seta ry (Seksuaalinen tasa-arvo ry) and Transtukipiste with organizing education and social services. (HeSeta Ry 2014).

5.2 Gay Pride as a potential target for sponsors

Though gay people are not the only target group in Gay Pride events it is good to observe more about the potential of these events from the sponsors point of view.

According to Kauppalehti (2009) the sexual minorities (gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals and transgenders) consist a lot of households of one or two adults. Gay or lesbian couple without kids have more income to use for products and services than a straight couple.

According to the research made for their thesis Kivinen and Murtola (2012) state that 78,4 % of the 500 gay men answering the survey would rather buy products from a gay-friendly company if that kind of option would be available. Also the buying-decision would be impacted positively for 76, 4 % if the company would be a sponsor of LGBT-organization or LGBT-events. The price of a product or service is not the most important factor for gay men, they give more value for the image and reputation of the company. Also it was important that the company would be gay-friendly.

6   Methodology

In this chapter according to Murcott (1997) it is important to answer to the following questions:

1.	How did you go about your research?
2.	What overall strategy did you adopt and why?
3.	What design and techniques did you use?
4.	Why these and not others?

Table 5: About the research (Silverman, 2011, 403)

According to Ronkainen, Pehkonen, Lindblom-Ylänne and Paavilainen (2013, 46-47.) selecting the right method for executing a research is not practically a choice for the researcher to make before the goals and research problem are clear. First the research needs to know what kind of data is needed and how this data can be gathered. Research methods have been traditionally divided into qualitative and quantitative. These methods are also combined really often, which is called "mixed methods". This gives more precise and diverse results. It is not easy to come up with the right kind of mix of methods for a research, the goal is that the research in whole is logical and that it gives a possibility to answer the research question.

While describing different research methods there comes a need to compare qualitative and quantitative ways. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009, 17) and also Ronkainen, Pehkonen, Lindblom-Ylänne and Paavilainen (2013, 81) it is not easy to define these terms. There is not a certain line that can be drawn between these two and each book defines them differently, from the writers point of view. This is why it is important to stay critical to all the information gathered about the subject. In general, quantitative method analyzes the meanings and their relationships in speech, written text or from visual data. For making an analysis this data is gathered as written form, as text. Quantitative method analyzes the gathered data as numbers and different kind of figures.

The objective for the thesis is to find ways to improve the sponsor seeking process for Helsinki Pride, and if possible, give concrete improvement ideas for the organizers. The research methods were in-depth interviews for Helsinki Pride 2014 organisers - as well as questionnaries for the sponsors of Helsinki Pride 2014. In this thesis the research method used was qualitative and in this chapter the concept of qualitative research is explained, also explaining why it was used.

6.1   Qualitative research method

In this thesis, two kinds of qualitative research methods were used, theme interviews and open-ended questionnaire survey. As Bridget Byrne (2004) states:

"Qualitative interviewing is particularly useful as a research method for accessing individual's attitudes and values – things that cannot necessarily be observed or accommodated in a formal questionnaire. Open-ended and flexible questions are likely to get a more considered response that closed questions and therefore provide better access to interviewee's views, interpretation of events, understandings, experiences and opinions… (qualitative interviewing) when done well is able to achieve a level of depth and complexity that is not available to other, particularly survey-based approaches."
(Silverman, 2011, 157)

Qualitative research method is designed to make the human behaviour and reasons behind that behaviour more understandable. In a qualitative research the most commonly used methods of collecting data are interviews, questionnaries, observation and the information based on certain documents. From these methods it is possible to choose one or use them together. The differentiation between questionnary and an interview is that in the questionnary the people answering are filling the form of questions by themselves in a group meeting or home. In the interview the interviewer asks the questions and collects the answers straight away. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 71- 73.)

While talking about qualitative research method, it is good to remember that the goal is to understand how people observe their life and how they act while things around them change. These observations, experiences and actions are always in a connection to the time, place and different situations. Also the importance of the person making the research comes valid, since the observation and results are always in a way reflection of that person's thoughts. Data gathered in qualitative research is usually smaller than in a quantitative research. This is because in qualitative research it is so important to understand the big picture of the topic researched in general. If there is too much data the analyzing and interpretation of the results comes impossible. (Ronkainen, Pehkonen, Lindblom-Ylänne and Paavilainen, 2013, 81-83) The qualitative research method is a suitable method to explore a phenomenon that has not been studied before (Ospina 2004) and this is why it was a clear option to use it in this thesis.

6.1.1 Theme interviews

For the thesis, three interviews with the organizers of Helsinki Pride 2014 were made during the spring of 2014. These were the Chairman of HeSeTa ry Olli-Pekka Koponen, Event Cordinator of Helsinki Pride Senni Moilanen and Janika Niskanen, Responsible of corporate co-operation in Helsinki Pride 2014. Questions were about Helsinki Pride, their visions about the sponsoring. The interviews were held in Finnish so that no important information was left out because of the language.

Theme interviews (or semi-structured interviews) are close to in-depth interviews in many ways. First the theme and particular questions concerning the subject have to be thought well, since the interview proceeds with the help of these tools. The goal in the theme interview is to find useful meanings and answers for the research problem. The themes chosen in advance are always related to all the information that is already known about the subject being researched. (Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2009, 74-75). To make it more clear of why to use this kind of method, semi-structured and in-depth, or non-standardised, interviews are used in qualitative research in order to conduct discussions not only to reveal and understand the "what" and "how" but also to place more emphasis on exploring the "why". (Saunders, Lewis and Tornhill, 2003, 248)

This method was chosen because there is not much written literature about Helsinki Pride event itself. Finding information about the event would have been challenging (if not impossible) without making the interviews with the organizers. With the interviews it was easy to collect general data about the event while getting more information about the sponsoring.

6.1.2 Questionnaries for the companies

After the event it was time to interview the sponsors of Helsinki Pride 2014 and this was made with an open questionnaire sent by email. There was contacts from 12 different companies and in the end six of them replied. The reason for choosing this method was that it was much more convinient than other options while thinking about how busy the employees of the companies seemed to be. This gave the people answering the questionnaire an opportunity to answer the questions whenever suited for them best. The open questionnaire also gives a possibility to answer the questions by using your own words and it gives time to think more about the answers. While making this kind of survey the positive side is that the researcher will not change the answers with her or his presence. This adds reliability to the answers. Of course there is a possibility for misunderstanding the questions, this can be avoided by well-planned questions and testing the questionnaire in advance. Also the questionnaire was made

in Finnish so that no important information would be left out because of the language. This kind of research method is mostly used for gathering data in a quantitative research but can be used in a qualitative research as well. (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2009, 74).

6.2   The reliability and validity of the research

According to Silverman (2011, 360) reliability refers to the stability of findings, it is a question of replicability, whether or not somebody could repeat the research project in the future and come up with the same results and interpretations. It has been argued whether the qualitative research can reach the level of reliability needed. For interviews to be reliable it is really important that all the respondents understand the questions in the same way and that the answers can be coded without uncertainty. This is why all the questions on the interviews were in Finnish. Interview studies must be made using low-inference descriptors which means recording observations as concrete as possible (Seale, Quality of qualitative research). When doing interviews with using e-mail this criterion will be satisfied because the respondents do their own transcribing. While reporting other interviews it is important to record all the interactions on tape and transcribe these tapes in a way that a reliable analysis needs. One way to increase reliability would be for more than one researcher to analyse and compare the data gathered. Also testing the interview questions in advance is a way to make the the research more reliable. In this research the questionnaire for companies was tested with four respondents before sending it to the actual respondents. In between, some changes were made, to make the questionnaire more understandable and confirming that the answers would be useful while thinking about the research problem.

Silverman (2011, 360-364) states that the validity represents the truthfulness of findings. While thinking about validity there is simply two kinds of error that by Kirk and Miller (1986) are:

| Type 1: Error is believing a statement to be tru when it is not |
| Type 2: Error is rejecting a statement which, in fact, is true |

Table 6: Validity - errors (Silverman, 2011, 368)

It has been thought that the validity in qualitative research would be more accurate than in quantitative research. The reason for this is that qualitative research methods take the researcher so much closer to the phenomenon being researched. This does not mean that the validity should not be measured in a qualitative research also. Usually validity is divided into two parts, internal and external validity. Internal validity includes the logic and consistency of the research from the inside. External validity measures the possibilities to transform the

results from one research to another context. (Ronkainen, Pehkonen, Lindblom-Ylänne and Paavilainen, 2013, 130.)

Most important thing for increasing the validity of the research is to make sure that the research is researching, what is should be researching. All the data is gathered with using qualitative ways and if the data is useful for the target. All the results have to be gathered by using the right kind of methods that can be argued with general criteria of science. Also the link between the results and the subject of the research has to be valid. A thought to consider while talking about validity of the research is if the researchers ideas and observations are equal to the respondents thoughts and observations. All the data goes thru the researcher so it is important that his/her own ideas don't get mixed up with the results. (Ronkainen, Pehkonen, Lindblom-Ylänne and Paavilainen, 2013, 130-131).

6.3   Data Analysis

The qualitative data consists of words and not numbers – this makes it difficult to analyse. The analyzing process depends on 1) the questions you want to answer 2) the needs of those who will use the information and 3) your resources. (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003).

The next steps should be gone through while analyzing the data:

1.   Get to know your data
2.   Focus the analysis
3.   Categorize information
4.   Identify patterns and connections within and between categories
5.   Interpretation – Bringing it all together

Table 7: Analyzing the data (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003)

Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009, 91-93) describe the data analyzing process in the same way:

1.   Making a decision of what is the most important factor in the data
2.   Going through the data and finding out the points in the area of your interest
3.   Everything else is left out from the research
4.   Collecting all the points together, away from all the other data
5.   Making different themes out of the data
6.   Writing a summary

Table 8: Analyzing process (Tuomi and Sarajärvi, 2009)

In a qualitative survey the researcher usually always finds something interesting that could not have been taken into consideration in advance. It is impossible to include all of this to the research so limitations must be made. In this thesis the interviews were already made with using different themes, so it is quite obvious how the data can be divided into smaller sections.

6.4   Content analysis

According to Berelson (1952), GAO (1996), Krippendorf (1980) and Weber (1980) Content analysis is a way to describe the data with words, not numbers. Content analysis has been defined as systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2014)

According to Krippendorff(1980), six question must be answered in each content analysis:

1.   Which data are analysed
2.   How are they defined
3.   What is the population from which they are drawn?
4.   What is the context relative to which the data are analysed?
5.   What are the boundaries of the analysis?
6.   What is the target of the inferences?

Table 9: Content analysis (Stemler, 2014)

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009, 103) content analysis is a way to analyze the data systematically and objectively. Data, in this case, can be for example books, articles, diaries, letters, interviews, discussion, reports and almost anything that is or has been put into text form. Content analysis helps to organize the data for the summary of results. The goal for the analysis is to create an understandable description in a written form of the subject being researched. The way to do this is based on logical interpretation, where the data is first crashed in pieces, then symbolised and in the last phase gathered together again logically.

7   The empirical findings

In this chapter the analysis is being made separately from the theme interviews and from the e-mail questionnaires made for the sponsors. The data has been put into different themes, using the same pattern as in the interviews.

7.1   Theme Interviews

While doing the content analysis, the next topics were the ones most discussed during the interviews: documentation, image/brand, problems, motivation, recruiting, lack of time, budgeting and strategy. These topics were then grouped in three different parts: Helsinki Pride, Volunteers and Sponsors. Since the lack of time was a huge problem concerning both volunteers and sponsors, it was decided to use the same topic in both. From the figure above it is possible to see how the grouping was done.
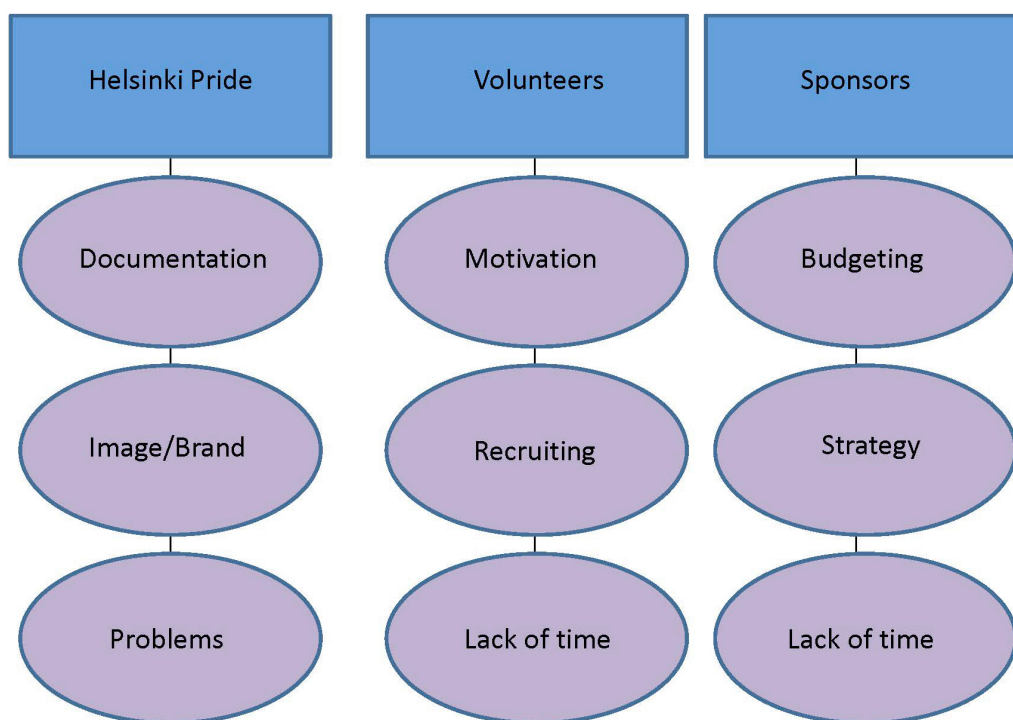
Figure 3:Theme interviews (Jaakkola, 2014)

7.1.1 Helsinki Pride

As stated before, getting the general information about Helsinki Pride and the organization behind the event was an important part of the theme interviews made with the three organizers of Helsinki Pride 2014. The biggest goal was of course to get more information and facts about the sponsoring process that was going on, history of it and also about the future wishes considering it. Helsinki Pride is an event where the organizing team changes every year (at least most part of it) and as it has been, there is always a gab between the event and the next January when there is no organized work group for the Helsinki Pride. Probably this is a reason why there is not so much information about the event itself.

"Get ready for the fact that documentation during the past years has not been good."
(Interviewee 2014)

Helsinki Pride is a human right event and there is most certainly a need in the future for making a visitor profile, since nothing like that has never been done. It can be argued untill then how the visitors see the event. This all also effects the future developments that should be done in order to make the event more succesfull.

"It is a summer festival. Of course it is good to keep in mind that Helsinki Pride is a human rights event. That's not what it is in people's calendars."
(Interviewee 2014)

Helsinki Pride is an event that has had many different organizers during the past years. The problem is that the work is not ongoing and it is always forced to start all the work from the beginning, each year. This needs changes in the future.

"This event is each year brought together with the huge sacrifices of the members of the organizing team. It should not be like this. It is also not people's fault, the problem lies in the structure. That is what should be fixed."
(Interviewee 2014)

"Another option for fixing the structure is to fix it little by little. The other option would have been to crash everything in pieces and start over. This could have meant that Helsinki Pride could have not been arranged in 2014. We thought that it was important that there is not going to be this kind of break."
(Interviewee 2014)

Helsinki Pride is an important event for the visitors and it is becoming even more important while all the political issues arising around the subject. People want to show their support and this is the right place to do it. There is also many other factors and problems concerning Helsinki Pride in general that came up from the interviews, mentioning few here:

- "Web pages should have been renewed also. They look good, but there is lot of information missing. The pages are also not in English and this is also a question of resources. It is hard to find people to these kind of things in their own time, for free."
(Interviewee 2014)

- "All the artist bookings, song for Helsinki Pride. Time schedules for the artist are made during the autumn or even the summer before. What comes to sponsoring, that process should definitely start in the autumn because many companies close their marketing budgets already then."
(Interviewee 2014)

While figuring out the biggest problem in organizing Helsinki Pride, the answer was the same in all the three interviews:

"It's simple – the biggest problem is that we are too late. There is not enough organizers compared to the time that is left."
(Interviewee 2014)

7.1.2   Volunteers

While talking about Helsinki Pride, it is no surprise that the volunteers organizing the event were an important subject in all of the interviews. This year there was again many new members in the organizing group and it seems that each year the group comes together in a different way.

"This year there is a lot of new members organizing Helsinki Pride, the producer brought her own contacts to the organizing team of Helsinki Pride. The size of the organizing group is also bigger."
(Interviewee 2014)

Of course there is a recruiting process each year to get new organizers for the event but it seems that many of the "key organizers" are already friends with somebody already organizing the event etc. It Is of course easier to get these kind of people involved. Important thing is to get members for the organizing groups that have the knowledge and professionalism on the area of their expertise in order to get the full potential in use.

"This year there was a lot of good and professional people in the organizing group. There should be business oriented members in the sponsoring team so that the work is carried out well."
(Interviewee 2014)

Especially for the sponsoring team it is important to find people who are used for being in contact with different companies. It makes the whole process more reliable and also gives a better image of Helsinki Pride in general.

"It is important to know how to co-operate with the companies so that you are convincing and professional. Especially in Helsinki Pride, where it is known that the organizers are volunteers. When somebody with a clear vision what he/she is doing comes to the negotiation it is a really positive thing for Helsinki Pride."
(Interviewee 2014)

7.1.3 Sponsors

The sponsoring process started too late in Helsinki Pride 2014. The biggest problem is that the companies already make plans for their budgets and future plans during summer/autumn. The sponsor seeking process, when started in January for an event held in June, was not an easy task. Besides the lack of time, there was also other problems concerning the process. Because of the lack of time the program of the week was too late. This was a problem, because the companies did not get the information needed early enough.

"The program of Helsinki Pride should have been announced earlier, so that the sponsors could have started organize everything already. Now the sponsors are in a really big hurry so that they can arrange the places and people giving speeches etc."
(Interviewee 2014)

There was a good team (although too small) making the sponsoring process in Helsinki Pride 2014, and they did manage to get enough sponsors for the event even though the process was hard. Also the marketing and communications team succeeded really well. The reason for the success in the sponsoring team was probably that the attitude was different against companies sponsoring the event than before.

"I have heard positive feedback that our work with marketing, communications and process for seeking sponsors has developed a lot this year. This all depends on the organizing group. Difference is that in the previous years Helsinki Pride has made big losses and the companies have made a lot of money. This year it has been important to share the costs with the companies. This has been a problem for the past years."
(Interviewee 2014)

While the strategy was different and the companies had to pay costs that they never before needed to, the value of sponsoring the event was big enough so that the team was able to do that.

"Of course there is complaints at first with the companies, but in the end they understand that everything has it's cost. Pride is after all a profitable event for the companies anyways."
(Interviewee 2014)

As said before, Helsinki Pride is a valuable event for the companies in many ways, here is two opinions around this subject from the interviews:

"Helsinki Pride can be sold with the amount of customers, the possibility to be seen by a big crowd. Numbers of visitors in Helsinki Pride events are big."
(Interviewee 2014)

"For the companies, the "pink money" is always a good thing. Biggest thing that we have to offer is the visibility. Not that the visibility would be so big – but the importance is where it shows. This helps the companies to build their brand and develop the image of the company among the target's groups thoughts."
(Interviewee 2014)

Helsinki Pride has a lot to offer for the sponsors. The problems concerning the sponsor seeking are (besides the lack of time) in the process itself that need to be fixed, mentioning few:

"In the e-mails and all the materials should have a common visual look, that was the goal already this year."
(Interviewee 2014)

"A marketing video could be a great idea – it would be easy to show for the companies what to expect from the event."
(Interviewee 2014)

"Visitor profile and the numbers of visitors should be an information available to use in the negotiations with the companies. This year we had to sell a product that we didn't have enough facts about. Reliability for this has been brought this year with counting the value of the visitor contacts and then measuring the price for different items from that."
(Interviewee 2014)

"The whole process should be considered and planned again. With a good strategy everything would be a lot easier."
(Interviewee 2014)

7.2   Questionnaires for the sponsors

While doing the content analysis, the next topics were the ones most discussed during the interviews: why to participate, goals, theme of Helsinki Pride, practical co-operation, marketing communications, target group satisfaction, co-operation recommendations, general opinion about the event and future plasns. These topics were then grouped in three different parts: before the event, during Helsinki Pride and after the event. Cathegorization was easy because the questions were grouped according to this also in the e-mail interview. From the figure above it is possible to see how the grouping was done.
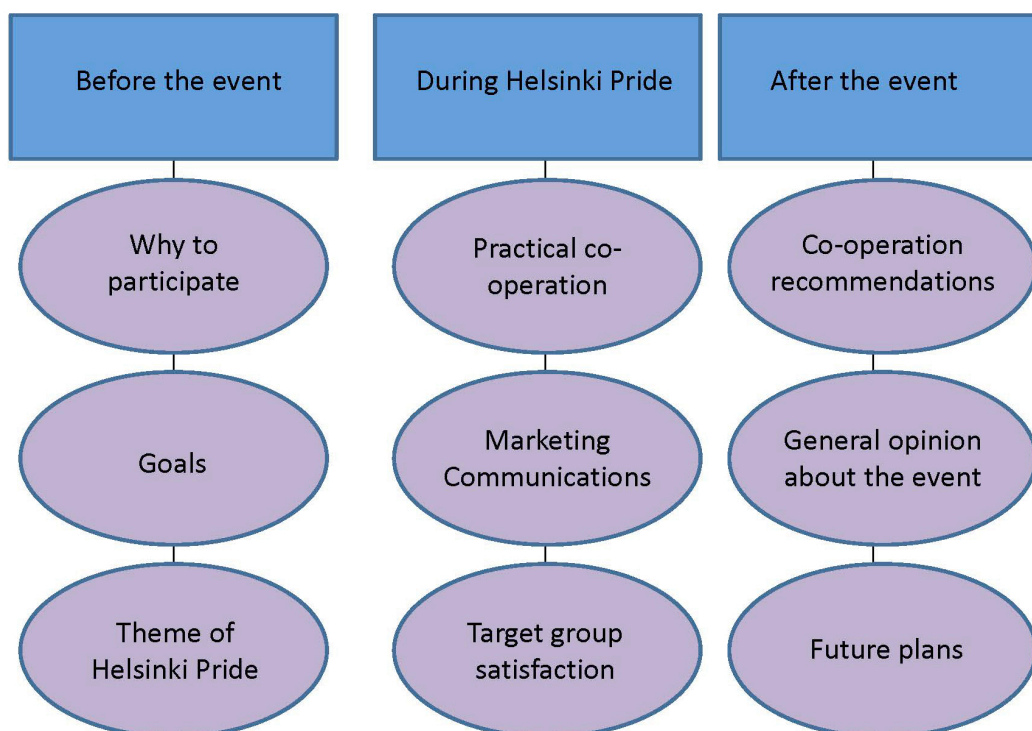
Before the event	During Helsinki Pride	After the event

Why to participate

Practical co-operation

Co-operation recommendations

Goals

Marketing Communications

General opinion about the event

Theme of Helsinki Pride

Target group satisfaction

Future plans

Figure 4: Questionnaires for the sponsors (Jaakkola, 2014)

7.2.1 Before the Event

The goals with making co-operation with Helsinki Pride were to get visibility in the event and support the good cause, this was the answer from all the representatives of the companies.

"Our biggest goal was to get visibility for our application and increase it's recognisability among the visitors of Helsinki Pride. In all of this we succeeded."
(Interviewee, 2014)

One company representative stated that the theme of Helsinki Pride 2014 (working life) effected on their participation. The others said that the theme was good, but it would not have made a difference to the participation if it would have been something else. Reasons for making co-operation with Helsinki Pride were to support the cause, get involved with the certain target group or that the co-operation is lasted longer and the company was willing to continue to co-operation after good experiences.

7.2.2   During Helsinki Pride

All the company representatives being interviewed said that the co-operation with the Helsinki Pride in general was successful. The contacts made from the behalf of Helsinki Pride were made professionally and well.

"Practical co-operation with Helsinki Pride was convinient and everything worked out as planned."
(Interviewee, 2014)

What comes to the information and material given for the companies on the behalf of Helsinki Pride the companies were mostly pleased. One of the six respondents stated that the material and information given from Helsinki Pride were not clear and were changed too late and another stated that the program should have been available sooner.

"Information and material changed right before the event so I couldn't say that everything was clear, but everything got done in the end."
(Interviewee, 2014)

"The program for the whole event could have been brought to us earlier, otherwise no complains."
(Interviewee, 2014)

All the representatives agreed that the opinion of their target group about the co-operation with Helsinki Pride has only been positive. Helsinki Pride was shown in companies marketing communications in for exmaple press releases, but mostly in the social media.

7.2.3   After the Event

All the company representatives agreed that co-operation with Helsinki Pride is something that they would definitely recommend for other companies as well and that they would like to be part of the event also in the future. Only one company representative stated that the rising costs of taking part as a sponsor could have influence on their future plans, but still thought that they will be in co-operation with Helsinki Pride 2015.

All of the representatives did not have experience of the event before, but everyone said that the event was a positive experience.

I did not have any knowledge or experience about the event before, after the event I see Helsinki Pride in a really positive way!"
(Interviewee, 2014)

"I think that the event was a really positive in every way and the atmosphere was great. My opinions about Helsinki Pride got event more positive this year than before."
(Interviewee, 2014)

8   Concrete development proposals for the process of getting sponsors

In general, the whole strategy of seeking sponsors should be planned. There should definitely be more time for the organizing team to go through the seeking process so that all the decisions made would be part of the plan. This would require a team that stands behind the process throughout the year, not only in the spring right before the event. Support for this should of course come from HeSeTa ry. There should be own coordinator for the sponsoring team because the producer of Helsinki Pride does not have enough time to focus on every part of the event well enough. Companies make decisions about their next year's budget during autumn, this is why the work needs to be started earlier. Also booking the places for the events and for example artist bookings should be done much earlier.

It would be important also to get a student to make their thesis about the visitor profile. In case this subject would not have been so clear while starting this thesis, that could have been a better option. It would have been probably more helpful for Helsinki Pride sponsoring team, while thinking about the process of selling the idea about co-operation for the sponsors. To do that, there should be more facts available for the sponsoring team, including the visitor profile, numbers of visitors from the previous year, expected numbers of visitors for the next year, theme of Helsinki Pride and program of Helsinki Pride.

The locations of different events should be planned well. In order to get sponsors involved, they need to know what is happening and where. This information needs to come to their knowledge sooner than before. Also the location of the Party in the Park needs to be carefully selected. There needs to be enough space for sponsors to promote their products and services. Also in 2014 the park used (Sinebrychoff) was too small for the amount of people attending the event.

According to interviewee from the theme interviews, next steps should be taken into consideration while designing the strategy of sponsoring Helsinki Pride 2014:

-    Careful planning of what Helsinki Pride has to offer and what is the pricing policy.
-    Limiting the number of sponsors well

- Seeking of potential sponsors
- Making the presentation of co-operation for the companies and designing a sponsoring package for all the potential partners
- Contacting the companies and setting up the negotiation
- Taking into consideration that contracts can not be made with two competing companies
- Each sponsor has one contact person from Helsinki Pride
- Contracts in written form
- Gathering all the information of the items sold and a list of "free items"
- Keeping in touch with the sponsors
- Arranging the possibility for the sponsors to meet with each other
- The one taking care of the sponsor is also present in the event to make sure that everything goes as planned
- After the event it would be important to thank the sponsors and also market already the upcoming Helsinki Pride.

It has been argued if Helsinki Pride needs a company/professional help in sponsor seeking or other activities. It seems though that the organizing team (although volunteers) is capable of developing the event. There is a lot of active and motivated people putting the event together. Important thing is to keep these members motivated also in the future.

In general, it would be important for people to understand that the money for arranging Helsinki Pride has to come somewhere. For this there is two options, the sponsors or the visitors. There should also be a strict line of who pays and for what so that there is no exceptions. Also it is good to consider what kind of information should be kept inside the organizing group and what not. The message that is given outside the group should be always the same and the goals for making Helsinki Pride should not be different between the members of the organization team.

9   Conclusions

Even though there are many problems that need to be solved before the sponsor seeking process could be more efficient, it seems that the companies who have been sponsoring Helsinki Pride are very pleased with the co-operation. Also all of the companies interviewed wanted to continue the co-operation also in the future. The goal to get long lasting partners does not seem to be a problem as long companies get into the co-operation. This is a great achievement for the organizing group who have made it possible to arrange an event of this size and also deal with the companies so professionally despite the lack of time and resources. Helsinki Pride needs professional and motivated members for the organizing team

also in the future. One hired producer for the event is not enough, when talking about an event that is this big (and also getting bigger each year).

The work should also be an ongoing process throughout the year so that the gap between the event and starting of the process again could be avoided. This would give a possibility to restore all the information better, so that there would be no need to start all the work again each year. This is probably the most frustrating part for the organizers and it also lowers the motivation for the "key organizers" to continue the work after they have been taking part for making Helsinki Pride once. Every volunteer has their own job, school or other activities that take time as well. When the process and strategy would be designed better, organizers would be able to do their work without such a big pressure and hurry. Also more time for planning would give a possibility for more innovative ideas. This would also help the whole event to develop for better in the future.

References

Alaja, E. and Forssell, C. 2004. Tarinapeliä. [Helsinki]: Suomen urheilumuseosäätiö.

Helsinkipride.fi, 2014. Helsinki Pride | HeSeta ry. [online] Available at: http://helsinkipride.fi (Accessed 05.09.2014).

Heseta.fi, 2014. HeSeta ry | HeSeta ry. [online] Available at: http://www.heseta.fi/heseta (Accessed 06.09.2014).

Kauppalehti.fi, 2014. Mainokset ohittavat Suomessa pinkin rahan | Kauppalehti.fi. [online] Available at:
http://www.kauppalehti.fi/5/i/talous/uutiset/etusivu/uutinen.jsp?oid=2009/11/27676&sort=false (Accessed 10.10.2014).

Kotler, P., Keller, K., Brady, M., Goodman, M. and Hansen, T. (2009). Marketing Management. Krippendorff, K. 2004. Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mainostajat.fi, 2014. Sponsorointibarometri 2014 Mainostajien Liitto. [online] Available at: http://www.mainostajat.fi/mliitto/sivut/Sponsorointibarometri_2014.html [Accessed 23 Nov. 2014].

Pareonline.net, 2014. An overview of content analysis. Stemler, Steve. [online] Available at: http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=17 [Accessed 23 Nov. 2014].

Pareonline.net, 2014. An overview of content analysis. Stemler, Steve. [online] Available at: http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=7&n=17 [Accessed 23 Nov. 2014].

Ronkainen, S., Pehkonen, L., Lindblom-Ylänne, S. and Paavilainen, E. 2013. Tutkimuksen voimasanat.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. 2003. Research methods for business students. Harlow, England: Prentice Hall.

Silverman, D. 2011. Interpreting Qualitative Data. 4th ed.

Sipilä, L. 2008. Käytännön Markkinointi.

Skildum-Reid, K. and Grey, A. 2008. The Sponsorship Seeker's Toolkit. 3rd ed.

Smith, A. 2006. A New Ad Adage: Same Sex Sells. TIME Magazine World. London. Accessed 12.10.2014. http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1220477-1,00.html

Taylor-Powell, E. & Renner, M. 2003. Analyzing Qualitative Data. Accessed 30.10.2014. http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3658-12.pdf

Tuomi, J. and Sarajärvi, A. 2009. Laadullinen tutkimus.

Valanko, E.2009. Sponsorointi: Yhteistyökumppanuus strategisena voimana.

Vallo, H. and Häyrinen, E. 2012. Tapahtuma on tilaisuus.

Vuokko, P. 2003. Markkinointiviestintä, merkitys, vaikutus ja keinot.

Figures

Tables

Appendixes

Appendix 1: The Interview question for the organizers of Helsinki Pride.

Theme Interviews:

- Chariman of HeSeTa ry, Olli-Pekka Koponen
- Event Cordinator of Helsinki Pride, Senni Moilanen
- Responsible of corporate co-operation in Helsinki Pride 2014, Janika Niskanen

Theme 1: HeSeTa

- General information about HeSeTa
- How is the co-operation with Seta
- What is HeSeTas role in Helsinki Pride more precisely and how is the co-operation with the Helsinki Pride volunteer team

Theme 2: Helsinki Pride

- General information about Helsinki Pride
- How has the event been before/future plans
- Values of Helsinki Pride
- What is the theme going to be in 2015 for Helsinki Pride

Theme 3: Sponsoring
- General information about sponsoring in Helsinki Pride¨
- How many sponsors has Helsinki Pride had in previous years? What is the situation now for this year
- What is the goal with the amount of sponsors
- What is the value that Helsinki Pride provides for a sponsor
- Which kind of tools have been used to get sponsors for Helsinki Pride

Theme 4: Volunteers of Helsinki Pride

- Who are the volunteers of Helsinki Pride.
- Recruiting new volunteers
- What motivates volunteers

Theme 5: Thesis

- How would you describe the problem Helsinki Pride has now with getting sponsors
- What would be the most important thing to find out from the sponsors of the event during the interviews

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the sponsors of Helsinki Pride 2014

Companies:

- NRJ Finland
- Beverage Partners Finland Oy / Barefoot Wine
- Amnesty International Finland
- Danske Bank Oyj
- Palvelualojen Ammattiliitto PAM ry.
- Hard Rock Cafe Helsinki

THEME 1: General information

1. Name of the Company

2. In which field of business does your company operate

3. Answerers name and title in the company

4. What kind of co-operation did your company do with Helsinki Pride this year? How much money did you use for sponsoring?

THEME 2: Before the event

5. Why did you start sponsoring Helsinki Pride this year? Social media, advertisements, own will, contact from Helsinki Pride?

6. What was your biggest goal in the co-operation with Helsinki Pride?

7. Has your company sponsored Helsinki Pride before? When and how were you involved? Why did you start the co-operation then?

8. If you have sponsored Helsinki Pride before, what was the biggest reason to continue the co-operation?

9. What other sponsoring target do you have and how do you choose them?

THEME 3: Helsinki Pride

10. How was the practical co-operation with Helsinki Pride

11. Was the information and the were the materials clear that you got from Helsinki Pride?

12. Is there some information that you would have needed that you didn't get?

13. How do you feel that your company's target group has reacted to the co-operation with Helsinki Pride?

14. What kind of exectations did you have according to the event and did you reach your goals?

15. How did you use the co-operation with Helsinki Pride in your marketing communications or customer relationships?

16. If you did take part of the evening held for the sponsors of Helsinki Pride: Do you think that it was useful for your company and how could this event be developed?

THEME 4: After the event

17. Would you recommend co-operation with Helsinki Pride for other companies also?

18. Would you like to be part of Helsinki Pride also in the future? If not, why?

19. How do you see Helsinki Pride in general as an event? Did your opinions change during the co-operation?

20. How do you measure the success of the sponsoring in your company? According to that, did you reach your goals?