

How to plan a yoga event

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| <p>The objective of this product-oriented thesis was to create a plan for a meaningful, enriching and memorable yoga event. The plan is meant to give the commissioner instructions on how to plan the event and marketing from the initiation to the final stage in a profitable manner. The commissioning party, the yoga instructor, is based in Lahti Finland, and desires to create more community feeling with the event.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of the thesis is divided into two chapters: event management and event marketing. Theories on the creation of experiences are also presented. Four different yoga events were benchmarked in order to gather more information about successful yoga event planning. In addition, a constructive survey was conducted to examine the interest levels for the specific type of event, and to investigate, what was expected from the event.</p> <p>The actual thesis product, the yoga event plan, was created using the knowledge from theoretical work and the findings from benchmarking and constructive research. The thesis process started in autumn 2015, and the thesis was completed in March 2016.</p> <p>The thesis product, "How to plan a yoga event", consists of three steps: the pre-event phase, the event day stage and the post-event stage. The tasks and responsibilities related to each stage are introduced in the form of tables. Furthermore, the author gives suggestions on possible event elements that will define the event concept, and presents the chosen event program and its timing.</p> <p>The yoga event plan is restricted to the creation of a specific Glow yoga event. The commissioner was very satisfied with the information presented in the plan, and she regarded the theoretical work of the thesis as a useful reference tool for her events.</p> | |
| Keywords Yoga event plan, event management, event marketing, creating experiences | |

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1 Introduction

Events as experiences have a notable role and importance in the modern economy and contemporary lifestyles (Allen & al. 2011, 141). People define themselves, and construct their identities and social groups based on the event experiences they have had. By attending events that resonate with their image of themselves and enrich their lives in some way, people seek happiness and enrichment to the desired or imagined lifestyles. (Allen & al. 2011, 141; Pine & Gilmore 2011,19.) Event managers try to match these needs of consumers by creating events that, according to Tarssanen (2009, 1), are meaningful, positive and memorable and can bring about a change in the consumers.

Influenced by different lifestyle events, the author was inspired to write the thesis on a topic that relates to the lifestyle that has been created around yoga. This lifestyle seeks well-being, and encourages development on both physical and emotional levels, such as finding peace within oneself, being present in the moment and connecting body, mind and spirit. The thesis topic combines the yoga lifestyle with an event that seeks to offer fun interaction, a possibility to sense extraordinary things outside of everyday routines, and get fully immersing experiences.

The commissioning party is an independent yoga instructor who wants to create more community vibe with a yoga event. The commissioning party has been working as a yoga instructor for two and a half years in Lahti. She teaches several different styles including hot yoga, flow yoga, rocket yoga, aerial yoga, yin & yang yoga, yin yoga and aerial yin yoga. On top of her weekly yoga classes, she has taught a couple of workshops. These workshops have been organized by a yoga studio, but now she would like to be more involved in the organization of this particular event for future reference. The commissioning party would like the thesis author to give suggestions on whether such an event has interest in the yoga public of Lahti and how the whole event could be organized from start to end process. The commissioning party is based in Lahti and would like the event to take place in Lahti area during spring/summer of 2016.

The main objective of this product-oriented thesis is to create a plan for a yoga event. The plan is formed specifically to serve the commissioning party's needs. The product is meant to give the commissioner instructions on how to plan the event from its initiation to the final stage in a profitable manner. In order to reach this thesis objective, quantitative methods are used in the form of benchmarking and constructive research. Benchmarking is used as a tool to get valuable information about yoga event organization and the creation of a successful event program, which will then be used in creating the yoga event

plan. A semi-structured survey is created for gathering data about the interest levels for the event and its content. The results of the survey will define which elements mentioned in the survey will be included in the final event plan.

The thesis outline constitutes of six main chapters: introduction, event management, event marketing, benchmarking four different yoga events, process description and discussion. Firstly, the thesis topic and objectives are presented in detail with an introduction of the commissioning party. This is followed by theoretical framework in chapters two and three, which is delimited to literary sources from authors who have many years' experience in the event field. Some online sources are also referred to, as well as one interview regarding the needed permissions for events. Event management, event planning process and its different steps are presented in chapter two, followed by theories about experience creation. The third chapter constitutes of presenting event marketing and the aspects worth of consideration when attempting to sell an event to a specified target market.

The empirical part of the thesis is divided into the three last chapters. In chapter four, benchmarking research and its results are presented, and the best findings are summarized. The benchmarking includes three yoga events that took place in Finland, and one event that were organized in the USA. In the fifth chapter, the yoga event plan is formed. The thesis process is explained, and the qualitative research is discussed with its findings. The creation process of the event plan includes planning its experiential elements. Furthermore, the decisions for choosing a set of elements to be included in the event plan, are discussed. The last chapter closes up the thesis with a conclusion and discussion about the thesis process. The success of the created event product is discussed and suggestions are given regarding future research. The author evaluates the thesis process and the learning experience. The appendices include the constructive research survey questionnaire in Finnish, and the final product made for the commissioner – the yoga event plan: “How to plan a yoga event?”.

2 Event management

In this chapter, events' organizational aspects will be discussed from the event manager's perspective, concentrating on the basic theoretical information needed when creating an event. An event manager, producer or director is the person responsible for managerial operations that require researching, designing, planning, coordinating and evaluating an event. (Goldblatt 2010, 18.) Event's planning cycle is presented, and three steps including defining event objectives, making feasibility analysis and creating a concept, are discussed further.

Goldblatt (2010, 18) explains planned events as functions that require human assembly for the purpose of celebration, education, marketing and reunion. To mark the difference between a planned and an unplanned event, some authors refer to planned events as special events. According to Allen & al. (2011, 11) the term special events has been created to describe specific performances, presentations, rituals and celebrations. These events are deliberately created to mark special occasions or achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives. There is a big range of special events, including fairs, festivals, sporting competitions and tournaments, shows, expos, parties and arts performances. (Allen & al. 2011, 11.)

Getz (2005, 6) proposes that special events are best defined by their context. He presents two definitions. Firstly, from the event organizers' point-of-view, a special event is a one-time, or infrequently occurring event outside the normal program or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body. Secondly, from the guests' point-of-view, a special event is an opportunity for an experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience.

Events can be grouped according to their size and scale. Event's scale of impacts varies according to the level of attendance, media profile, infrastructure, benefits and costs. Starting from the event that is the smallest in size and has the lowest scale of impacts, going through to the biggest in size and scale, events can be categorized into local/community, major, hallmark and mega-events. (Allen & al. 2011, 12.)

Events may also be categorized by their form or content (Allen & al. 2011, 15; Conway 2009, 43). By using this common means of classifying, Allen & al. (2011, 15-17) recommend three different event groups. These comprise of festivals such as arts, food or wine festivals, sports events including individual sports and multi-sports events, and business events such as conventions, seminars and meetings. Conway (2009, 43-44)

concentrates on voluntary and public events and divides events into 8 categories by their form and content to show some examples of event types. These include sporting competitions, specialist/commercial events, teaching/skills events, fundraising, meet and greet, public relations events, pure profit events, and lastly, fun events. Häyrynen & Vallo (2014, 141) propose similar categorization as they state that an event can be entertaining or concentrated on business, or both. Regarding the implementation of the event, Häyrynen and Vallo (2011, 141) propose, that the organizing team can carry out the event, or it can be bought from an external company as a whole. Other possibilities are to build smaller event entities to create a mission driven event or take part in a ready-made umbrella organization's event, where a smaller event can be set up.

2.1 Event planning process and concept

The process of an event starts with planning which takes 75% of the event's lifecycle. The actual event takes 10% and the post-event marketing 15%. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 178.) According to Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell (2011, 154), special events are projects in their nature as they are non-routine, occur at a specific period, produce an outcome designed to meet a client's need, and are limited by time, budget and scope.

Project management involves a series of stages, which help in planning and implementing the event (Allen & al. 2011, 157; Kauhanen, Juurakko & Kauhanen 2002, 26). The number of these stages varies according to different authors. Allen & al. (2011, 157-159) propose 5 steps including initiation, planning, implementation, event and shutdown. All of these 5 steps can be also seen in the stages suggested by Kauhanen & al. (2002, 26), but further tasks are suggested inside each step (figure 1). The project plan suggested by Kauhanen & al. can be observed in the outer circle of figure 1.

Also Masterman (2004, 48) introduces a model of the event planning process that seems to follow the pattern of a project plan. He includes 10 different stages in the planning process, which are illustrated on the inner circle of figure 1. The main difference between the steps suggested by Masterman (2004, 48) as opposed to those proposed by Kauhanen & al. (2002, 26) is that Masterman includes feasibility analysis before implementation planning, whereas Kauhanen & al. place it after composing a detailed project plan (figure 1).

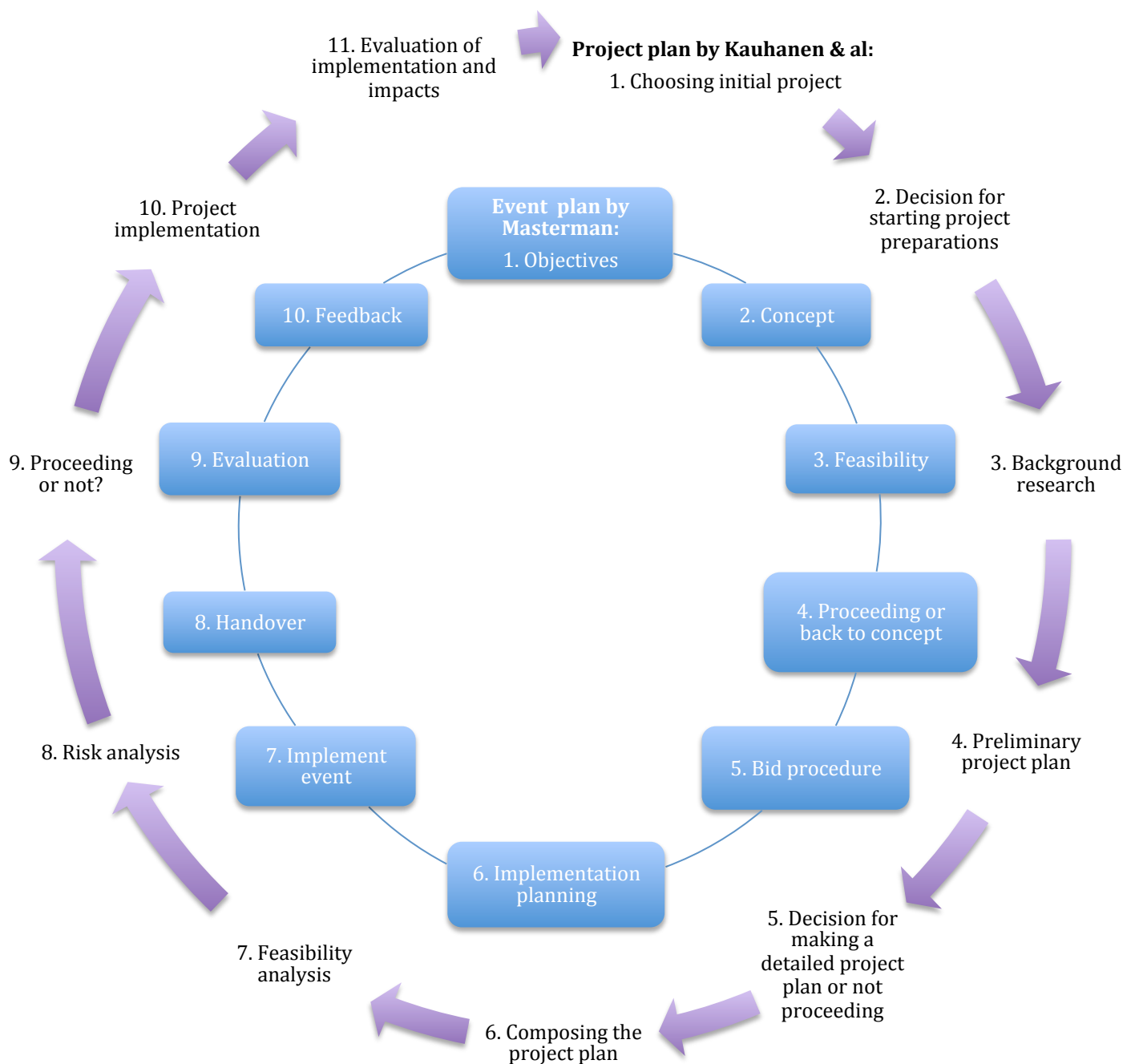


Figure 1. The steps of event planning process according to Kauhanen & al. (2002, 26) and Masterman (2004, 48)

Häyrynen and Vallo (2014, 109) don't present the event process as a project, but consider same dimensions important as the aforementioned authors. They propose that a good starting point for a successful event is to go through all the necessary points such as the objective and message, event content and program, the target group, the process, and the persons in charge (Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 109).

Creating a strong concept or idea for the event creates the foundation on which the whole event creation process will later be built (Allen & al. 2011, 138). Häyrynen & Vallo (2014, 104) mention that in the starting point of planning and getting ideas for an event, the event manager should start with asking three questions: what, where and when? The whole event will be planned around the answers to these questions. Sometimes an idea arises from the event facility, the values of the organization, its activities and history, trends, phenomena, or the mission of the event. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 105.) The planning process can be done in a group of people from different backgrounds in order to brainstorm interesting visions and ideas (Allen & al. 2011, 140; Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 105). The ideas that best serve the needs of the event are identified, evaluated and refined to an event concept (Allen & al. 2011, 140).

The stage of creating the concept involves consideration of the scale of the event, how it will operate, its timing, location, venue, facilities and equipment required (Masterman 2004, 54). The event concept must be capable of reaching the event's purpose, achievable within the available resources and flexible enough to serve the range of stakeholders (Allen & al. 2011, 138). Sometimes the event type can be restricted by the available skills and experience of people proposing to run it, as well as their contacts in the field, possible exhibitors and event budget (Conway 2009, 45; Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 141). To create a successful event both from the customer's and organizers' perspective, the organizing party's financial strengths and personal capital should be kept in mind at all times during the planning process (Conway 2009, 45-50). Furthermore, identifying potential strategic partners and sponsors are early considerations when creating the event concept (Masterman 2004, 54-55). In the event planning process any hindrances, constraints, and risks should be carefully reported in order to make a successful event in the end (Conway 2009, 45-50).

2.2 Event objective

Defining the reason for why the event is created is crucial (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 45; Masterman 2004, 52). Masterman (2004, 52) and Allen & al (2011, 92) recognize the necessity for setting objectives in the preliminary or first stage of event planning process. Also Häyrynen & Vallo (2014, 115) emphasize the importance of keeping in mind the objective outcomes and the desired change that is to be brought forward in the target group, right from the start. According to Masterman (2004, 52), objectives determine the event's nature and scale, and are concerned with what the event is to achieve. He proposes that the objectives should be SMART; they should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.

Allen & al. (2011, 158) agree to the need of objectives both in the creation of an event concept and in the initiative phase of project management. Allen & al. refer to the term purpose when defining the objectives of an event concept. The purpose of the event should be fully and accurately identified to provide a good starting point for determining the event concept. Likewise, Allen & al. also define the need for setting objectives when the production of an event is seen as project management. The initiation phase which is the first phase of project management, is characterized by setting the idea, objectives and a possible project feasibility study.

Kauhanen & al. argue that there may be more than one event objective in practice but during the planning process one primary objective should be set. This objective is usually financial meaning that there is an expectation to gain profit with the event. Financial goals can bring profit directly or indirectly. An event that has a primary goal of marketing a product or a company, has an indirect financial goal, in other words it will bring profit to the company behind the event in the long run. A fair is an example of a direct financial goal, where the financial profit is wanted at that moment. (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 45-46.)

For sports events the event objectives may be, for instance, to seek monetary profit, to develop participation in sports and engage communities (Masterman 2004, 52). In addition to the primary objective, an event can have very important goals regarding its content. These kinds of objectives are common for music festivals, which need to have an appealing content of interesting artists in order to get good ticket sales. (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 45.) Another event objective could be to spread knowledge about a cause, such as promoting tourism in Finland or getting media attention for a charity. These kinds of events do not usually seek profit. It is mentioned by Häyrynen and Vallo (2014, 112), Masterman (2004, 51) and Allen & al. (2011, 138) that setting a concrete objective for the event will also help in evaluating the outcomes of the event, to see whether the goal was achieved and whether the event was successful in the end.

For the event objectives to be realistic and achievable, a feasibility analysis should be made (Masterman 2001, 52). Project feasibility study, also known as situational analysis, shows the viability of the event and the management required to deliver it. It may include, for instance site and date suggestions, possible partners and sponsors, possible risks and required management. (Allen & al. 2011, 158.) When a new event concept is created and a feasibility analysis is made, the outcomes of the analysis will directly determine if and when the event will proceed (Allen & al. 2011, 92).

2.3 Event site

The location of the event is an important element in creating the event concept. The event venue needs not only cater for the number of participants but also contribute to the desired style and atmosphere. The physical setting is also crucial for consumer satisfaction (Allen & al. 2011, 139). When creating an event, environment, lighting, space, movement, decor, acoustics and even restrooms all affect the customer's experience and comfort (Goldblatt 2010, 80).

The selection of an event site is effected by the nature of the event, the date, the target group, accessibility and the rental costs (Allen & al. 2011, 139; Lahden seutu, 9). When the decisions are made concerning the event site, the booking should be made well in advance, and optional event sites should be listed in case the site is not available during the planned date (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 51). The location of the event site is important, as it will define how easy it will be to access the site (Allen & al. 2011, 140; Conway 2009, 102). It should be located close to a center of population from which the public can be drawn to the event (Conway 2009, 102).

2.4 Regulations and permissions

According to Conway (2009, 141), public or voluntary event's organizer needs to get permissions and approval from several different authorities, people, organizations and groups before being allowed to run the event. The event location, size, format, content and type define the required permissions. Shone & Parry (2013, 234) state that permits and licenses are generally dealt with at a local level, within town, city or district. However, some events need to be dealt with at a regional or provincial level, within a framework of national or European Union legislation. It is necessary to check locally for every event to find out what legal requirements there may be concerning staffing, permits, licenses and other regulatory issues. (Shone & Parry 2013, 234.)

An event organizer always needs to have permission for using an area for event purposes. If the event site is a public area, which use is controlled by the city of Lahti, a permission of using the land is needed. (Lahden seutu, 9.) There are some exceptions of events that don't require announcements or permissions. They are the kind of events that gather a small amount of people, as well as those where the nature of the event or the event site don't necessitate action for maintaining order or safety or special traffic arrangements. (Lahden seutu, 13.) It needs to be considered, however, that the event organizer is always responsible of the general safety at the event (Lahden seutu, 9).

Certain announcements have to be made about temporary selling of food in Lahti region. Selling, that lasts up to two days and happens less frequently than once a month, is considered temporary (Lahden seutu, 21). Selling of food can be managed either by the event organizer or independent sellers. If the organizer himself manages the serving of food, he needs to make an announcement of a movable food establishment to the authorities. The food vendors renting a table in an event need to report about preparing, selling or serving food to the health protection authorities of the event locality in written form. (Rahkonen 28 January 2016.) The event organizer attaches all the movable food establishments' basic information into the general announcement of the event, which is then sent to Lahti official authorities 14 days before the start of the event at the latest. The food establishments themselves report about selling at the event to the authorities. (Lahden seutu, 21-22.)

Selling needs to be well organized and the event staff needs to be trained to be able to work in problematic and unpredictable situations. Food vendors renting a table need to have an in-house control plan and keep it with them during the event. (Lahden seutu, 22.) In events, it is important to pay attention to the correct temperatures for selling and storing food. The selling and serving stalls should also be hygienic. The guidelines for selling food outdoors in Lahti region can also be adapted to food operations taking place indoors. These guidelines give further instructions on what elements need to be taken into account, such as water stations, power supply, and ventilation system. (Rahkonen 28 January 2016.)

2.5 Event budget

Event budget is a general guide to the income and expense projected for the event (Shone & Parry 2013, 147; Goldblatt 2010, 158-175). In addition to identifying where the revenue derives from and to determining costs, budgeting for events consists of performance targets that will realize the set objectives (Masterman 2004, 93). Preparation of a budget is a challenging part of financial management as it is usually based on limited information and assumptions. (Goldblatt 2010, 158-175.) In the event budget the most important aspect is to proportion revenues and expenses so that the financial risks are manageable (Lahden seutu, 9-10).

All expenses can be divided into two major categories: fixed overhead expenses and variable expenses. The methods to manage these categories are different. The cost of music entertainment, rent and salaries are examples of predictable fixed overhead expenses that don't change when the number of participants increases. The variable

expenses often relate to elements that are purchased at the last minute from vendors, thus they are often more difficult to predict. These include items such as audiovisual rentals, registration materials and other items that have a less predictable total cost that relies on the number of participants and price negotiation skills. (Goldblatt 2010, 164-165.) Other examples of event expenses are temporary structures, transportation, program, marketing, permissions and side services (Lahden seutu, 9-10).

Stated by Goldblatt (2010, 167), cutting down event's costs is one way of improving the event cash flow. Before cutting down any event expenses, it is important to think which things could be cut down so that the content of the event doesn't become weaker. If cutting down expenses results in weakening the content of the event, it also decreases income. (Lahden seutu, 9-10.)

In events, professional finance control enables corrections to be made well in advance. For instance, the progress of ticket sales after marketing actions guides decision-making. In finance control, attention should be paid to actual sales in relation to expenses, and possible budgeting differences. A budget is also useful for finding the break-even point after which income covers expenses. (Lahden seutu, 9-10.)

Events get income from ticket sales, participating fees, rent charges from event's vendors, or restaurant operation (Lahden seutu, 9-10). Furthermore, additional merchandise or services can be created, to bring in significant income (Shone & Parry 2013, 154; Lahden seutu, 9-10). Allen & al. (2011, 205) introduce additional revenue sources such as sponsorships, the client, advertising, grants and fundraising. Income can also be raised by increasing the prices of tickets or other sales, by obtaining more sponsor income, or by obtaining new partners and donations (Lahden seutu, 9-10).

2.6 Events as experiences

An experience is considered to be an action that is meaningful, positive and memorable. It can bring about a personal change in the participant. (Tarssanen 2009, 1.) Providing commercial experiences on a global scale without industrial borders is considered its own economy, the experience economy. All leisure time activities and entertainment are said to be part of the experience economy, including movies, sports, games and travel. (Tarssanen 2009, 17.) Jensen (1999, 4) suggests the market for dreams and feelings is gradually eclipsing the market for information-based reality and tangible products. This means that we are changing from information society to dream society where emotions, stories, narratives and values return to the scene. Allen & al. (2011, 141) propose that

events as experiences have a notable role and importance in the modern economy and contemporary lifestyles.

Multiple diverse dimensions should be considered in the creation of event. These include the multisensory nature of experiences, the way they are shared with others, and the intensity and duration of various elements. Other dimensions that affect the customer's experience are the level of personal meaningfulness and the complexity or simplicity. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, xxi.) The consumer's cultural, national and local sensitivities affect the way they perceive experiences, as well as the prior life experiences (Pine & Gilmore 2011, xxi; Tarssanen 2009, 18). Any dimension of enjoyment usually creates a more memorable experience in the guest's mind (Pine & Gilmore 2011, xxi).

Experiences themselves are not tangible, but people greatly desire them. Experiences create value that lies within people, where it remains long afterward (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 19). Allen & al. (2011, 141) suggest that people seek and embrace experiences that enrich their lives and resonate with their images of themselves. They seek events that boost their desired or imagined lifestyles. Event experiences become a part of how people define themselves, how they build up their identity and social groups. Gilmore and Pine mention that buying experiences makes people happier than buying goods. This greater sense of well-being should be taken into consideration by companies offering experiences as they have a chance of earning a place in the hearts of the consumer. The consumers are more willing to spend their hard-earned money and hard-earned time in experiences that offer them happiness. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 19.)

At their best, events and experiences have good stories. A participant becomes deeply absorbed in an exciting storyline, and the storyline adds social significance and content for the participant. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 109; Tarssanen 2009, 13). A good story has both factual and fictional elements, such as local facts spiced up with ancient legends. The story appeals to the event participant's feelings allowing him to experience the event also on an intellectual and emotional level. (Tarssanen 2009, 13.) The main idea, the themes and the story should be present in all stages from marketing and actual experiencing to after sale (Tarssanen 2009, 13).

Experiences are co-created to some degree, as they happen inside an individual person in reaction to what is staged outside that person. However not every circumstance is made for a co-creation, as not every customer wants to take active part. Instead, the degree of control given to the customer should be considered. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, xx-xxi.)

2.7 Four realms of experience

Pine and Gilmore (2011, 45) describe experiences based on their position on the horizontal and vertical axis in figure 2. The experience may engage guests on any number of four dimensions. The first dimension is the level of guest participation (horizontal axis) where one end is passive participation and the other end is active participation where the guest takes part in creating the experience. The vertical dimension (figure 2) describes the relationship of the event and the customer. Absorption, in one end of this dimension, means occupying the customer's attention from a distance. The other end, immersion, makes the customer physically part of the experience. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45-46.)

Pine and Gilmore classify experiences into four realms: entertainment, educational, esthetic and escapist. Many experiences usually engage through one of the four realms. However, the most holistic experience is achieved by including all the four sectors (entertainment, education, escapist and esthetic) into the experience. The experiences can also be enhanced by blurring the boundaries between the four realms, or by adding extra to the mix components of the realms. (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45-46.)

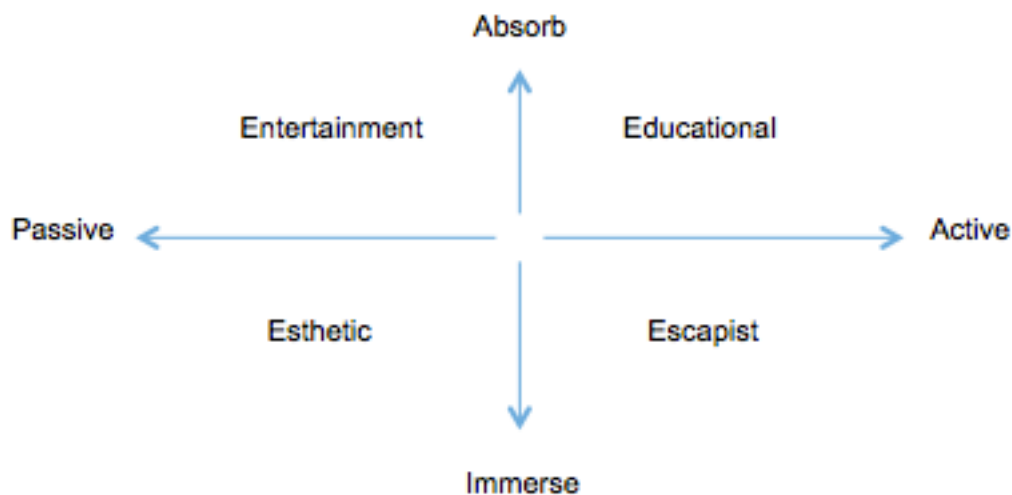


Figure 2. Experience realms (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 46)

According to Pine and Gilmore's four realms (2011, 45), listening to radio without getting immersed into the radio program is considered an entertaining experience. When the participation is more active and the participant is absorbed in the situation, as for instance in an ice-skating course or cooking school, the educational realm is highlighted. An escapist experience such as paragliding requires active participation and immersion. Esthetic experience, as for instance admiring the views or examining the environment with

many senses, is more passive immersion. When the center of the figure depicting the four realms is reached, the experience becomes more intensive and all-encompassing.

2.8 The experience pyramid

The experience pyramid (figure 3) created by Tarssanen (2009, 11) is a model of an ideal experience where all levels of experience are represented. It is a tool for experience providers for finding flaws and critical points in order to analyze them and find solutions for improvement.

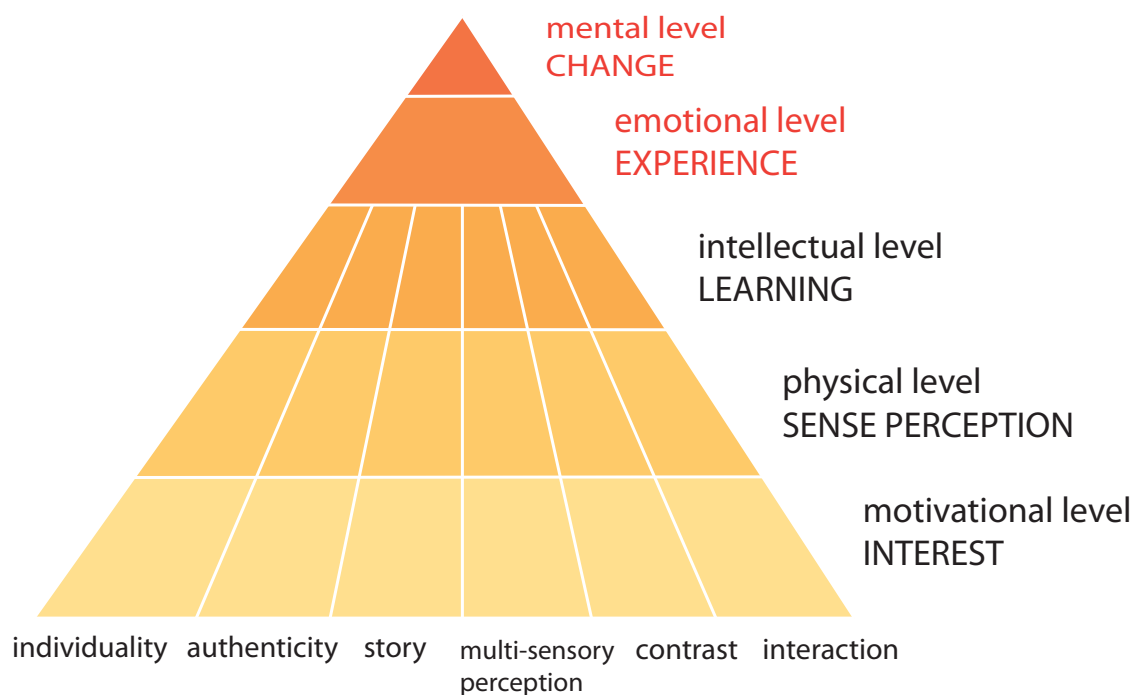


Figure 3. Experience pyramid (Tarssanen 2009, 11)

In this model the experience is observed through two different levels, first one being the product's elements (horizontal axis in figure 3) and the second one being the customer's experience (vertical axis in figure 3). The elements of an experience can be added to any service product, which is then likely to be felt as an experience. This, however, is not always guaranteed since customers are individuals and will sense and observe the service differently. (Tarssanen 2009, 12.)

The elements affecting the customer's experience are on the horizontal axis of the pyramid model (figure 3). These are individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast and interaction. Individuality refers to uniqueness, when the experience is not offered anywhere else, and it can even be customized to the customer's

needs. Authenticity means the credibility of the product, and it reflects the existing lifestyle and culture. The customer sees an authentic product as genuine and credible. An experience should always have a story through which the various elements of the experience are bind together to make it coherent and catching. A good and authentic story adds social significance and content to the product, giving the customer a reason to experience it, other than just doing it for the fun of it. (Tarssanen 2009, 14.)

On the horizontal axis of the pyramid (figure 3) multisensory perception refers to the importance of designing all sensory perceptions to strengthen the theme of an experience. Getting rid of such sensory perceptions that might intimidate the guest is part of making the customer experience as enjoyable as possible. Creating contrast is also crucial. Experiencing something new and out of the ordinary in a foreign environment enables the customer to view himself from different perspective, as well as see and experience things in a different way free from the limitations and habits of his everyday life. Interaction, the communication between the service provider and the customers, is of great importance. In order to create community spirit, the participants in the same program should be introduced to each other. Although it is possible to have a meaningful experience by oneself, sharing the experience with other customers makes the experience commonly accepted and appreciated. It raises the social status and links the customer more closely with a certain group. (Tarssanen 2009,14.)

The experience pyramid's vertical axis (figure 3) illustrates how the customer experience is constructed from interest (the base level of the pyramid) to the actual experience and conscious processing. This leads further to a meaningful experience and a mental change (the top of the pyramid). An ideal product has all of the described elements of experience involved on each level of experience.

In the motivational level, at the base of the pyramid, the customer's interest in awakened. The expectations are created here with different marketing tools. All the experience elements should be taken into account when marketing the experience; the marketing should be individual, authentic, multisensory, interactive, and it should boost contrast. The second level of customer experience (second vertical level in figure 3) is physical, where customer experiences the product through physical senses. The customer becomes aware where he is, what he is doing and what is happening. On physical level, the experience should be made safe and pleasant. On the third level of intellectual the sensory stimuli are processed (third vertical level in figure 3). The customer acts accordingly to the stimuli, learns, thinks, and applies knowledge and forms opinions. A good product ensures the possibility to learn something new, to develop and gain new

knowledge, either consciously or unconsciously. On this level, the customer decides whether he is happy with the product or not. (Tarssanen 2009,14.)

On the fourth level (figure 3) the meaningfulness is experienced. On this emotional level the experience is most likely to evoke positive emotions such as delight, excitement, happiness, joy of learning and affection, if all the elements have been taken into account. On the mental level (top of the pyramid), a positive and powerful emotional experience may lead to an experience of personal change, resulting in rather permanent changes in person's physical state, state of mind or lifestyle. In this kind of mental change, the person has acquired something new as part of his personality, or changed or developed as a person. (Tarssanen 2009, 15-16.)

Other customers, service staff and surroundings influence customer's experience. The experience is created in interaction with the service provider through a service scape. This means that the service situation is set up for a special experience and the service staff has a crucial part in making the experience one-of-a-kind. In addition, the customer's own cultural background, past experiences and expectations have an impact on what emotions the experience triggers. (Tarssanen 2009, 18.)

3 Event marketing

Event marketing can be defined as the process by which event marketers and managers gain an understanding of their potential consumers' characteristics and needs. Information about potential consumers is gathered, to be able to produce, price, promote and distribute an event experience that meets both the needs of consumers and the financial or social objectives of the special event. (Allen & al. 2011, 259.) To create a successful marketing plan, certain steps should be understood. These include segmenting the market, targeting and positioning, setting measurable marketing objectives, choosing marketing strategies, and designing an effective marketing mix. (Allen & al. 2011, 277.)

3.1 Event message and target group

The event organizer should know the needs of the target group to whom the event is going to be organized and what is going to be communicated to them through the event content (Allen & al. 2011, 259; Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 104). Moreover, the target group's ideas and desires concerning the event content are of great value when planning a successful event (Vallo & Häyrynen 2014, 107). When the event doesn't reach its right target group, it can be stated that the event was unsuccessful to some degree (Kulttuurin kehittämiskeskus, 9).

According to Allen & al. (2011, 278-280) and Masterman (2004, 155-156), knowledge sought about customers can include psychographic, geographic and demographic information. Psychographic segmentation means dividing a market according to its lifestyle and values (Allen & al. 2011, 280; Masterman 2004, 156). Häyrynen & Vallo propose that once the target group, their interests and the likely ways in which they spend their free-time are identified, marketing the event becomes more efficient, and it becomes easier to reach the right group of people (2014, 104). Psychographic segmentation, however, has some limitations as it is challenging to accurately measure the size of lifestyle segments. Still, it offers event manager a better understanding of the types of experience that audiences leading different lifestyles want from the event. (Allen & al. 2011, 280.) The characteristics of people, such as gender, age and whether the audience has family or not, are information that event organizer needs to consider when making demographic segmentation (Allen & al. 2011, 278; Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 123; Masterman 2004, 156).

When segmenting the event's target group geographically, it can be determined whether the audience is regional, national or for example focused on a specific neighborhood (Allen & al. 2011, 278; Kauhanen & al. 2002, 37). A pop music festival could have regional

or even national potential audience of youngsters aged between 15 and 25 (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 37). On the other hand, an organ music festival would most probably have a relatively different potential audience of middle-aged and older organ music enthusiasts.

An event should have one main message that the customers will be able to recall after the event. In addition to this there may be multiple other smaller messages on the side that support the main one. Event objectives and messages need to be forwarded clearly to all the parties involved in the event process, such as the cooperation partners and owners in order to be discussed clearly further to potential customers. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2014, 118.) Häyrinen & Vallo (2014, 116) state that many elements have an impact on the message the event generates, including the event location, space, program, food and drinks service, idea, theme, event host, performers, promotional material and material used during the event. Therefore, all of these elements should be planned to support and promote the event messages to create a consistent event.

3.2 Marketing mix

The five Ps of event marketing suggested by Hoyle (2002, 12), also referred to as the marketing mix, include product, price, place, public relations and positioning. Components of marketing mix help in creating the marketing plan. In order to reflect the experiential aspects of events, Allen & al. (2011, 283-285) introduce some further Ps including programming, packaging, event product experience, people, partnerships and promotion.

Before a festival or event marketing plan is created, the marketer needs to have full knowledge about the product. Events and festivals as service product experiences contain three elements. The first element is the core service with benefits that the customer experiences. The second element is the tangible 'expected' product, which can be for instance the food & beverages as well as the venue and seating. The third element is the augmented product, or additional features that differentiate the event from its competitors, such as service quality or event merchandise. (Allen & al. 2011, 283.)

An attractive event program is a critical aspect of the event product (Allen & al. 2011, 286). Distinguishing a core concept or a theme in the program can be a great differentiating factor in relation to other events. Event marketer should consider what it is that is presented that has actual meaning to the audience. Another consideration is to join the event program with its physical environment or site, in other words visualize what kind of performance would be best in a certain setting, and what kind of stage structures would work in a specific environment. The programming success depends on the compatibility of

performers to the event's market, the technical quality of the performance and the history of the type of performance at other events. (Allen & al. 2011, 287.)

In the marketing mix, place refers to both the site where the event takes place and the place at which customers are able to buy tickets to the event (Allen & al. 2011, 291). However, Preston (2012, 84) calls the mechanics of booking a process, which he considers an additional P to Hoyle's marketing mix. Preston (2012, 84) states that websites have become a common form for ticket distribution, thus they have a major role in marketing as well. The quality of the website suggests the quality of the event. A website has to look appealing, but it also needs to work smoothly and provide an easy informational and booking process to the customer. Furthermore, the product should be available in places where the target market finds it easiest to purchase from, which might not be the Internet but a street store (Blythe 2005, 7). The event organizer should also determine the selling occasion, whether the tickets are sold beforehand or only at the entrance. The means of distribution can include event's own website and external service providers, such as ticketing agencies. (Allen & al. 2011, 291-292.)

People are seen as part of the event product. The satisfaction of event visitors is considered to depend on their interactions with other people at the event. Therefore, event marketer should keep visitor segments compatible within their audience, as well as ensure that the event's elements allow easy interaction among the participating people. (Allen & al. 2011, 284.)

Pricing of the event can be based on research on the prices of similar events and demand of the product. The financial philosophy of the event should be considered as it defines whether the financial goal is to offer free entertainment, break even or generate profit. It should be kept in mind that creating such pricing strategies that attract target audience with willingness and ability to pay for a ticket plays an important role in making a successful event. (Hoyle 2002, 13-15.)

The success of an event will largely depend on its promotion regardless of the nature of the event (Hoyle 2002, 30). Promotion refers to those activities that will bring an event forward to the attention of potential customers to such degree that generates attendance (Preston 2012, 76). Promotion is vital in creating awareness of the event, a desire to participate, and a feeling by the potential participant that the time and money invested validate the benefits the event offers (Hoyle 2002, 30). The best suitable promotion mediums and methods should be selected in order to discuss the event message to the target market in the best manner (Kauhanen & al. 2002, 113). Promotion or integrated

marketing communications can include for instance advertising, e-marketing, publicity, personal selling and sales promotion (Allen & al. 2011, 315-320).

In addition to the marketing mix, Hoyle (2002, 2) considers three Es critical to the success of any event. These include entertainment, excitement and enterprise. Key to the event marketing success is to provide such entertainment that will draw the people to the event. To get audience leave home may be challenging, as there are many entertainment options at home. Offering a different and unique experience with the promise of excitement is therefore crucial. Hoyle defines enterprise as readiness to take risks and initiative, and suggests that people love experiencing something new, and to be amongst the first ones to experience it. (Hoyle 2002, 2.)

3.3 E-marketing for events

The marketing in digital environment aims to identify, anticipate and satisfy customer needs in the online environment with the use of electronically communicated media, such as Internet (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 19.) Some examples of platforms are desktop browser-based platforms, desktop apps, email platforms, video-marketing platforms and feed-based data exchange platforms such as many social media ecosystems (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 5). The form of direct e-marketing includes e-mails and text messages. Internet marketing includes web-pages, Internet- or banner marketing and search engine marketing. Other means of digital marketing are viral marketing, marketing games, mobile marketing, interactive television, web seminars and competitions. (Karjaluoto 2010, 14.) According to Statistics Finland (2015a), 87% of 16-89 year old Finns used the Internet in 2015, and 68% of them used the Internet several times during one day. 46% of Finns did online purchases in 2015.

Social media can be categorized into groups such as social networks, discussion forums, rating sites, and virtual worlds (Juslén 2009, 6.4). Sharing opinions, interacting and communicating with other users are characteristic to Internet and mobile-based social media. Additionally, social media encourages content creation, participation, engagement, and the building of communities and networks. (CIPR 2011, 4.) Statistics show that 53% of 16-89 year old Finns had been following a social media platform during the time of three months (Statistics Finland 2015a). However, the use of social media platforms varies in different age groups; the percentage of users seems to decrease when going from the youngest group towards the elderly. The 16-24 year-olds use social media platforms the most with a percentage of 93. 87% of 25-34 year-olds use social media, 35-

44 year-olds are next with 70%, 45-55 year-olds with 51% and 55-64 year-olds with 35%. (Statistics Finland 2015b).

Some of the popular social networks include Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ and Twitter (Chaffey & Smith 2013, 214). According to Taloustutkimus Oy (2015), the use of Facebook in Finland is highest among people under the age of 25 as 90% of them use Facebook. It is presented that 82% of 25-34 year old Finns and 63% of 35-49 year old Finns use Facebook.

Social media marketing differs from conventional marketing in that more profound connections can be created, and even more committed and tight customer relationships can be built (Dragon 2012, 5). Social media offers events great possibilities for convenient communicating and marketing that can be used before, during and after an event. The organizer can for example create a new event in Facebook, or use the organization's profile to inform about the event. The decision for which one is to be used is drawn from the company's marketing strategy. If the brand of the event is widely recognized, then there is a good reason for creating its own event profile. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2014, 87-88.)

Twitter and Instagram can also be used to inform on the side of Facebook. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2014, 88.) Instagram is a social media application for sharing life experiences with others through photos taken with mobile phones. The photos can also be viewed on Instagram website. (Instagram 2015.) The use of Instagram is less popular among the Finns compared to the use of Facebook, as 52% of under 25 year-olds use Instagram, only 27% of 25-34 year-olds and 8% of 35-49 year-olds use it (Taloustutkimus Oy, 2015).

Social media is an inexpensive and fast way of marketing, and it is easy to update the event content as well as communicate the theme to the target group in order to get them into the right mood. The event can be also marketed in a company's blog. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2014, 87-89.) According to Häyrinen & Vallo, social media can be used both for informing potential audiences, and to bring together new ideas for the event, to invite people, to promote and to receive feedback.

Social media can be a part of the actual event. The participants can be asked to post their thoughts and feelings regarding the event, or questions to performers in Twitter. The event management team can assign one person to post photos and short video interviews straight into the Facebook profile of the event to keep the site updated, or alternatively to the blog site. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2014, 89-90.)

Häyrynen and Vallo (2014, 90) mention that no social media platform should be given the central attention in any event. However, the tools and opportunities it offers should be used in relevant stages of the event. The technology and tools of social media changes inevitably, but it is good to keep in mind that not all the participants want to use new or more complex platforms. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2014, 90.)

3.4 Post-event marketing

According to Häyrynen and Vallo (2014, 194), in two weeks' time after the event certain post-marketing actions should take place. The post-event phase of an event includes thanking the organizing group and volunteers, collecting feedback from the audience and analyzing it, sharing the material such as documents or slideshows digitally, sending gifts to audience or cooperation partners, answering to contact requests and having a wrap-up meeting.

For the purposes of follow-up and evaluation of marketing, feedback should be gathered from the audience after the event. Actual results should be compared to event marketing goals. In the planning process of marketing actions, clear goals and ways of measuring success should be set. Consistent follow-up helps to develop operations that can be performed more fluently and effectively in the future. With a good follow-up one is able to gain new and important information for future use, evaluate effectiveness of used resources and make changes into plans before executing them in the future. (Rope & Vahvaselkä 2000, 169-171.)

3.5 Sponsors and partners

Preston (2012, 88) states that in recent years the ever-present need for differentiation in increasingly competitive markets has increased the expenditure on sponsorships. Starting partnerships with other operators in the culture field and event organizers can be beneficial, since it can generate bigger interest in the target market on that specific market area. There are different types of possible partners including event site owner, spin-off event organizers, contractors, suppliers, investors and sponsors. (Kulttuurin kehittämiskeskus, 10.)

Stated by Preston (2012, 88), the content of the event isn't seen as important by the potential sponsor as what the content represents in the minds of consumers. Therefore, the emotional components of the event are what are on offer to sponsors. By understanding the buying patterns that are linked to the associations and emotions of a specific type of event, the event marketer can target the most appropriate sponsors.

(Preston 2012, 89.)

According to Masterman (2004, 192), the sponsoring party aims to

1. increase product or corporate awareness
2. develop product or corporate image
3. drive sales
4. develop market position
5. achieve competitive advantage

Sponsors' aims fit into at least one of the aforementioned five key areas. Sponsorship is a strategic marketing investment by the sponsor, not a grant or a donation. This means events management must regard sponsorships as working business partnerships between the sponsor and the event property. Sponsors are investors who want an increase in sales and a direct impact on their brand value. Sponsors want to see a return on their investment that is higher than their other marketing actions, or complimentary to their on-going marketing mix. (Allen & al. 2011, 328-329.)

From a sponsorship, an event seeks financial investment, in-kind services, marketing and media know-how, event brand enhancement or product and service offers for event goers. Before seeking sponsorship as a means of revenue, event manager needs to consider whether the event has sufficient rights or benefits that can be offered to sponsors. In addition, it should be considered whether the target market of the event is compatible with the target market of the sponsor. It is important to have enough resources and skills to market and manage sponsorship, which requires allocating staff and other resources to building and sustaining the sponsor relationship. (Allen & al. 2011, 329-333.)

4 Benchmarking four different yoga events

Benchmarking is also called comparison analysis or model analysis. Benchmarking is consistent and continuous comparison of one's own organizations' quality, productivity, working methods and processes to those of the best organizations and companies. When the comparison is made, the best practices can be chosen for further use. Benchmarking can be made through interviews, but best practices can also be researched from articles, books and the Internet. Some examples of possible Internet resources are news, companies' websites, patent websites, and different organizations' sites. (e-conomic, 2015.)

The author benchmarked four of the best practices she found in the field of yoga events. The author took part in two of them in 2015, Joogafestival & Zen-Expo and Joogafestival Helsinki goes I love me -fair. The other two were chosen for their interesting event content. Specific attention was paid to the events' organizational aspects, event site and event content.

4.1 Joogafestival & Zen-Expo

Joogafestival Helsinki was a two-day event in Kaapelitehdas in 28.2-1.3.2015, open for around nine hours on both days. Joogafestival has been arranged three times, and the upcoming fourth event will be held in February 2016. The Joogafestival & Zen-Expo was a combination of a fair with vendors, lectures, workshops, wellness treatments by health specialists and program for kids. There was a possibility for the attendees to try out different yoga styles with the guidance of professional yoga instructors from the capital Helsinki region. In addition to yoga there were classes of meditation, method putkisto, pilates, taiji, qigong, asahi and other classes available to the festival goers, altogether 100 classes to choose from. Health specialists offered treatments such as acupuncture, energy and wellness treatments, guided meditation sessions and mindfulness sessions with affordable prices. The ticket prices ranged from €10 to €40 depending on how many pre-registrations one wanted to make to the yoga lessons. The festival has a web-page and a Facebook event profile page, where the events are promoted. (Joogafestival Helsinki 2015a; Kaapelitehdas 2015.)

For the purposes of creating the thesis product, specific attention was paid to the event location, space, event content and food served. The place itself, according to the author, was a good choice for this kind of event since it's easy to reach by public transportation, and there are enough accurate spaces for yoga lessons. Kaapelitehdas' large indoor hall was suitable for multiple vendors and their stalls, and there was a restaurant pop-up and

an area for seminars on the second floor. It is also very important to have adequate room for the yoga classes and enough changing rooms. In Joogafestival & Zen-expo there were not enough restrooms and no changing rooms. The multiple studios on the upper stories of the building as well as some training studios of the Zhang Fang wushu center in Kaapelitehdas were in use during the festival.

The content of the event was interesting, since the options of yoga classes and other wellness classes were diverse. The participants had had the possibility to book the yoga classes beforehand, but it was also possible to wait in line before the yoga class to see whether there were places left. The number of participants depended on the size of the studio. Signing in to the classes was made easy for both the participants and yoga instructors, as there was an extra person at the door with a name list of the pre-bookers. In between the classes one could wander around, listen to yoga instructors' lectures, get a closer look at the options of different yoga schools in Helsinki region, try out different foods such as raw chocolate and porridge, buy yoga clothes, yoga props and massaging tools. The food in the pop-up restaurant was vegetarian, possibly compatible with many yoga practitioners' lifestyles. The restaurant was run by OmNam, a vegetarian restaurant that operates in Helsinki city center.

4.2 Joogafestival Helsinki goes I love me 2015 -fair

Joogafestival Helsinki was present at a wellness fair called I love me -fair in 16-18. October 2015. They had a set area for the classes that fair goers could attend. Different forms of yoga, pilates, taiji and asahi were presented. During the three days of the fair, more than 100 classes were available. Different forms of yoga could be explored and the festival visitors had a chance to get to know the instructors and their teaching methods. More than 40 instructors from different yoga studios around Helsinki region were present at the event. The classes were 60 minutes long, and they were said to be suitable for anyone seeking a new hobby, wishing to further deepen their knowledge on yoga or wishing to wake up the body in between strolling at the fair. The ticket to the fair was €15/adult, plus €5 for each yoga class. (Joogafestival Helsinki 2015b.)

The yoga class spaces were in a large hall, where the yoga classes were separated from the fair area with dividing screens. This meant that you were able to hear all the noise coming from around the fair area, which was not a positive thing, as you couldn't fully immerse and concentrate in the yoga class. The teachers also had to raise their voices, and some of them used microphones in order to be heard in the large hall. The changing area was basically a wall propped with benches and some shelves where you could leave

your bags and shoes. There were many toilets in the fair facility to use for changing clothes. The idea of importing yoga into this kind of wellness fair was a good idea, as the festival visitors could possibly find a new hobby from the vast amount of different types of exercises that were showcased. However, the noise kept it from being a serene experience.

As the author had pre-registered to the event, the ticket was obtained at the entrance by showing an ID-card. Once entering the part of the wellness fair where yoga festival was set up, there was a booth for signing in to the yoga classes that led to the space reserved for yoga practice. Signing in was managed smoothly.

When comparing the overall impressions and experiences of the two events organized by JoogaFestival Helsinki, the bigger event in Kaapelitehdas was better and wider with its programme and event content. However, there was a lack of places to sit down and enjoy your time in between the classes and strolling around at the event. Therefore, people were sitting on the floor next to the yoga classes. There was same kind of problem at the fair, as there were only some big beanbags on the floor at the sign-up booth. The organization was good at both events as getting in was smooth and you didn't need to wait in a queue. However, the event space itself was a big disappointment at the fair, as you couldn't fully concentrate on the practice because of the noise. In addition to the yoga classes at the fair, there were numerous raw food stalls that offered some tastings. There would have been a need for a pop-up restaurant serving healthy food. Helsingin messukeskus has some permanent restaurant, but their offerings weren't appealing to the author.

4.3 Spirit Yoga Fair

The spirit Yoga Fair was organized on 21st of November 2015 by the community of South Florida Meditations and More in the International Swimming Hall of Fame, Fort Lauderdale, USA. It was a mixture of a market, artistic body paint show, live DJ music and glow yoga class. In addition, there was a gong sound healing meditation with a sound healing practitioner as well as acupuncture for those seeking deeper healing and meditation experience. The sunset market with local vendors, food bites, juice samples, vegan ice cream, face painting, live music, acro yoga playshop, hula hooping and tarot cards reading took place before the yoga class. (Spirit Yoga Fair 21 November 2015.)

The Glow yoga by Cristal Gould was organized inside the hall, and everyone attending was asked to wear bright whites in order to shine in the dark hall. After the yoga class

there was a late night osho meditation outside, after which some earth sounds with drums and didgeridoos called for yogis to join a fire dance jam around the fire pit. The event story comes across in the marketing poster that was posted on Facebook (image 1.) It has a mystical feeling about it, with a photo of a dark sky full of stars where the addition of colorful mandala creates contrast. The sponsoring partners are shown on the bottom of the poster. (Spirit Yoga Fair 21 November 2015.)



Image 1. Marketing poster of Spirit Yoga fair (South Florida meditations and more 8 November 2015)

The event schedule was from 4pm to 11pm. There were two hours to go around the sunset market before hitting the yoga class followed by two hours of yoga, two hours of sound healing and mediation, and a free schedule for the osho meditation and fire dance afterwards. The event had its own event site in Facebook, and it was marketed at Cristal Gould's yoga site on Facebook called Cristal Yoga, as well as on her own Facebook page. The ticket prices for this event ranged from \$15 to \$35, depending whether only the

yoga class was included or also sound meditation and acupuncture. There was a raffle for which the tickets were \$10 each. All proceeds benefitted Cristal's India Seva Mission. There were several sponsors in the raffle, including Barkan Method Yoga, JugoFresh, Lululemon Aventura and Back to The Roots Organics to name a few. (Spirit Yoga Fair 21 November 2015.)

4.4 Manifestation by yogaROCKS Lahti

This yoga event was a whole day event on 17th of January 2016, 10am-5pm, arranged by yoga and climbing studio yogaROCKS Lahti in Finland. The urban day retreat blended yoga, reflection, writing and creative visualization with the guidance of two instructors. The event's aim was to teach profound manifestation techniques and transformative exercises which help to create positive change in the attendees' life. (Manifestaatio 17 January 2016.)

The day was split into three parts. First part was for letting go of things: personal reflection on the year of 2015 and the current state of balance in order to start the future in clarity. There was a 90-minute yoga practice with the intention of clearing the way for healing and new growth through an all levels vinyasa yoga practice. The second part included a lunch: winter vegetable soup, roasted beet salad, fresh bread, coffee/tea and raw chocolate cake. The lunch was set up at the yoga studio premises. The third part of the day was for manifesting, for doing, being and having. Different techniques of manifesting were introduced including vision boards, treasure mapping, goal setting exercises and creative visualizations. The attendees were then encouraged to spend time on one or more of these techniques. (Manifestaatio 17 January 2016.)

The day was closed with a yin practice and guided meditation. Price for this event was €65 for members and early birds, €75 for later purchase. (Manifestaatio 17 January 2016.) The marketing was done in social media platform Facebook. The author didn't find any information about the event from the website of the yoga studio. There were A4 size event posters inside the yoga studio promoting the event.

4.5 Best practises from the benchmarked events

From the benchmarking the author gained knowledge about important elements that make an event an enjoyable experience. The benchmarking mainly focused on the events' content, but some interesting organizational aspects could also be found. The knowledge can be adapted to the planning of the thesis product. The benchmarking showed that the target group of the event has to be well considered, and their needs have

to be met. They will likely spend their money and time on something that is planned especially for them, and is well organized.

The author considered that there were some interesting differences in the event content between the four events. The two events organized by JoogaFestival Helsinki were large scale, attracting hundreds of people, whereas the Manifestation and Spirit Yoga were smaller scale events. The larger events had more than a hundred smaller activities embedded into the event while the smallest event, the Manifestation, was mainly organized around a couple main activities with the guidance of two instructors. Spirit Yoga focused on doing yoga with one instructor, but additional activities and vendor stalls were managed by other people. The combination of vendors, yoga and additional activities such as self-growth and tarot card reading were intriguing.

The author saw that a well-planned combination of activities generates excitement in the participants and makes them try out new things. The author saw the possibilities for the thesis product, as it could include multiple extra activities such as vendors and wellness related treatments in addition to the main yoga experience. The combination of activities should however be coherent and in balance. The physical yoga exercise can be balanced with some more relaxing activity.

For the event to be flowing and comfortable for the participants, the event planner needs to take into consideration the ticket booking process, signing in process on the event day and the suitability of the facilities. The surroundings should fit the theme, and there should be enough changing rooms, water bottle filling stations, restrooms as well as enough places to sit and relax if the event lasts the entire day. The event site is an important part of the event; therefore, it was gathered that a suitable and big enough space has to be booked. The author was able to take part in two of the benchmarked events and she regarded it important that everything was organized around the theme of wellness. Therefore, in the thesis product the program and extra activities should boost well-being, vendors should be chosen with regard to their products' and their contents, and healthy meal options should be available.

All of the four benchmarked events showed the importance of timing a set schedule, and that the organizers need to act according to the plans. The participants don't want to wait when they have come specifically for an activity on a set time and date. On the event day there needs to be enough staff who are responsible for decorating the event site and putting up props, guiding people, signing people in, managing selling of the tickets, answering to participant's questions, and cleaning up after the event. In I love me –fair

2015 some of the yoga classes were guided with two extra people who checked that the participants did their yoga postures correctly. It might be an idea worth of consideration for the event the author is planning, as one instructor may not be able to correct everyone. The yoga event activities should be able to be guided by one instructor, but some extra staff would be needed for the organizational aspects such as ticketing.

The example of Joogafestival goes I love me -fair 2015 showed that there is need for a microphone and a sound system in larger spaces. This should be considered when the yoga event is planned. If live DJ music is played, there is a chance it might overpower the instructor's voice.

Table 1. Comparison between benchmarked events

| | Joogafestival & Zen-Expo | Joogafestival goes I love me-fair 2015 | Spirit yoga fair | Manifestation by yogaROCKS Lahti |
|---------------|---|---|---|--|
| Space | Large indoor hall of Kaapelitehdas, multiple smaller studios for yoga lessons | Large indoor hall for yoga lessons divided into multiple studios by room dividers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indoor hall for the show and yoga class - Market outside | yogaROCKS studio |
| Event content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 yoga and other classes to choose from - lectures - workshops - vendors - yoga schools' stalls - health treatments - a pop-up restaurant - program for kids | 100 yoga and other classes to choose from | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local vendors - face painting - live DJ music - acro yoga - playshop - hula hooping - tarot card reading - glow yoga class - artistic body paint show - sound healing meditation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal reflection of the year 2015 - 90 minute vinyasa yoga practice - lunch - manifesting with vision boards, treasure mapping, goal setting and creative visualizations - yin practice and guided meditation |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Tickets | €10-€40 | €15 + €5 for each yoga class | \$15-\$35 | €65 for members and early birds, €75 for nonmembers and later purchase |
| Organizational aspects: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The instructors and lecturers were all named in advance - Staff managing the cloakroom, entrance and signing in to the classes - A set schedule of the program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff for managing the entrance and signing in to the classes - A set timetable of the yoga classes, including the names of the instructors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The names of the yoga instructor and the meditation instructor were mentioned - No other mentions about staff in the online sources - A set schedule, but free timing for the last activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two yoga instructors' names were mentioned - No other mentions about staff in the online sources - A set schedule |

5 Process description

In this chapter, the event planning process is presented with further sub-headings introducing all aspects that affected the process. A qualitative research was conducted as part of the framework. For the purpose of planning the event, the most interesting findings of this research are presented. Experiential elements of the yoga event are described with reference to the realms of experience and the experience pyramid. Reasons for choosing event components for the event plan are generally discussed with references to benchmarking in chapter 4 and the theoretical framework in chapters 2 and 3. The actual product 'How to plan a yoga event' that was made for the commissioning party can be found in the appendices (appendix 2).

The commissioning party wanted to know how the whole event would be organized from start to end process. Accordingly, the product 'How to plan a yoga event', consists of a detailed plan that was divided into three parts. The first part discusses what happens before the event, the second part gives guidelines on what has to be done on the event day and the third part includes steps of the post-event stage. The author considered event marketing important in all of the aforementioned parts. The event elements, schedule and program were given special attention in the first two parts.

The author planned the product thoughtfully and wanted the chosen elements to be executable and correspond to the initial commission. Instructions on how to create a special yoga event were made easy to follow, clear and detailed. The thesis concentrates on planning the product, that is the actual event. However, the author didn't have the possibility to execute the plan and see how it works in real life, since the commissioning party wanted the event to take place in spring or summer 2016. The author graduates before the event is executed, but would be highly interested in working with the commissioning party in the actual execution of the event.

5.1 Planning process

The commissioning party had told the author about yoga events held in London and Miami, which had a live DJ and were held in spaces with ambient UV-light. The author thought it would bring new, interesting and fun vibe to the yoga scene in Finland as well if these different sense activating elements were brought into the yoga practice. The event name Glow yoga was agreed on together with the commissioning party.

The thesis process started in the end of October 2015, when the author came up with the idea of planning a yoga event. The author approached the commissioner with the idea,

and she was happy to commission as she felt that the idea of a glow yoga event was fresh and that guidelines would help in organizing this specific event and future events. She wanted to create more community vibe with the event in Lahti, thus the experiential elements for creating more community feeling were borne in mind.

The author wasn't given any restrictions regarding the event or the resources. The author was free to create guidelines on how to plan a yoga event from start to end on her own terms. The only commissioning party's wishes were for the plan to be executable and that the event would generate profit. As a result, many interesting and innovative ideas were planned, but not all of these were taken into the final plan. The final selection of the program was made keeping in mind that doing yoga should play the main part in the event, with some extra activities that would emphasize the feeling of community.

The author and commissioning party communicated throughout the process, as the author wished to see whether the ideas were heading to the right direction. When the constructive research scope was chosen, the commissioner was contacted, as the eleven people who the survey was sent to, were gathered from the personal contacts of the commissioner.

The timeline of the thesis process represents the progress in temporal order starting from attending one benchmarked event and ending with the possible implementation of the event (Figure 4).

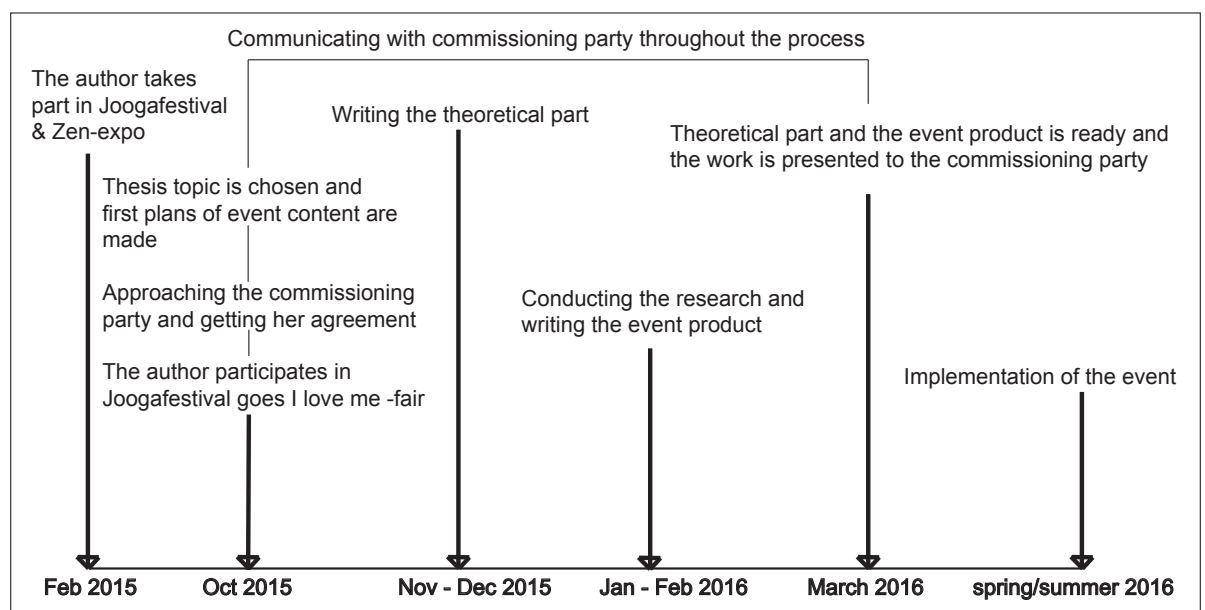


Figure 4. Timeline of the thesis process

The benchmarking research started already in February 2015 when the author took part in the JoogaFestival & Zen-expo. The author concentrated on the theoretical framework of the thesis in November and December 2015, when articles about yoga events were searched, and research on yoga events' online marketing was made in order to learn about the subject and get new ideas for the event program. The theoretical base was then gathered from online and literary sources with the addition of an interview of a food inspector from the city of Lahti. The basic information about event organization and event marketing were chosen for the framework of the thesis with the addition of theories about creating enjoyable experiences.

The constructive research was conducted in January 2016, and the results were gathered together to analyze them. The best findings were included in the thesis. In addition to the conducted constructive research, benchmarking was seen as a good way to further research event organization and find good practices on the subject. Another purpose was to see what a good yoga event program is made of. The other benchmarked event, Joogafestival Helsinki goes I love me 2015 –fair, which the author was able to participate took place in October 2015. Writing the part of benchmarking was done in January and early February 2016. The thesis was completed in March 2016.

5.2 Qualitative survey

The commissioning party asked for suggestions on whether the planned event has interest in the yoga public of Lahti. Therefore, a constructive research was conducted in order to investigate whether there would be interest for Glow yoga –event and what people would expect from it. Furthermore, the objective was to get some ideas regarding the content of the event, to see whether there would be interest for the already planned activities, and to gain some additional ideas. The chosen scope was 5-10 respondents. The commissioning party wanted the qualitative survey to be sent to her contacts who had background in practicing yoga and lived in the Lahti region.

A written semi-structured survey questionnaire was chosen to be efficient for the purposes. The survey was conducted in Finnish. The questionnaire included questions with multiple answering options as well as open-ended questions. With the open-ended questions, the author hoped to give more freedom to answer. The questionnaire can be found as an appendix (appendix 1). The questionnaire was sent to eleven people.

Five respondents answered, and all of them were interested to participate in the described event. In addition to yoga and live DJ music in the UV-lit space, there was a common

interest for additional time spent together. Also, having three extra activities alongside yoga was of interest to the respondents. These included an after party, eating, and a yoga wear/jewelry stall. Some of the respondents answered to the open-ended question with their own words about other activities they desired to be included in the event. These included relaxing and massaging in a circle and guided heart opening practice or other self-improving practice. Also, a guided meditative dance session was suggested, where DJ would play music and people could express themselves by dancing preferably with their eyes closed and without taking eye-contact with others. This kind of activity was said to need a set timeframe.

The respondents suggested that the duration for the whole event should be 3 or 4 hours. The survey included a question whether a meal should be offered as part of the event, to be included in the ticket price, to be with surcharge or whether it shouldn't be part of the event at all. Four out of five said the meal should be available for purchasing with a surcharge. Four out of five respondents answered to the last open-ended question with thoughts about their expectation of the event. One respondent wished that a catering company, that prepared for instance Indian or Nepalese food, would bring the food to the event. One respondent wished for good music suitable for yoga, possibly with different themes. Regarding the vendor's stall, men's yoga clothing was suggested to be available for purchasing as well as yoga props such as belts, blocks and mats.

The addition of new ideas brought up in the conducted survey were considered very valuable as the respondents were from Lahti area, and were interested to take part in the event. Taking the community into the planning process was seen as a good idea, since the participating people then hopefully feel more involved in the event. Custom-making the event to correspond the desires and expectations of the participants has its benefits, as the event is then not only organized for the fun of it, but it has some deeper meaning, which is to fulfill the community's needs.

The purpose was to use the questionnaire as a tool to get ideas for the event, and to know whether the event would attract yoga enthusiasts to participate. The validity confirms that the research measures what it purports to measure (Goldblatt 2010, 47). This provided, this research can be regarded valid, as the objective was to get answers from yoga enthusiasts and to generate new ideas. Both of these objectives were reached. The likelihood of attending the event was 100%. However, as there were only 5 respondents, the answers to the likelihood of participating don't necessarily represent the large audience.

Reliability helps prove that the research will remain truthful and accurate over time (Goldblatt 2010, 47). If this same study would be conducted with another group of yoga enthusiasts, the answers wouldn't be significantly different, thus the research can be considered reliable.

5.3 Planning experiential elements of the event

In the creation of Glow yoga event all the four realms are taken into account: entertainment, education, escapist and esthetic. Although it can't be guaranteed that every participant gets a holistic experience, maximizing creation of experience in the customer is possible. In order to enable the creation of experience in the yoga event customer, the six elements of experience should be considered: individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast and interaction. The starting point was to create a yoga experience that would be fun and would create community feeling. The purpose of combining yoga with live DJ music and UV-lights was to create a sense of being somewhere new, getting the participants immerse fully in the yoga practice and feel a sense of community by doing things together. This being said, all the dimensions mentioned by Pine and Gilmore are important to the yoga event. The desired situation is for Glow yoga participants to be fully absorbed in the situation, actively participating and immersing in it with many senses.

The event seeks to be educational and escapist, not forgetting the esthetic and entertainment. The yoga itself can be an educational activity or an escapist one, depending on the customer's previous knowledge and skills on yoga. A participant doing yoga for the first time can get an educational experience as he/she learns new things about yoga and its different postures, himself and his own capabilities. An advanced participant may have the same kind of experience as a first-timer. However, with good planning of the event, the aim is to make a more advanced participant feel fully immersed, and get an escapist experience once he gets into the flow of moving and sensing everything around him: the ambiance in the space, lighting, sounds of the live DJ music and other participants. Other customers, service staff and surroundings influence the yoga event participant's experience. The instructor creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere and gives instructions to self-empowering and better ways to engage with one's own body and strengths. The service situation, the yoga event, is set up to be a special experience and the service staff has a crucial part in making the experience one-of-a-kind.

The esthetic dimension is taken care of with lighting, props, clothing, body painting etc. According to Pine & Gilmore (2011, 64), compelling experiences can be created, when the

event space is layered with amenities and props that correspond with the way the space is used, and it is rid of features that don't serve the function. This idea is strengthened by Tarssanen's experience pyramid, as all sensory perceptions should be designed to strengthen the theme of an experience. All the multisensory items of the yoga event such as props, clothing, lighting, exercise and food should make the customer experience enjoyable. In the yoga event, every sensory perception that doesn't serve the theme function and could intimidate the customers, should be removed. The multisensory items are considered important for the yoga event, and therefore the senses should be awakened in different steps of the event. The surroundings with ambient lighting and black lights in otherwise dark space will create a different setting and activate the sense of sight. Face and body painting as one of the extra activities beside the yoga was chosen not only because the paint will glow in the dark during the yoga practice giving some extra sensory activation to the eyes, but because the activity of painting also activates the senses of touch and feel.

The event will include a meal, which needs to suit the event concept and theme. The respondents of the survey proposed the meal to be organized by a catering company, preferably Nepalese or Indian food. The participants' senses of taste and smell are activated with the food and possible juice sample tastings. Therefore, they need to be enjoyable, suitable for everyone, and healthy as yoga lifestyle is all about complete well-being.

As stated in the experience pyramid model, creating contrast is also crucial. In addition to being an authentic, educational and escapist experience, the Glow yoga event seeks to create a new and out of the ordinary way to spend 4 hours. Spending time doing yoga exercise in a different and foreign environment enables the customer to view himself from different perspective. The customer is able to see and experience things in a different way free from the limitations and habits of his everyday life.

It is desirable that the customer sees the yoga event product as genuine and credible. In order to build a coherent and catching story, the main yoga event program elements should be examined. The yoga, meditative dance and massage session create a relaxed and fun program together with live DJ music, ambient UV-lights and glowing face/body paintings.

When successfully carried out, the Glow yoga event creates a long lasting memory in the customer's mind. The dimension of community is considered important in Glow yoga event as sharing fun and positive experiences with others can create long lasting

memories. In Glow yoga event, participants get together with new and old friends to share a common interest of yoga. The sense of belonging in a group is highly valued, and the memories can be recalled together afterwards. It is possible to have a meaningful experience by oneself, but sharing the experience of yoga, meditative dance, massaging, and eating together with other participants makes it commonly accepted and appreciated. It hopefully raises the participants' social status and links the participants more closely with the yoga event group.

On the fourth emotional level, which is meaningfulness, the experience is most likely to create positive emotions. Yoga event seeks to evoke these feelings of delight, excitement, happiness, joy of learning and affection in every event activity. Furthermore, on the highest mental level of the experience pyramid, a positive and powerful emotional experience may lead to an experience of personal change. For the participants of Glow yoga event, the result might be a change in person's physical state, state of mind or lifestyle.

5.4 Structure of the yoga event plan

The content of the event was put together utilizing the author's own ideas, suggestions from the commissioning party, as well as ideas brought up by the research and benchmarking. The author wanted to take into account the results of desired event content from the survey, and piece together a memorable and unique combination of activities that would fit into the framework of a 4-hour event. The event date was not determined by the commissioning party hence some details had to be left open. For example, no specific decision was made regarding the event site, the DJ or a specific catering company, but suggestions and examples were given. In order to find the best solutions from the vast options in the field, some further research was made online and enquiries were sent regarding the lighting equipment and catering.

The structure of the plan was made in accordance with the project steps described in the theoretical framework. The event plan is constructed of three parts: pre-event phase, the event day and the post event phase. The information in the pre-event phase was divided into separate chapters by their content, with following headings:

- Booking and confirming the event site
- Marketing
- Vendors
- General permissions
- Serving food at the event
- Permissions for selling food at events in Lahti

- Props and materials
- DJ and event staff
- Event sponsors
- Tickets
- Budget

For the event to go smoothly, the actual event day's responsibilities, schedules and details need to be thought of well in advance. In the event plan, the event day's responsibilities are described in two separate tables; what happens before the start of the event, and during the event. All responsibilities and the people in charge of executing them are included in the tables. The event program is presented with its timing and details. In the last phase, the post event phase, a table shows the tasks to be completed after the event. Tables were used to illustrate the needed procedures in an informative and easy way, making the event plan easier to read. The procedures that demand explanations are explained further after the tables.

The author decided to include a general event plan schedule showing all the procedures that will take place at different stages of the event. This schedule is in a table format and there are time slots starting three months before the event going through to after the event. The schedule shows the people responsible for each task and will help to organize the planning in timely order. Starting at least three months before the event, it is possible to create the yoga event from scratch. As stated in the general schedule, the first thing is to decide on the initial event objectives, theme, program and number of participants. These are presented in the first table showcasing the details of the event.

5.5 Event plan elements

The process and reasons for choosing different elements for the event plan are discussed in this chapter. There are many options in Lahti area regarding possible event venue, catering company, lighting equipment, ticket selling channels, possible sponsors and vendors. Therefore, some further research was made in order to find the best and most suitable solutions for the event. The chosen program elements are also addressed.

The event plan includes a chapter about booking and confirming the event site. The event site should be booked at least three months before the event to ensure that the space is available on the planned date. If a specific or a popular space is wanted for the event, it needs to be booked even 6 months before the event. The author made research about event sites available in Lahti area and came across large gym halls, which can be rented from schools for event purposes (Lahden kaupungin liikuntapalvelut). They were considered a good option for this event and the participating crowd of hundred people.

Other possible event sites would be yoga studios in Lahti area, which are therefore mentioned as good event site options in the event plan. Also, some other possibilities were found but are not included in the event plan. These include the sports and fair centre of Lahti, the renovated factory halls in Sibelius music hall complex and music schools' halls.

As the event lasts four hours, the author saw a need for a meal in the event content. Moreover, sharing a meal with others raises the feeling of community in the event. Enquiries about serving food at the event were sent to five catering companies: Cafe Charlotta, Metsola Center Oy, Tolvanen Oy, Evelliinan lounaskahvila and Kotikokki Simpaset Ky. Two of them, Tolvanen Oy and Cafe Charlotta confirmed that they would happily cater food for hundred participants. There needs to be personnel taking care of serving the food and cleaning up after the meal. According to Tolvanen Oy and Cafe Charlotta there would be a need for 2-3 waiters in this type of event where the food is served in a buffet-style. Café Charlotta could offer a menu of 2 salads, lamb curry, vegetable curry, basmati rice and a dessert for the price of €17,90/participant. The cost of the tableware would be €1/participant and one waiter's compensation €27/hour. Therefore, the food cost for hundred people together with the cost of tableware and the compensation for 3 waiters working for 2 hours would be €2052 in total. Tolvanen Oy stated that the details would need to be discussed in a meeting together with the catering company once the final event budget is decided. Tolvanen Oy mentioned that anything is possible, not only the menus mentioned on their website but also a custom-made menu could be created to suit this specific event. The final event budget would define what is possible; which menu elements, what tableware and how many catering staff can be included in the catering agreement.

To create a special and ambient event space, the event needs UV-lights and ambient lights. The size of the chosen event site will define how many special lights are needed. Therefore, no specifications were made about the number of lights that should be rented. A company that rents lighting equipment for events was approached. TJ vuokraus ja palvelut -company rents different lighting solutions for event purposes in Lahti area. They could rent 4 fluorescent UV-lights. Two of these lights would be 60cm long and the two others would be 120cm long. Another option is to search for another event lighting equipment company, or buy UV-lights from discoland.fi where one 120cm fluorescent UV-light attached into a metallic base costs €44 (Discoland).

At least two vendors are needed for the event. For instance, these could be companies that sell yoga wear, yoga props, jewelry or fresh juices. Two examples of local Lahti-

based yoga wear companies were found: Prema Jooga and Bahini wear. Prema Jooga is a Finnish yoga wear brand, which is operated by Lena clothing. Bahini wear is also a yoga wear company operated by a designer based in Lahti, and the clothes are made in Nepal, in a community called Crystal Earth. The work is ethical and supports the village community (Bahini wear). These examples were chosen to be included in the event plan as they do local, beautiful, and ethical work, thus they would be a great addition to the event that wants to support the community. A Helsinki-based cold press juice company POWAU is included in the event plan as a suggestion, since their healthy products would suit the event. POWAU makes 100% fruit and vegetable juices with added herbs, green leafs and water soluble superfoods (POWAU). A juice team from POWAU can be hired for events, or the juices can be ordered from their online store. POWAU could be asked to open a juice tasting station at the event, and sponsor the Instagram competition where they could give away juices for the winners.

The thesis product doesn't involve choosing one specific DJ, therefore this task is left for the commissioning party, as she will be able to tell about her own music preferences and find a suitable freelance artist. The compensation for working as a professional freelance musician at a one-night event in a restaurant or club setting is €200 according to Muusikkojen liitto. This association is for professional musicians with know-how on agreements, copyrights and social security (Muusikkojen liitto). The listed compensations on the website of Muusikkojen liitto however don't apply to non-professional freelance work. Regarding the program of the event it was seen important that the DJ music is professional, so the compensation of €200 was included in the event plan.

The pricing of the tickets was made having in mind that not necessarily everyone wants to eat at the event hence two ticket categories were chosen. Category A tickets are €65 and category B tickets are €45. The category A includes a meal and category B does not include the meal. These prices were chosen after benchmarking research. The event needs to yield profit, thus the ticket prices need to be high enough for the sales to bring profit after covering all expenses. The cost for the food brought by the catering company and the compensation for waiters is estimated to sum up to around €20 per participant, thus category A ticket including the meal is €20 more expensive than category B ticket.

Tickets could be sold at a yoga studio before the event, they could be purchased online, or they could be sold at the entrance of the event. The author considered it was important that the commissioner would be able to manage the registration and ticket sales effectively. Online purchasing was regarded the easiest and most suitable channel for the commissioner. Therefore, it is included in the event plan that selling tickets happens only

online and at the entrance of the event. An online payment institution such as Holvi.com would be suitable for arranging the ticket purchasing. In Holvi.com, all the money-related aspects of the event can be managed from ticket sales and invoicing to bookkeeping online. All attendees can be reviewed on one order list. (Holvi 2015.)

The event is expected to get 100 participants. This means that the commissioner won't be able to organize the whole event on her own. Since there are multiple elements in the event in addition to the yoga exercise, the author considered there was a need for two event employees who would help in getting the event together, and in running it. The author gathered from the benchmarked events, that having sufficient amount of people organizing and running the event is one key factor in succeeding. The tasks of these employees require some special skills, as there is a short time to execute a list of tasks before the event. The author considered, from her own experience in organizing events, that there are some important features the event employees should possess to be able to complete their tasks. To be able to communicate with the event team and the event participants, good interpersonal skills are needed. Connecting the microphone and sound system require technical skills. Organizational skills, flexibility, energy, eye for detail and good time management were other aspects that the event manager would need to consider when recruiting the event staff. The whole event team has a great effect on the participants' event experience, thus everyone in the event team should be able to bring forward the event message and theme in a consistent manner.

The event plan contains separate chapters about general permissions, and permissions regarding serving food in an event in Lahti region. These were included, since it is important to inform the authorities not only for legislative reasons but also for the safety and fluency of the event.

The event budget should be decided as one of the first things in the event planning process. As the event has so many variables, no final budget was included. Instead, the event plan includes a table where suggestions are presented; what expenses could be included in the budget and which elements could generate income.

The author decided on the length of the event, which needed to be appealing to the participants. The survey respondents regarded evening as the best time to implement this event, and the best duration according to them was 3-4 hours. To be able to create a good combination of different activities and include a dinner in the event, 4 hours was seen adequate by the author. The event time was decided to be from 6pm to 10pm. The respondents of the constructive research preferred Saturday as the event day. This would

be good to take into consideration when planning the final date for the event, as for many people Saturday is a day off and they would be able to take part in the event.

The program consists of five parts: first activities, Glow yoga exercise, dinner, meditative dance and guided massaging in pairs. First activities include face/body painting workshop where the participants are guided to create paintings on their peer participants with UV-glowing paint. This was included in the event, as it was considered a great way to activate senses, get some visual elements to the event, and make the participants interact with each other right from the start. Vendors were also included in the first part of the event, where they would open their stalls and sell products. The participants wouldn't need to arrive at 6pm sharp but they could arrive within a 45 min timeframe from 5.45pm to 6.30pm, since the nature of the introductory activities allows it.

The Glow yoga exercise was given a time slot of 1h 45min in the event program. The content of the Glow yoga exercise is not defined in the event plan, as it is to be planned by the commissioner. With professional skills the commissioner will be able to create a fun yoga exercise that suits all levels of yoga practitioners. In the event program, the dinner is after the yoga exercise, and during those 45 minutes, the participants will be able to share their time with other participants in a relaxed dinner setting. While others may want to sit and relax around dinner, others can wander around the vendor stalls during the dinner break.

One respondent in the constructive research suggested an additional activity, a meditative dance. The author decided to include it in the program after the dinner. In this activity that lasts 15 minutes, the participants need to challenge themselves as they improvise a dance in the event space. If possible, they have their eyes closed or won't be taking eye-contact with each other, which asks for fast reactions to each other's movements. This activity is very free, but should be guided by the yoga instructor. The meditative effect of this activity is in the action; the participant's do free movements and feel about the changes in their bodies after the yoga practice.

In order to have a proper closure for the event, a relaxation moment of 30 minutes was allocated in the end of the program. The last activity calls for relaxing and taking in the feelings and conditions the event activities brought up. This activity is also guided by the yoga instructor. It starts with massaging in pairs and moves on to a relaxing exercise in the end, which ends the whole event. Hopefully the participants will feel that the event brought something new, fun and worthy to them.

5.6 Marketing plan of the yoga event

Defining the target group was done mainly on psychographic and geographic terms. The target group was segmented to the residents of a specific area, in this case Lahti. By psychographic segmentation the target market was chosen to include people who enjoy yoga lifestyle, and love to interact with others. Therefore, the target group for Glow yoga event are active yoga enthusiasts who enjoy community events. Demographic segmentation was not used, because the age, gender and family of the target group were not seen very important. The yoga lifestyle attracts a wide range of people from young children to senior yoga practitioners.

All the current and previous customers of the commissioning party are targeted in order to market the event to those who already have some experience in yoga. This target group would be expected to tell friends and relatives who would be drawn to experience something totally new to them. The main objective is to create a feeling of community and gain visibility with this event. Having this in mind, the best possible outcome would be to gain new customers with this event.

The main message of the event is to have fun yoga in an ambient atmosphere and to create a community of like-minded people. The chosen event space, program, food and drinks service, theme, promotional material and material used during the event, as well as performers and host will bring forward this main message. This main idea should be present at all stages from marketing and actual experiencing to after sale.

Glow yoga is new to Lahti area. There are several yoga studios that offer workshops and events in Lahti area, such as yogaROCKS Lahti, Energyfly and Lahden astanga joogasali. However, the combination of live DJ music with yoga in a UV-lit space is something unique.

Social media was considered the most cost-effective means of marketing the event, since the statistics show that people are actively using different social media platforms, especially Facebook. Marketing in different social media platforms was regarded timesaving and convenient. The commissioning party's own personal Facebook profile and her yoga Facebook profile are channels to promote the event, and a separate event profile should be created in Facebook. In order to appeal to a wider audience some direct marketing is used, including personal marketing, flyers and posters.

It is discussed in the event plan that 40 posters and 200 flyers should be printed out for Glow yoga marketing. The event budget, however, defines the possibilities for the quality and amount of printed marketing materials. The aforementioned numbers are therefore indications on how many would be needed for event marketing purposes. Posters need to be spread around the town of Lahti, preferably to sports clubs, schools, and businesses in the city centre. There is a need for flyers at the yoga instructor's own lessons and at the spin-off event. The spin-off event consists of a small yoga session guided by the yoga instructor, and handing out flyers in one of the shopping malls in Lahti. It will preferably raise awareness of the event and the yoga instructor among a large audience, and attract participants to the event. Preferably the yoga instructor will get more visibility amongst the participants with the event, the participants will remember her after the event and start attending her weekly classes and future events.

Companies sponsoring the Glow yoga event would be able to increase their corporate and product image by handing out some products for Instagram competition. Products especially designed for yoga enthusiasts, would most certainly gain an increase in product awareness amongst the yogis who follow Instagram. Naturally, other products than only those designed for yogis would be welcome as well. Local businesses from Lahti area, such as Bahini wear, would raise product awareness amongst Lahti and surrounding regions' residents and benefit from getting more local customers.

6 Discussion

This chapter includes a conclusion where the execution of the product-oriented thesis and its results are discussed. The thesis process is evaluated and elaborated with thoughts about the chosen framework, its implementation and results. A comparison is made between the theoretical work and the empirical part, to see whether there are connections and whether the theoretical base holds true in the context of this thesis. Furthermore, it is discussed whether the work was successful or not, with reference to the goals. Future propositions are given concerning possible future research objectives. Lastly, the author's own development during the thesis process is discussed.

6.1 Conclusions

The theoretical framework of the thesis is delimited to event management, event marketing and selected theories about experience creation. Both literary and online sources were used for the theoretical part. An additional interview was made to gather information about regulations and permission from a health inspector of food control based in Lahti. Benchmarking four different yoga events were used as a tool to gather more information for planning a successful yoga event. Two out of four benchmarked events were participated by the author, and the other two were analyzed from online sources. In addition, a constructive survey was conducted to get to know the interest levels for the type of event, and to know what is expected from the event. On the side, the respondents brought up new ideas regarding the event content, and some of the suitable suggestions were used in the final event plan.

The actual thesis product, the yoga event plan, was created using the knowledge from the theoretical work and the findings from benchmarking and constructive research. The yoga event plan is restricted to the creation of a specific Glow yoga event. It is a suggestion for the commissioning party on how the event could be planned from initiation to evaluation, along with suggestions on how to make it profitable. The plan includes three steps: pre-event phase, the event day stage and post-event stage. The tasks and responsibilities related to each stage are introduced in the form of tables. Furthermore, the author gives suggestions on possible event elements that will define the event concept, and presents the chosen event program and its timing.

The basic knowledge on the plan can be used for any upcoming yoga event. Additionally, the theoretical work of the thesis can be used as a reference tool for any future events organized by the commissioner. The actual event implementation was not part of the thesis framework.

6.2 Process evaluation and future propositions

Some limitations were brought to the work as no set date was decided for the event, and the implementation of the event was not included in the framework of the thesis. Instead of creating a plan that has every detail described and planned to the date, the author decided to concentrate on giving suggestions on how the event can be organized, and which items and elements could be included in the event. The author saw the endless possibilities for suggestions quite challenging, but managed to create a set of event activities and put together a logical event plan that includes the steps from start to end processes.

One of the commissioner's wishes was to get suggestions on whether the yoga public of Lahti would be interested to participate in the specific type of yoga event. This was researched with a survey questionnaire, and the results showed that all respondents were interested to participate in the event. The scope should have been much bigger to truly research the interest level of all yoga enthusiasts from Lahti region. However, the scope was sufficient for other research objectives, such as gaining information on which activities were considered attractive, and what was the desired length for the event.

The author saw that the commissioner's wish for suggestions on how to make a profitable yoga event was met to some extent. Suggestions were given on how to create a budget, how to choose elements for the event, and how to create profitable ticket pricing. However, the author wasn't able to create a final budget for the event.

The commissioning party didn't give a certain deadline for the thesis, but planned to implement the product in the spring or summer 2016. The author put a deadline for completing the thesis in early February, which however wasn't met, as the thesis was completed in the beginning of March. Still, it didn't have an impact on the commissioning party's plans.

Limiting the theoretical framework was challenging, as the literary and online resources for event management and marketing were extensive and diverse. The author was surprised to find a great amount of specialized event resources. All of them, however, couldn't be used because of too limited view on a special type of event market. Some specialized literary sources on sports event organization raised the authors' interest but weren't seen relevant as they mainly concentrated on large-scale or mega-events. The author faced a challenge in delimiting the framework that would be used for creating the event plan, but

finally the basics about event organization and marketing were chosen for the framework of the thesis with additional theories about the creation of experiences. These formed a good base for the creation of a yoga event plan. The event plan has connections to the theoretical framework as all the main stages and elements of event project cycle were used to create the product. The author can state that the theoretical framework holds true in the creation of the plan.

The commissioner was very happy with the thesis process and the contact along it. She regarded the plan as a great platform to start with and to develop further from. She is currently in the process of developing new yoga events, and the thesis has provided her with great ideas and reminded her of all the details that have to be taken into account when planning events. She has started using the timeline for another project of hers as a basis of what she need to remember and when all of these things need to be done and taken care of. She is going to keep a yoga retreat in May, and most of the thesis applies to the planning of the retreat as well. The theoretical knowledge used in the thesis gave the commissioner ideas for creating more all-around satisfying events for her students.

One future proposition would be to do a research on whether the event plan holds true in real life when the event is implemented. Another suggestion is regarding the constructive research. The author proposes that a larger research scope of yoga public should be included in making a constructive research about the desires and interests for attending a specific type of yoga event. When the number of respondents is large enough, the research findings could give some indication on whether the event would attract people or not.

The Glow yoga event could be made into a regular event series, where the event would be organized once in every two months. The same event team would organize the series of events. A research could be conducted concentrating on the organizing team's thoughts and ideas about the event process and its success. This would be a qualitative research and the results would be beneficial for improving the future events. The results would indicate whether expanding the event series to other cities would be worthwhile.

6.3 Own learning process

The author was intrigued by the idea of doing a product-oriented thesis as she has great interest in finding creative ideas and solutions. The author has experience in organizing events in previous work positions, and a passion for attending events that are sense

provoking, and become enjoyable and memorable experiences. This provided, the author was happy to create a structured yoga event and marketing plan.

The author was familiar with the theoretical framework of the thesis before the writing process started, as she had previous experience in creating events. The thesis process proved to be longer and more challenging than the author had expected, as the content of theory sources to be studied was extensive. The multiple steps of the thesis process prepared the author for making the final product. During one stage of writing the author had to put special attention to separating the empirical parts from the actual product. Nonetheless, all process steps gave the author more knowledge on the subject, be it theory base research or conducting the constructive research. The author gained experience in using multiple different methods e.g. benchmarking and constructive research. She learned to create a logical survey and conduct a research in a professional manner. The author will be able to use the knowledge in the field of hospitality in the future.

Working for a commissioner gave a positive challenge as the author got to work towards fulfilling the commissioner's wishes about the outcome. The author regarded working towards a set goal defined by another person as a new and refreshing learning process. The author was happy to get a sense of direction and purpose, which enabled her to stick to the plan. Doing a work-life related thesis gave the author good understanding of what the cooperation between different parties in the hospitality field can be like, and got interesting ideas regarding possible future collaboration projects.

Conducting research and creating a logical and coherent piece of academic writing were no obstacles but required a new way of thinking – a professional approach. From now on, the author feels more confident in undertaking a project which requires good timing, and working with a constantly evolving piece in a professional manner.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey questionnaire



Haaga-Helia

Hyvä tutkimukseen osallistuja!

Kerään tällä tutkimuslomakkeella tietoa Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulun opinnäytetyötäni varten. Opinnäytetyöni käsittelee joogatapahtuman suunnittelua ja markkinointia. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus on selvittää olisiko Glow yoga –tapahtumalle kiinnostusta, ja mitä tapahtuman toivottaisiin sisältävän. Glow yoga –tapahtuma yhdistää hauskan ja yhteisöllisen joogatunnin pimeässä, live DJ musiikin ja kehonmaalauksen väreillä, jotka hohtavat pimeässä antaen tapahtumalle lisämaustetta.

Pyydän Sinua vastaamaan alla oleviin kysymyksiin, jotka käsittelevät tapahtumaa ja sen sisältöä. Käsittelem vastauksesi luottamuksellisesti enkä luovuta saamiani tietoja ulkopuolisille. Jos Sinulla herää kysymyksiä, otathan minuun yhteyttä.

Toivon saavani vastauksesi 24.1.2016 mennessä sähköpostilla osoitteeseen reetta.launiemi@myy.haaga-helia.fi

Kiitos paljon vastauksistasi jo etukäteen!

Reetta Launiemi

1. Sukupuoli _____
2. Ikä _____
3. Kuinka kauan olet harrastanut joogaa? _____

Voit värittää valitsemasi vaihtoehdon seuraavista kysymyksistä:

4. Olisitko kiinnostunut osallistumaan Glow yoga -tapahtumaan, jossa soittaisi DJ?
 - a) Kyllä
 - b) En
5. Mikä tapahtuma-ajankohta olisi sinulle mielekkäin?
 - a) Perjantai-ilta
 - b) Lauantai-iltapäivä
 - c) Lauantai-ilta
 - d) Sunnuntai-iltapäivä
 - e) Sunnuntai-ilta

6. Mitkä oheistoiminnot kiinnostaisivat Sinua? Voit valita useita.

- a) Ruokailu
- b) Yhdessäolo
- c) Mehumaistiaiset
- d) Joogavaatteiden ja korujen myyntikoju
- e) Preparty
- f) Afterparty
- g) Vapaata tanssia DJ:n musiikkiin
- h) Muu, mikä?

7. Mikä olisi hyvä pituus Glow yoga -tapahtumalle?

- a) 3h
- b) 4h
- c) tapahtuma voisi olla ____ tunnin pituinen

8. Haluan ruokailun

- a) sisältyvän pääsylipun hintaan.
- b) erillisestä maksusta paikan päällä.
- c) En halua ruokailun olevan osa tapahtumaa.

9. Mitä muuta toivoisit tapahtumalta?

Appendix 2. Product: How to plan a yoga event

How to plan a yoga event

Event details

| | |
|---|--|
| Event: | Glow yoga event with live DJ music in a UV-lit setting. Event includes extra activities, vendor stalls, and a dinner. |
| Objective: | Gain profit and visibility with the event, and create feeling of community |
| Place: | Lahti |
| Expected number of participants: | 100 |
| Event duration: | 4 hours |
| Date: | Event is planned to be executed on a Saturday evening in spring/summer 2016 |
| Event manager: | The yoga instructor |

General event plan schedule in order of time and importance

| Time | Task | Person(s) responsible of the task |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 3 months before | Decide on event objectives, theme and program | Event manager |
| | Create an event budget | |
| | Book the event site | |
| | Rent tables and chairs (if not included in the event site rent) | |
| | Hire the DJ | |
| | Make an agreement with the catering company | |
| | Confirm vendors | |
| | Create a program and schedule | |
| | Apply for permissions | |
| | Make sponsorship agreements | |
| | Create a website for registration and ticket sale | |
| | Social media marketing: create a Facebook event profile and promote in other Facebook profiles and groups | |
| | Create and print flyers and posters | |
| | Personal marketing: hand out flyers | |
| 2 months before | Recruit two staff members to help out in the spin-off event and on the final event day | |
| | Book lighting, sound system and microphone equipment | |
| 1 month before | Start Instagram competition | |
| | Spin-off event at the shopping mall, hand out flyers | Event manager and two staff members |
| | Send event details to menoinfo.fi and Lahti Region Oy | Event manager |
| | Purchase body paints, glow sticks and rubbish bins | |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| | A week before the event: announce Instagram competition winners and send the prizes | |
| | Retrieve all booked props | |
| | Print name lists for entrance ticket booth, make signs for event day and get a cashier | |
| Event day | Set up the space: lighting sound system microphone catering point tables and chairs entrance booth face/body paint station waste management | Two staff members |
| | Put up signs | |
| | Welcome vendors and the DJ | Event manager |
| | Set up vendor stalls and the DJ station | Vendors and the DJ |
| | Manage entrance booth | One staff member |
| | Manage the face/bodypaint workshop | One staff member |
| | Manage the catering point | Catering company |
| | Welcome the participants and be the general host during the event | Event manager |
| | Guide the yoga exercise | |
| | Guide the meditative dance | |
| | Guide the massaging and relaxation activity | |
| After the event | Clean up the space | Two staff members |
| | Return all rented items | Event manager |
| | Thank partners and sponsors | |
| | Post event photos in social media channels | |
| | Create feedback forms, send to participants, collect them, and analyse the data | |
| | Make a final evaluation | |

Pre-event step by step

Budget

The objective is to gain profit with this event. This budget plan is an example of what the budget for the Glow yoga event could consist of. If event expenses are €6500 and everyone is expected to buy A price category tickets with €65, the critical point is 100 sold tickets to break even. The objective is to gain profit, thus the expenses need to be less than €6500.

| Expenses | Income |
|--|--|
| Event site rent | Ticket sales |
| Event props' rent: lighting, sound system, microphone, chairs and tables | Possible sponsorships |
| Event materials: paint equipment, glow sticks, rubbish bins, signs | Renting a vendor table for yoga wear company |
| Marketing materials | |
| Juice sample tasting | |
| Food expenses | |
| Compensation for DJ | |
| Compensation for 2 staff members | |

Booking and confirming the event site

The rent price of the event venue affects the pricing of the event, and the location affects how the customers are able to reach the place by car or public transport. Booking the event site is one of the first things to do when organizing the yoga event, since it defines many other elements of the event. Therefore, it should be booked at least three months before the event date. Different yoga studios can be approached, as well as concert halls and different schools for their large gym facilities. However, there are some restrictions for choosing a site for the yoga event. For the purposes of this special black light yoga event, the space needs to be quite dark. Therefore, spaces with a lot of windows that can't be covered are out of option. In addition, the space needs to be big enough for around 100 people, which sets some limitations, as the amount of restrooms/changing rooms needs to be sufficient. A large enough space is needed to be able to spread out the yoga mats for the yoga practice. There has to be enough space to serve the dinner made by a catering company, and enough chairs to sit down and enjoy the meals. Also, the space needs to be easy to reach by car or public transportation. Adequate parking space is needed.

The event site owner/landlord could be asked to sponsor the event. Creating a sponsorship with the landlord can be beneficial, since the rent cost could be covered with the sponsorship agreement. One possibility is to have a yoga studio as a sponsor. Even though this event is an independent one, the event manager could agree to additionally promote the studio's classes and events. There are also several school gym halls in Lahti area that are suitable for this event. The event manager can apply for the gym halls that are available during weekdays from 4pm to 10pm, and on weekends from 9am to 10pm, if the school isn't using it or any sports club hasn't already booked it beforehand. The spring semester lasts until the 30th of April 2016, therefore the event should be implemented before the end of the semester. Using a big school gym hall in Lahti area costs €35 per hour according to a pricelist from Lahden kaupungin liikuntapalvelut 2015-2016. The Glow yoga event itself is scheduled to be 4 hours long. At least one extra hour is needed both before and after the event, for getting everything ready before the participants are allowed to enter, and for the clean-up. The use of a school gym hall could cost e.g. $6 \times €35 = €210$.

Event sponsors

Sponsors should be approached at least three months before the event. Regarding the Facebook and Instagram contest, several sponsors could be approached. The sponsors would be asked to voluntarily hand out some of their products for marketing purposes of the event. These products would be given to those who win the Instagram competition.

Local businesses from Lahti area can be approached, such as Bahini wear. Sponsoring the event would be beneficial for the company as it would raise product awareness amongst Lahti and surrounding regions' residents and it would benefit from getting more local customers. Bahini wear is a yoga wear company, which is operated by a designer based in Lahti. Other businesses than those concentrating on yoga products are welcome as well.

Helsinki-based cold press juice company POWAU could be asked to sponsor the event, and take part in the Instagram challenge and the event. POWAU makes 100% fruit and vegetable juices with added herbs, green leafs and water soluble superfoods.

Vendors

At least two vendors are needed for the event day; one that sells yoga wear and yoga props, and one that will manage juice sample tastings. Bahini and Prema Jooga are examples of yoga wear companies, which could be asked to sell their products in the

event. Prema Jooga is a Finnish yoga wear brand operated by Lena clothing based in Lahti.

Regarding the juice tasting station, juice company POWAU could be approached.

There are two options:

1. To hire an event team from POWAU to manage a station at the event or
2. To order the juices beforehand from POWAU online store, and have one event staff member take care of the juice station during the event.

Marketing

Marketing should start 3 months before the actual event. An official event profile should be created in Facebook, and this event profile can be shared on commissioning party's own Facebook profile feed, her yoga profile's feed, on different yoga groups and Lahti region's event groups in Facebook. In the official event profile people can be invited to the event, and they can invite their friends as well. In the event profile the participants will be able to see the list of attending people. When people like the event profile, they will get further information and advertisements about the event in their Facebook feed. The profile will include information about the event location, time, program, the catering company's menu, information about local transportation services, event ticket prices, reminders about the Instagram challenge and a link to the website where registration and ticket purchases can be made.

The Instagram competition should be created one month before the event. The main purpose of the Instagram competition is to get more visibility for the event, its instructor and its sponsors as well as make people spread the word about the event. The competition should be promoted on the event's official Facebook profile and the commissioning party's own Facebook profiles. Two winners will be chosen from the competitors. The names of the winners are announced a week before the event, and the prizes are sent to them either by the yoga instructor or the event sponsors.

The first example of the Instagram competition includes taking a photo of a certain yoga posture and posting it with text: "Snap and post a photo of you rockin' a yoga pose, and you can win goodies or a ticket to the Glow yoga event in Lahti! Ready, set, pose! Remember to tag your photo with #glowyogalahti and the sponsors' hashtags!"

The second example of an Instagram challenge includes posting a photo of a chosen yoga posture with text: "All you adventure-loving yogis out there, go and find a poster of the Glow yoga event in Lahti city center. Post a photo of yourself with it, and you can win

either a free ticket to the event or goodies! Remember to tag your photo with #glowyogalahti and the sponsors' hashtags!"

Personal marketing will take place after yoga lessons of the commissioning party, starting 3 months before the event. When there are limited resources for marketing the event, the event organizer can create a larger event combination with a couple spinoff events. Therefore, it would be beneficial to market the event on these spinoffs, small events, which together create a whole entity from the view of the customer. An example of a spinoff would be a small shopping mall event. A small yoga session at the shopping mall would desirably create interest among a larger audience, and handing out flyers would give them a possibility to look at the details more carefully at home and get excited about this event. In Lahti area, Karisma and Trio are examples of shopping malls where such small event could be organized. The head of marketing in Karisma and Trio should be contacted concerning the arrangements of this spinoff event. This small event should take place one month before the event.

At least 40 posters should be printed out and put up on bulletin boards around Lahti and business premises that give permission for it. For the spin-off event, there is a need for posters and flyers as well. In total, 200 flyers need to be printed out, and handed to people at the spin-off event in the shopping mall, and at the commissioning party's own yoga lectures.

Additional media channels should be contacted one month before the event. The media group ESA has a website, menoinfo.fi, for events in Lahti area. This event calendar is a free marketing channel for the yoga event. ESA media group picks event details from the website to be published in their different media channels. Another channel that can be used is Lahti Region Oy, which offers events visibility on their website, newsletters, flyers and other forms of Lahti region's marketing.

General permissions

There are several regulations that should be taken into account when organizing the yoga event in Lahti region. If the event site is a public area, which use is controlled by the city, permission for use needs to be granted from the landlord. A permission of using a specific area of Lahti city has to be obtained from an authority. An event organizer always needs to have permission of using the area for event purposes and is always responsible of the general safety at the event. The manager should apply for permissions regarding the yoga event site and serving food well in advance, 3 months before the event. The bigger the event, the earlier the manager needs to start applying for permissions.

Serving food at the event

A catering company can be used, or the food can be bought straight from a restaurant and served according to food safety regulations by the event organizer. The agreement with a catering company should be made three months beforehand to ensure that their services are available on the specific date. The event should have a time frame for the dinner to be able to serve it at the right temperature. The menu details, the tableware, and needed number of waiters will be determined together with the catering company. Some menu examples could be Nepalese or Indian food. The number of participants, who have purchased the ticket with a meal, will be viewed from the event registration site's list of attendees.

Two catering companies, Tolvanen Oy and Cafe Charlotta from Lahti, would happily cater food for hundred participants. There needs to be personnel taking care of serving the food and cleaning up after the meal. If the food will be served buffet style, 2-3 waiters will be needed from the catering company according to Tolvanen Oy and Cafe Charlotta.

Catering expenses will depend on the final event budget. The budget shows what is financially possible; how many menu components can be included. Café Charlotta could offer a menu of 2 salads, lamb curry, vegetable curry, basmati rice and a dessert for the price of €17,90/participant. The cost of the tableware would be €1/participant and the waiters' compensation €27/hour.

Permissions for selling food at events in Lahti

Food selling at an event, that lasts up to two days and happens less frequently than once a month, is considered temporary. Selling food can be managed either by the event organizer or independent sellers. If the juices for the juice sample tasting station will be bought and served by the event organizer, the authorities need to be informed about having a movable food establishment in the event premises. The event staff needs to be trained to be able to work in problematic and unpredictable situations. In events, it is important to pay attention to the correct temperatures of food selling and storing.

If a juice company hires a table at the event, they need to report about preparing, selling or serving food to the local health protection authorities of the event in written form. The event organizer can attach every movable food establishments' basic information into the general announcement of the event, which is then sent to Lahti official authorities 14 days before the start of the event at the latest. Food vendors letting a stall at an event and a catering company that is responsible of food and its serving need to have an in-house control plan and keep it with them. Reporting to the food safety authorities about using a

caterer can be done either by the caterer or the event organizer. The food safety authorities should be contacted at terveydensuojelu@lahti.fi if there is any doubt about the correct procedures in selling and serving food during the event.

The reporting file and the guidelines for selling food outdoors in Lahti region can be found in Lahti region's website. These guidelines can also be adapted to food operations taking place indoors. As stated in these guidelines, some aspects of the event surroundings have to be taken into consideration such as the ventilation system and waste management.

Props and materials

Props need to be booked 2 months before the event to make sure they will be available on the specific event day. The Glow yoga event needs special black lights in order to create light for glowing face and body paint, white clothes and glow sticks. In addition, there is a need for ambient lights, because the UV-lights themselves don't create enough light for the yogis to be able to see and move around the yoga practice area. Smaller materials such as face and body paints and glow sticks need to be purchased 1 month before the event.

TJ vuokraus ja palvelut -company rents lights for event purposes in Lahti area. For the purposes of the yoga event, they could rent 4 fluorescent UV-lights. Two of these lights would be 60cm long and the two others would be 120cm long. Another option is to buy UV-lights from discoland.fi, where one 120cm fluorescent UV-light attached into a metallic base costs €44. The facial and body paints could be bought online, for example from discoland.fi. A set of 8 different UV paint colours would cost €19,90.

In addition to the lighting equipment, important technical equipment needed for the event include a sound system for the DJ and a fitness microphone system for the yoga instructor. There is a need for tables and chairs for participants to sit down and enjoy their meals. If the event takes place at a school gym hall, the tables and chairs could be rented from the school. Also, there is a need for multiple rubbish bins, signs that guide the participants to the right place and a cashier for the entrance ticket booth. If the event organizer decides to serve the ready-packed fresh pressed juices, they need to be purchased before the event.

Event participants should be advised to take their own yoga mats with them, but there should also be mats available for those who don't have their own. These could be borrowed from one of the studios the yoga instructor teaches at.

DJ and event staff

The compensation for working as a professional freelance musician at a one-night event in a restaurant or club setting is €200 according to Muusikkojen liitto. This however doesn't apply to non-professional freelance work. It is regarded important that the DJ music is professional, so the compensation of €200 would need to be included in the event budget.

At least two staff members are needed. In the spin-off event they will be responsible for handing out flyers. On the event day, they have a more comprehensive list of tasks to complete. They should be recruited 2 months before the event, having in mind a need for people with organizational skills, flexibility, energy, eye for details, good time management-, tech- and interpersonal skills.

Tickets

For this event, two ticket price categories would be suitable. The price category A is €65 and includes both the event and the meal. The price category B is €45 and includes the event but no meal. Purchasing the ticket to Glow yoga event happens online or at the entrance of the event. In order to know how many people are coming, and to get information about possible allergies for the catering company, a registration website is put up online. Those who want to purchase category A-tickets need to register three days before the event day at the latest, since the catering company needs to be informed about the needed amount of food. Category B tickets will be available also at the event entrance. The registration website should be programmed to receive up to 100 participants. A link for registration and ticket purchase is put up on the Facebook event profile. One efficient example of a payment institution online is Holvi.com, where all the money-related aspects of the event can be managed from ticket sales and invoicing to bookkeeping. All attendees can be reviewed on one order list.

For the purpose of follow-up and evaluation of marketing it would be of advantage to know how the customers found out about the event. During the online ticket purchase the customer would be asked a question "where did you find out about this event?" Answering choices would include: event's Facebook page, yoga instructor's own Facebook page, Instagram, flyers, posters, spin-off event, personally from the yoga instructor, friends or family, other.

Event day step by step

At least one hour should be dedicated to organizing the event space with props from 4.45pm to 5.45pm before the participants are let in. The nature of the first activities allows for participants to enter the event when they like between 5.45pm-6.30pm. The participants will be able to get in at 6.30pm the latest.

| Event day, before the start of the event | | |
|---|--|--|
| Two event employees will take care of: | | The yoga instructor is responsible of: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arranging the event space with the props: Connecting UV-lighting, sound system and microphones | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing and closing the registration website |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Putting up guiding signs on the walls and signposts around the event site | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bringing in yoga mats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up the entrance ticket booth including cashier | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcoming the DJ, vendors and the catering company |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up the body paint workshop and giving instructions to people with face/body painting | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up the juice tasting station, tables and chairs for the catering point, putting the rubbish bins on their place | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking photos during the event activities for post-marketing purposes | | |

| During the event | | |
|--|--|---|
| The event employees will be both given their own tasks: | | The yoga instructor is responsible of: |
| <p>One employee will manage the entrance booth at the start:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sell tickets - Sign in people who are on the name list - Hand them glow sticks <p>The employee is responsible of taking photos during the event</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being the general host: welcoming everyone to the event and creating community vibe by getting people to introduce themselves to each other - Offering the participants elements for an enjoyable experience - Guiding participants from one activity to another - Giving instructions on activity elements, variations and further explaining the purpose of every activity - Doing activities on time |
| <p>The other employee will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manage the face/body painting station as a first activity - Manage the juice station and give juice samples to participants during the dining break, if a juice company isn't used | | |

Event program and schedule:

Event starts officially at 6pm and ends at 10pm.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 5.45pm – 6.45pm | First activities: a face- and bodypaint workshop with instructions, vendor stalls open |
| 6.45pm – 8.30pm | The Glow yoga exercise with live DJ music (1h 45min) |
| 8.30 – 9.15pm | The dinner is served by a catering company, vendor stalls are open |
| 9.15 – 9.30pm | Meditative dance guided by the yoga instructor |
| 9.30 – 10pm | Guided massaging in pairs, ending with a relaxation |

The doors should be opened at 5.45pm to let people in, and the doors are kept open until 6.30pm. The participants will be able to wander around the vendors' stalls and the face/body paint station from 5.45pm on. DJ is in charge of creating a soundscape during the whole evening starting at 5.45pm. There is a possibility to purchase yoga wear, mats, blocks and belts etc. from the vendor stall, taste fresh pressed juices (if a vendor is in charge) and get a face/body paint made by another participant with the paint that glows in the UV-lights. Instructions are given to the participants by one staff member to be able to create simple but beautiful face/body paintings to peer participants. The host, yoga instructor, will officially open the event at 6pm welcoming everyone. The Yoga exercise starts at 6.45pm. The content of the 1h 45 minute long yoga exercise could include vinyasa yoga that suits all levels of yoga practitioners.

Catering company and its timing have to be on spot at 8.30pm as the event is planned strictly within a set timeframe. The vendor stalls are open during the dining break. Self-expression is highlighted in the next activity, the guided meditative dance session, which will start after the meal at 9.15pm. The DJ plays music during this session and people are encouraged by the instructor to express themselves by dancing with their eyes closed and without taking any eye contact with others if possible. Since this activity is more relaxed than the yoga, it happens after the meal. The dance session is quite short, because enough time is needed for the last activity: massaging and full relaxation. The last 30 minutes from 9.30 to 10pm is therefore reserved for massaging in pairs and a guided relaxation. The idea is to let the participants feel about how the day's exercise feels in their bodies, get a good recovery by getting massaged by a peer participant, and get a sense of closure for the event. The yoga instructor guides this session and gives instructions to participants who are first divided in pairs for massaging and switch when instructor tells to. After massaging the instructor guides a relaxing exercise for the last 5-10 minutes, giving the participants a chance to feel the difference in their bodies after the activities.

| Post event steps | |
|---|--|
| Two event employees' responsibilities: | The yoga instructor's responsibilities: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pack up all borrowed items including tables and chairs, yoga mats, lighting and sound system, microphone equipment etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Manage finances and make final payments to the catering company and the landlord if not already completed before the event |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take off the signs around the event site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Return rented items to their owners |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean up the space accordingly, and take care of waste management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send thank you e-mails to the vendors and sponsors of the Instagram competition |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue marketing in social media: post photos of the event on Facebook and Instagram |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a feedback form, send, collect and analyse |

As stated in the table above, the yoga instructor's responsibilities include making a feedback form, which is helpful for getting valuable information about the success of the event, participants' hopes and suggestions for next events. When the feedback forms are analysed, the findings should be included in a final evaluation of the whole event. The yoga instructor should discuss together with the event team the success of the event, and include improvement suggestions in the final evaluation. Moreover, the planning process should be evaluated together with finance, timing, event day procedures and the event's success. The final evaluation with propositions and suggestions can be used as reference for next events.

The event process is a project that requires good organizational skills from the event manager's part to be able to implement a successful event. When the steps suggested in this plan from initiation to evaluation are taken into account, the event implementation becomes easier, more cost-effective and timesaving. Good planning, and careful consideration of event elements and their management ensure a successful and profitable event.