

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

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**Planning and Implementing of an Event:  
Case “Maslenitsa” in Saimaa Region**

Thesis 2013

## **Abstract**

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Planning and Implementing of an Event: Case “Maslenitsa” in Saimaa Region,  
52 pages, 2 appendices

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Degree Programme in Tourism

Bachelor’s Thesis 2013

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The idea of event organization came up during lectures at Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. Saimaa region needs to have more events and festivals. Thus, the purpose of this thesis project was to plan and implement an event based on traditional Russian celebration Maslenitsa. This event could enhance cultural connections between two neighbour countries and attract both local residents and Russian tourists in the region. Besides, the partner company Saimaa Adventures Ky got an opportunity to introduce event as part of their activities, present and sell their other services.

Theoretical material for the project was gathered from the books, articles and Internet sources related to event management. The ways of Maslenitsa celebration in Russia and other countries were studied. Based on that, the project plan for celebration was created and implemented. The celebration was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March at Holiday Club Saimaa area in cooperation with Saimaa Adventures Ky.

The aim of that project was to introduce the festival to local residents of Saimaa region and tourists from St. Petersburg area. The final result of the thesis process was implementation of a created plan. According to the feedbacks, both local residents and tourists enjoyed the celebration.

Keywords: Event, Event Management, Maslenitsa

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## 1 Introduction

Nowadays, the towns of Imatra and Lappeenranta are considered as one of the main destinations among Russian tourists from Saint- Petersburg region. There is a number of reasons for that, one of which is the close location to the border between countries. According to Baranova (2012), tourists visit Finland for shopping, SPA and beauty treatments, enjoying the nature of the region, visiting relatives and for business purposes also.

For instance, based on information from Finnish Tourist Board (2011), tourists from Russia is the largest foreign visitor group. The number of tourists travelling to Finland increased up to 27% in year 2011 in comparison with year 2010 and up to 12% in year 2012 in comparison with year 2011. Over 8 million Russian tourists visited Finland within year 2012. (The Finnish Border Guard 2013.) Thus, the growing number of tourists stimulates infrastructure and service development in the region.

Based on that reason, the introduction and implementation plan of a new event for the lake Saimaa region could become a supporting factor for development of in-bound tourism in the region.

Furthermore, there are several other factors that incite to create a new event. First of all, there are only a few events in a year in Imatra and Lappeenranta area, especially during winter season. Organizations that operate in the region are concerned about the lack of events. For example, GoSaimaa Ltd, is a corporation founded by the local towns, municipalities and travel companies. The aim of the company is to boost tourism in South Karelia region by marketing the diverse product selection. Company's annual marketing plan confirms that the area vitally needs more events in order to attract a bigger number of tourists from different regions. (Gosaimaa.com 2013.)

Secondly, event arrangement provides an opportunity for local entrepreneurs to take part in it in order to present and sell their goods and services for tourists. Thirdly, organization of "Maslenitsa" (traditional Russian celebration) could create cultural connections in the area among local inhabitants and tourists. Fourthly,

“Maslenitsa” is the family type of event and for that reason it could be a supporting element and attractive factor for the largest customer segment in the area.

The main aims of the thesis are:

- To introduce the plan for organizing an event in Imatra based on traditional Russian celebration called “Maslenitsa”.
- To implement the project in Saimaa region.
- To give the opportunity for local entrepreneurs to present and sell their products and services at the event.

There are several stages that are used for completing the project. The first one is a desk study. At this stage theoretical material is studied and analysed, for example books “Event Management and Event tourism” by Getz (editions from 1997 and 2004), McDonnell, Allen, O’Tool “Festival and Special Event Management”, etc.

Second is analysis of ways of Maslenitsa arrangement, i.e. analysing of the processes of different municipalities that organize events of such type in Russia and also abroad. The third method is observation, i.e. observation of the audience behaviour and getting their instant feedbacks during event.

For me, as a Russian person, Maslenitsa is the most beloved celebration. This is a festival that unites people of different ages in order to remember the traditions of the country, to have fun, spend time in the company of friends and relatives. Therefore, introducing such an event for residents of Saimaa region is a good opportunity for creating knowledge about Russian culture. As for Saimaa Adventures, organization of the festival is a new field for the company. Besides, the company gets an opportunity to present and sell their services at the event.

Therefore, this thesis contains information and actual facts that relate to the festival planning, implementation and management. The second chapter of the thesis report contains information concerning event management and tourism in general. The third chapter introduces the concept of Maslenitsa celebration, describes the traditions and history. Besides, it also provides information about the ways of celebration of this festival in Russia and other countries nowadays.

The fifth (main) chapter deals with the different stages of project planning and management. The last two chapters summarize the results of the implementation of the project; contain conclusions and recommendations regarding event organization.

## **2 Event tourism and special event management**

Event management is the application of project management to the creation and development of festivals, events and conferences. It involves studying the intricacies of the brand, identifying the target audience, developing the event concept, planning the logistics and coordinating the technical aspects before actually launching the event. (Smith 2008.)

### **2.1 Brief historical overview**

Since ancient times, people have found the ways of marking special days and occasions in their lives: changing of the seasons, the phases of the moon, and renewal of life every spring (McDonnell & Allen & O'Tool 1999). The festive and public celebratory characteristics are important because festivals and events have long existed as significant cultural practices devised as forms of public display, collective celebration and civic ritual (Quinn 2009).

Very often there were religious underpinnings, as many festivals existed in the Middle Ages. Public displays and civic rituals were significant in Renaissance times, imperial and international exhibitions became a part of both public life and the collective imagination in Europe from the middle of the 19th century. (Quinn 2009.)

Overall, people feel the need to mark the important occasions in their both private and public aspects of life. On the other hand, with the development of technology and media, significant number of people has lost their religious beliefs and social norms of the past, but McDonnell et al. (1999) claim that people still need larger social events to mark the local and domestic details of their lives.

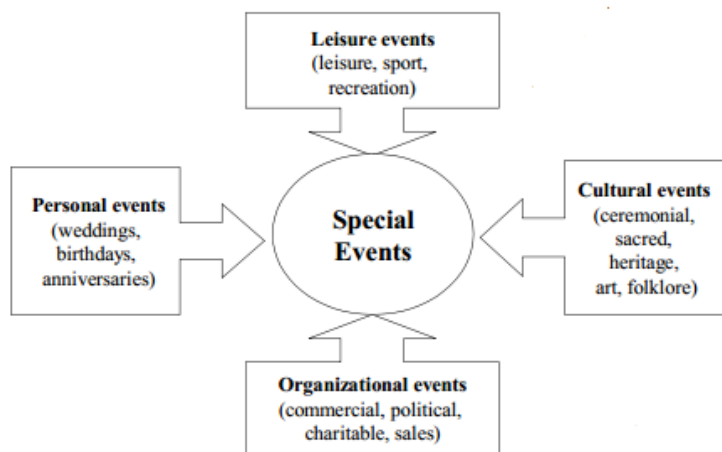
## 2.2 Special events and their classification

In order to achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives the term “special events” has been created. It describes specific rituals, performances or celebrations that are carefully planned and created to mark special occasions. Special events can include national days and celebrations, important civic occasions, unique cultural performances, major sport events, etc. (McDonnell et al. 1999.) Besides, McDonnell et al. (1999) suggest that special events are best defined by the context.

In general, all special events are often characterized according to their size and scale. According to McDonnell, Allen & O’Tool (1999) common categories are:

- mega- events (Olympic Games)
- hallmark events (refer to the events that are identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city, region)
- major events (those that can attract significant visitor numbers, media coverage and economic benefits).

Below, there is one more type of classification of the events that was introduced in the work of Shone & Parry (2010):



Picture 1. A suggested categorization of special events (Shone & Parry 2010)

### 2.3 Event tourism and economic impacts

“Event Tourism” is a term used to describe a destination development and marketing strategy to realize all the potential economic benefits of events. From the perspective of an event manager, tourists are potential customers (and in many events the main customers), so knowledge of their characteristics is important. (Getz 2004.)

Nowadays governments realize the meaning of events for the economy of the cities. They are turning to the tourism industry that is capable of delivering of economic benefits and job creation. Above all, events attract visitors, increase their average spend and length of stay. (McDonnell et al. 1999, p. 34). Festivals and other events have become integrated into regional development agendas (Quinn 2009).

Events are seen as image-makers that create profile for the destinations, position them on the market and provide a competitive marketing advantage. This led to the creation of a new field known as event tourism. (Getz 1997.)

Moreover, Getz (1997) defines event tourism as:

- The systematic planning, development and marketing of events as tourist attractions, catalysts for other developments, image builders, and animators of attractions and destination areas; event tourism strategies should also cover the management of news and negative events.
- A market segment consisting of those people who travel to attend events or who can be motivated to attend events while away from home.

In this thesis the main target group is tourists that attend the event while they are away from home.

Holding an event produces both positive and negative impacts. As McDonnell et al. (1999) claim, it is the task of the event manager to assess, manage and balance them.

To summarize, referring to McDonnell et al. (1999), the main economic impacts of the event hosting at the tourism destination are:



- Benefits for the economy from expenditures of the visitors on accommodation, food, shopping and other tourism related services, extension of the length of stay.
- Engender of other areas of the economy i.e., construction business (new tourism infrastructure), investments.
- Increase of the employment rate by temporary job creation.
- Attraction for visitors during the low season when tourism facilities are not utilized.

## **2.4 Other impacts of special events**

Other impacts that events produce are:

- social and cultural
- physical and environmental
- political.

Social and cultural impacts include the increase of pride from celebration of national days or validation of particular groups in the economy (seniors or disabled people). Some events broaden people's cultural horizons; introduce them new customs or ideas. Furthermore, events have the power to challenge the immigration and to explore the possibilities. (McDonnell et al.1999.)

In addition, events are an excellent opportunity to show the physical characteristics of a destination. On the other hand, they might be very delicate and need protection and comprehensive environmental guidelines. (McDonnell et al. 1999, pp. 24-25.)

Besides, events bring niche development opportunities for a city and state governments. They increase profile to the host community. Events attract visitors and thus create economic benefits and jobs. Above all, events can generate social cohesion, confidence and pride. Therefore, governments should value and support events. (McDonnell et al.1999, p.34.)

As it was mentioned earlier, events along with positive impacts can also produce negative impacts. The most common, identified by McDonnell et al. (1999) are:

- environmental damage (pollution, noise, traffic congestion)

- destruction of heritage
- risk of event failure
- community resistance to tourism (damage of reputation)
- loss of authenticity
- inflated prices
- opportunity costs
- manipulation of community, etc.

In order to avoid negative impacts and enhance positive, proper event concept and operational plan should be designed. Therefore, the next chapter introduces the main idea of the event that is proposed by the author of the thesis to be organized in Saimaa region.

## **2.5 Event planning**

Planning of the event is the most crucial and time consuming process. It requires clear understanding of the current position of an organization and determining of a future desired position of that organization.

Event planning is a complex process that involves many steps, such as setting a vision and mission, objectives, developing of a strategy, analysis of the environment (McDonnell et al.1999, p. 59).

Moreover, planning process can be divided into two main processes: strategic and operational planning. Strategic plans are usually directional. They identify means of achieving long term objectives. Besides, strategic plans are usually single- use plans. (McDonnell et al.1999, p. 59.)

On the contrary, operational plans are short- term. They describe specific steps needed to be done in order to implement set strategies, establish revenue and expenditure budgets. Operational plans are usually standing plans that can be used every time when the event is organized again. Both types of planning are used in planning of festivals, celebrations or other special events. (McDonnell et al.1999, p. 59.)

Regarding the books on event management by McDonnell et al. (1999), Getz (1997) and lecture notes by Lehtola (2012), the basic structure of the event plan includes following stages:

- introduction of the idea and concept of celebration
- objectives and the essence of an event
- partner organization
- responsibilities of the parties
- work with volunteers
- partners in cooperation
- program planning
- budgeting
- marketing
- event marketing mix
- risk assessment and management
- authorities (licences and permissions)
- evaluation of the project: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
- conclusions and recommendations

For example, the thesis report structure is based on this template.

## **2.6 Duties and responsibilities of event manager**

Event manager is a person who is responsible for every aspect of the event organization, starting from planning an event to implementing of it. An event management professional has to carry out many operations and processes to organize an event and make it successful. Based on information of the website Ekunji.com (2013) the main tasks of an event manager are:

- planning the event
- venue selection
- logistics
- design
- decoration
- negotiation

- media planning
- budgeting for the event
- marketing the event
- ticket sales
- customer service
- managing people
- catering
- hospitality
- time management and problem solving.

Therefore, event manager needs to have a team of professionals or volunteers that are ready to share responsibilities with event manager.

Furthermore, in order to carry out all the functions that are mentioned earlier, event manager has to possess following skills and characteristics:

- communication skills (verbal and written). Knowledge of at least one international language will give an advantage.
- budget management and time management
- basic knowledge of computers
- negotiation skills
- multi- tasking
- team management
- project management
- public relations
- marketing skills
- stress handling skills. (Ekunji.com 2013.)

## **2.7 Successful event organization**

In order to organize a successful event, following basic rules should be followed. First of all, the event should be carefully planned. Besides, the proper strategies should be set. As it was mentioned earlier, the venue for the event, budgeting, logistics etc. should be thoroughly prepared. Special attention should be given to the marketing campaign, as good promotion is a key to success. It is also worth re-

membering to choose a proper target group for the event and marketing campaign.

As for a budget, the baseline or draft budget can be created. Based on that draft, further budgets can be improved. This might help to control possible expenditures and incomes. Logistics should also be organized and controlled properly as it unites all the operations.

Secondly, the task of an event manager is to find responsible members for the event organization team. They should be professionals in their field, responsible, punctual, possess good communication skills, positive attitude and have problem-solving skills as personal characteristics.

Thirdly, every team member should know exactly one's own responsibilities; check in advance whether everything is ready for the event. Besides, it is also very important to remember and listen to the needs of the stakeholders of the event.

Fourthly, event manager and the team of event organizers should predict and try to avoid or eliminate all possible risks and dangers in order to create safe environment for the event participants.

Finally, an event manager should know what is happening during preparation process and during event implementation. Event manager should monitor and measure satisfaction of the event's participants. Based on that, evaluation of event implementation can be done. (McDonnell et al.1999.)

### **3 Maslenitsa traditions**

In order to understand the nature of the event implemented in Saimaa region, the following chapters are introducing and explaining the nature of Maslenitsa celebration.

#### **3.1 Maslenitsa: history, celebration, traditions**

Maslenitsa is the oldest surviving Russian holiday; archeological evidence suggests it may have been celebrated as early as the 2nd century A.D. (Wilson 2005).

Celebration of festival “Maslenitsa” is an Eastern Slavic religious and folk holiday. It is celebrated during the last week before Great Lent—that is, the seventh week before Easter (Shubnaya 2011). The Orthodox date of Easter can differ from the Western Christian date. In 2008, for example, Maslenitsa was celebrated from 2<sup>nd</sup> of March to the 8<sup>th</sup> of March. In 2012 it was celebrated from 20<sup>th</sup> of February to 26<sup>th</sup> of February. This year the Maslenitsa week started on 11<sup>th</sup> of March and lasted till 17<sup>th</sup> of March.

Maslenitsa has its origins in both pagan and Christian traditions. In Slavic mythology, Maslenitsa is a celebration of the imminent end of the winter.

On the Christian side, Maslenitsa is the last week before the Great Lent. During Maslenitsa week, meat is already forbidden to Orthodox Christians, making it "meat-empty week" or "meat-fast week". It is the last week during which milk, cheese and other dairy products are permitted, leading to its other name of "Butter week" or “Pancake week”. During the Lent, meat, fish, dairy products and eggs are forbidden. Furthermore, the Lent also excludes parties, music, dancing and other distractions from the spiritual life. Thus, Maslenitsa represents the last chance to have dairy products and those social activities that are not appropriate during the more prayerful and sober Lenten season. (Shubnaya 2011.)

However, for many people Maslenitsa is not only a celebration that welcomes a new season. It remains one of the most important family celebrations. From ancient times, spring was associated with the rebirth and renewal. That is why, in previous times in Russia Maslenitsa week used to begin from congratulating the newlyweds. Historically, they were riding the sledge throughout their village. (Metlenko 2013)

During many centuries Maslenitsa retained the character of a folk festival and celebration. In the XVIII and XIX centuries the main part of the festival was a peasant comedy where the plot was Maslenitsa itself. The performance was accompanied with variety of copious refreshments before the Lent, with farewells and promises for the next year. Sometimes, comedies also included the historical event from the real life of the region, city or village. (Metlenko 2013.)

Maslenitsa also includes snowball fights, sledding, riding on swings and sleigh rides. The festival was known as a “threshold time” in folklore jargon. It was a time when rules (both societal and natural) could be broken; people often wore masks and clothing of the opposite gender, role-played, consumed large amounts of alcohol, and made merry. (Wilson 2005.)

As the culmination of the celebration, on Sunday evening, Lady Maslenitsa (a doll, made of straw, dressed in women’s clothes) was put to the flames of a bonfire.

### **3.2 Traditional food of the festival**

The most characteristic food of Maslenitsa is “blini” (pancakes). Round and golden, they are made from wheat, buckwheat, oat or corn flour, eggs and milk. Pancakes are served with caviar, mushrooms, jam, and sour cream and with lots of butter. They are given to friends and family all through the week, but traditionally, the first pancakes were given to beggars to pay tribute to the memory of deceased relatives. (Metlenko 2013.)

Pancakes are essential to the celebration of Maslenitsa. They are cooked every-day starting from Monday. The largest amounts are cooked from Thursday to Sunday. Traditional Russian pancakes are known from the times of worshiping of pagan gods. The Sun god called Yarylo expelled the winter, and pancakes symbolize the sun. They were used in almost every ritual. (Metlenko 2013.)

Metlenko (2013) also states, that every woman traditionally had her own recipe of the pancakes. It was handed from generation to generation through female line of the family.

### **3.3 Traditional Maslenitsa schedule**

As it was mentioned earlier, Maslenitsa is celebrated during the whole week. Actually, this festival is considered as one of the most cheerful holidays in Russia. On Sunday before Maslenitsa begins, people usually visit their friends, relatives and neighbors. Besides, they also invite guests to their own houses.

Every week day of Maslenitsa has its own name and devoted to special rituals.

### **Monday- Welcoming**

By this day the construction of snow and ice- hills was completed. Children and adults compiled a doll of Maslenitsa from straw and woman's clothes. Then they were dancing in khorovods (surrounding the doll, holding each other's hands) and afterwards placed it at the top of a snow hill. One more entertainment for the people of all the ages was sliding down from the hill on this day. (Metlenko 2013.)

### **Tuesday – Playing**

Most of the fun and mischief happened on this day. Men could kiss any passing woman on the streets during this day. From the early morning, the young people went sledging down from the ice-hills and ate pancakes. Single guys used those sleigh rides to look for young beautiful girls. The whole purpose of these games and activities was to make the matchmaking process easier and form couples to get married on the Krasnaya Gorka (Red Hill Holiday – a Sunday after Easter, traditionally the time for couples to get married).

Guests were welcomed at the gates of the houses and treated with variety of delicacies including pancakes. (Shubnaya 2011.)

### **Wednesday- Regaling, the Sweet Tooth day**

On this day sons-in-law would pay a visit “to enjoy their mothers-in-law's pancakes”. In the old times there was far more than just one son-in-law in one family, so the occasion demanded an elaborate and substantial dinner for relatives. Pancakes again would be the center of the feast. (Shubnaya 2011.) They would be in great variety.

Sometimes, mostly in the villages, “women's rally” would be organized as part of the “mother-in-law pancake party”. Several women would be drawn together in threes and take rides around the village. Normally, these were newlywed wives who had to demonstrate their durability and strength in order to prove that they could succeed riding in the “family team”. (Shubnaya 2011.)

At the end of the day people were gathering together to sing hailing songs to praise the hospitable mother-in-law and her abundant home (Shubnaya 2011).



### **Thursday – Revelry**

From this day a Broad Maslenitsa started. People were no longer allowed to work, and all the fun was getting to its boiling point.

On this day fist fights traditionally took place. Fist fighting was devoted to commemorate Russian military history when soldiers allegedly fought each other in hand-to-hand combat. “Never hit a man when he is down”, states a Russian proverb, and its roots are found in Maslenitsa. On this day people ride in sledges with effigy to help the sun drive away winter. (Shubnaya 2011.)

### **Friday- Mother-in-Law’s Eve**

On this day Sons-in-Law treated their Mothers-in Law with pancakes. A mother-in law was kindly asked to her son’s-in-law is house for a dinner in a special way: in the evening the son-in-law had to send the invitation to his mother-in-law personally, and the following morning he would send a group of “ambassadors” to her. The bigger was the delegation, the greater the honor was to the mother-in-law.

Generally, newlywed couples were dressed in their best and rode sledges to show off their prosperity and well-being. (Shubnaya 2011.)

### **Saturday- Sisters-in-Law’s Gathering**

On this day young wives would invite their sisters-in-law for a feast. If husband’s sisters were single, young men were expected to join the dinner. If husband’s sisters were married, the host would invite all her married relatives. Besides, this day was also known as a day devoted to the relatives’ visits and pancake feasts. (Shubnaya 2011.)

### **Sunday – Forgiveness Day**

This day is the last day of Maslenitsa week. This day is devoted to the tradition of asking all relatives and friends for forgiveness. Young married couples used to visit their relatives, present gifts to their matchmakers, parents and friends, who congratulated them at the wedding. They would also pay visits to their godparents to give presents to them, too. (Shubnaya 2011.)

Usually this day was also followed by dancing and singing farewell to Maslenitsa. The doll of Maslenitsa or Lady Maslenitsa which represents winter was put to the flames of a bonfire. This ritual was accompanied with the jokes, songs and dances. People berated winter for its cold and hunger and thanked for joyful winter fun (Shubnaya 2011.) Once Lady Maslenitsa was turned into ashes people buried it in the snow or collected the ash and put it across the fields to dung the future crops.

Maslenitsa ends with the first day of Lent – Clean Monday which is considered the day of purification from sin and forbidden food. On Clean Monday people usually went to Russian sauna “banya”; women washed dishes, cleaned the house, and threw away remains of forbidden food. (Metlenko 2013.)

For the above mentioned, Maslenitsa is a great Russian tradition that is reflected in cultural heritage of the nation, such as movies (“The Barber of Siberia” by Nikita Makhalkov), songs, paintings, etc.

Below, there are pictures of the paintings of the greatest Russian artists who captured the tradition of Maslenitsa celebration in their masterpieces.



Picture 2. Vasily Surikov,  
“The Taking of a Snow Town” 1891  
(National museum 2011)



Picture 3. Boris Kustodiev,  
“Maslenitsa” 1816  
(Russian Survey 2011)

### **3.4 Celebration of Maslenitsa in Russia nowadays**

Tradition of Maslenitsa celebration has been changing throughout the years. Nowadays, the whole week of Maslenitsa is celebrated only in one Russian city- Yaro-

slavl, which is considered to be a capital of Maslenitsa celebration in the country. On the whole, Maslenitsa is celebrated in different districts of Moscow, St. Petersburg and other cities of Russia.

Indeed, this celebration is widely highlighted in the media of Russia. There is advertisement on TV, radio, social networks and in printed media also. It reminds people of traditions and history of the festival. Besides, companies and businesses create a variety of competitions, quizzes devoted to the festival. Above all, photos of the event celebration are published in magazines, and TV reports are created.

Moreover, festival unites people of different generations: from kindergartens to universities and leading companies of the country.

Currently, only the last day of Maslenitsa is mostly celebrated. On that day the program of festival usually starts from morning and lasts the whole day. It includes a fair, for example, where people can buy handmade souvenirs, pancakes and other refreshments, performances of singers and actors, horse sledge riding, competitions for children and adults, fights, taking of a snow town, etc. At the festival all the guests have opportunity to take photos with actors, souvenir sellers, etc.

It is worth mentioning that pancakes are handed out to the guests also for free. As usual, the celebration ends with the burning of the doll of Maslenitsa in the center of the venue of the festival.

In most cases the government or local municipalities are the main stakeholders of the festival. As a rule, they also attract local entrepreneurs, actors of the local theatre studios and artists to the organization of the festival. Maslenitsa is considered an integral part of cultural life of the cities in Russia. This festival is celebrated in the purpose of recollection and promotion of Russian traditions, history and culture. Getting profit is the least issue taken in consideration. Usually, entrepreneurs only pay income taxes on products and goods sold in the event.

### **3.5 Celebration of Maslenitsa in other countries**

According to highlights in the media, traditional Russian Maslenitsa is celebrated in different countries around the world for example in Sweden, United Kingdom, the USA, and Australia. As a rule, it is always organized by Russian representa-

tives and governmental officials that work abroad. Additionally, they also attract local Russian communities to the event organization. The main purpose of the event organization is promotion of Russian culture, familiarization of local population with traditions of the other country, creation of new cultural connections. Examples of Maslenitsa celebration in three foreign countries are presented below.

### **United Kingdom, London**

Referring to information of the official web-site, Russian week in London (2013), the event Maslenitsa has been organized in the city since 2011 by the company Ensemble Productions. This year the festival was held on 16<sup>th</sup> of March from 13.30 till 18.30 in Trafalgar Square.

Besides, the event included traditional fair, food and souvenir selling, and a big concert with the performers and singers from Russia. The festival was attended by 200,000 guests according to Euronews (2013).

Moreover, the event was supported by the mayor of London, Boris Johnson, who opened the festival with greeting speech. As for other partners of the festival, they include: Russian Embassy in London, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Russian Ministry of Culture, Fund "Russian World", the official charity partner of the festival-fund "Naked Hearts" created by the model Natalia Vodianova, etc. (RIA Novosti 2013.)

The event was also supported by social media campaign in Facebook (Russian Maslenitsa in London 2013).

### **Australia, Melbourne**

Maslenitsa was organized on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March from 10 a.m. till 8 p.m. at Federation Square in Melbourne. The event was organized with the support of the Minister of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Russian Ethnic Representative Council and Serbian Social Services and Support.

The approximate number of assumed participants was at least 40,000 people. The estimates were built on the experience of the two previous years. More than

600 people including volunteers, actors and participants were involved in arranging of the festival. (Metlenko 2013.)

As the event in London, also Maslenitsa in Melbourne included a fair, performances, games, competitions. The event's special guest was Victoria Bolonina, a contestant on Australian TV show "The Voice" (Popovich 2013).

### **The United States of America, Washington D.C.**

The celebration of Maslenitsa took place on 15<sup>th</sup> of March at the Russian Embassy in Washington D.C. as part of the Embassy's annual Russian Mardi Gras Maslenitsa celebration. The event has been hosted by the Embassy since year 2000. (RIA Novosti 2013.)

About 300 people took part in the celebration. Funds raised from the event's fair will go to the needs of Orthodox Cathedrals of St. Nicholas and St. John the Baptist which helped to sponsor the event. The Maslenitsa Committee was presented by Russian Ambassador to the USA. The celebration included a concert, souvenir, jewelry and food fair. (RIA Novosti 2013.)

According to the information of the same source of information, Maslenitsa festival was also held in Houston, Texas.

## **4 Methods and working procedures**

In order to create implementation plan for the event, following methods were used:

- desk study
- observation.

In the second chapter of the thesis report the desk study method was introduced. At that stage theoretical material regarding event management was studied precisely. For example the thesis report structure is based on that material.

Besides, the results of the desk study were introduced in previous chapters. With the help of that method, Maslenitsa event organization in Russian cities and abroad was analyzed. Based on information of that chapter, the idea of the event for the Saimaa region was created.

Finally, observation method provided the opportunity to analyze the results of the implemented project and to get feedbacks from the audience at the event.

## **5 Plan and implementation process of Maslenitsa event**

Working procedures or plan of the project implementation are introduced in chapters below. Every chapter is also supported with theoretical material on the subject and describes the real actions that were taken during project implementation.

### **5.1 Objective and the essence of an event**

Above all, the concept of celebration for Saimaa region was created. The main objective of this event was to introduce Maslenitsa event to the citizens of Saimaa area with the help of Russian tourists in the region, and enhance cultural connection between both countries.

The idea of the event organization was brought up in the first part of December. As this event was organized in the area for the first time, it was decided to create a celebration that can attract approximately 100 people. Holiday Club Saimaa free territory was chosen as a venue for the event. The event was set on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March. Both features were chosen due to the number of reasons.

First of all, Holiday Club Saimaa is a new resort and a hotel that was already fully booked for the beginning of March. Besides, 8<sup>th</sup> of March is The International Women's Day and a public holiday in Russia. The next two days (Saturday and Sunday) were days off. Traditionally, many families come to Imatra and Lappeenranta during these days.

Moreover, that day was also suitable because World Parasailing Championship was also planned in that area on the same day. It meant that Finnish customer segment would be covered also. Thus, two potential customer segments were expected to be in the same area at the same time.

Besides, the venue met the requirements of safety. Potential hazards, access and egress of emergency services, and other needs such as pedestrians, traffic and shelter were considered. (Event management check list and guide 2013.)

The main concept of the event was a performance that was managed by two people- two leaders, in Finnish and Russian languages. Besides, at the same time the work of fair and play grounds for children and adults was meant to be organized. Burning of a doll of Maslenitsa was a culmination of the event.

According to the result of the event, which could be reflected in the feedbacks of the audience and number of participants, the organizers and stakeholders could make a conclusion whether this event should be arranged next year or not.

## **5.2 Organization and responsibilities**

To begin with, the biggest challenge was finding a partner organization for the event arrangement. With the help of the thesis supervisor the author got an idea to offer collaboration to Saimaa Adventures Ky and later to Holiday Club Saimaa. In order to introduce the idea of the event, get partners and sponsorship, the presentation was organized on 21<sup>st</sup> of January.

In the following two chapters, information on two key stakeholders is introduced.

### **5.2.1 Saimaa Adventures Ky**

Saimaa Adventures Ky is a program service provider in Imatra, South Karelia region, Finland. The company was founded in August 2009 by Ville and Antti Harinen. Company's services are aimed for the people looking for an active holiday in Imatra region. The company operates throughout the whole year. (Saimaa adventures Ky 2013.)

There are several categories of services offered by Saimaa Adventure Ky. One way of classifying them could be: group and individual programs, winter and summer season offers. Winter program includes different types of snowmobile safaris, Nordic skating, floating in ice water, parasailing and ATV safaris. Summer program includes ATV safaris, parasailing, fishing, water ski and jet- ski, banana boat ride, and riding over the rapids. There is also rental service provided by company both in winter and summer seasons. (Saimaa adventures Ky 2013.)

Customers of Saimaa Adventures can be divided into the following major groups:

- by size: individuals and groups

- geographically: local and tourists, who in case of Saimaa Adventures are mostly coming from Russia.

Main company's activities are done on the lake Saimaa which is the fourth largest lake in Europe. (Saimaa adventures Ky 2013.)

### **5.2.2 Holiday Club Saimaa**

Holiday Club Saimaa is a spa hotel that was opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2011 in Rauha, Lappeenranta. It belongs to the Holiday Club Resorts Oy hotel chain that has operated from 1986. It is one of the leading timeshare hotel chains in Europe. Holiday Club Resorts Oy has 32 resorts and 1300 holiday homes. Seven resorts are spa hotels. Eight resorts are located outside Finland, in Sweden and Spain (Costa del Sol, the Canary Islands). (Holiday Club 2013.)

Holiday Club Saimaa hotel has 221 rooms, Spa Aqua Park pools, hot tubs and area with saunas. There are also treatment services provided by Harmony Spa. (Booking.com 2013.) Besides, the territory of the resort equipped with the 18- hole golf course that is going to be opened in summer 2013. (Holiday Club 2011.)

### **5.3 Responsibilities of the parties**

In the beginning of the work on the event concept two variants of project implementation were worked through:

- Turning to the company from Russia that could help to organize the event, supply necessary materials.
- The event implementation is done by the author of the thesis with the help of volunteers both from Russian and Finnish side.

After careful studying and analyzing of the issue, the second option was chosen due to the low cost factor. Besides, the first variant included bringing of a foreign team of professionals. That required getting number of permissions, agreements and visas. Due to the limited amount of time (2 months), it was not possible. Thus, inviting of a folk performance group was not considered also. However, scenario for the event was created by the Russian company "Megaproject" and adopted for performance in Saimaa region by volunteer Mark Mäyrä and author of the thesis.



It was agreed at the first meetings, that stakeholders and event manager, (author of the thesis) divide following responsibilities:

<b>Saimaa Adventures</b>	<b>Holiday Club Saimaa</b>	<b>Event Manager</b>
Sponsorship of the event	Sponsorship of the event	Preparation of event scenario, games and music
Providing partners for the event fair	Providing of the venue	Getting volunteers for the event, work with them
Getting licenses from police	Taking part in marketing campaign (delivering of brochures)	Supplying of the souvenirs
Music equipment		Supplying of costumes for volunteers and leaders
Equipment for the competitions		Supplying of equipment for competitions (i.e. a doll of Maslenitsa)
Preparation of brochures for marketing campaign		Translation of brochures for marketing campaign to Russian language
Marketing campaign (newspaper)		Social- media marketing campaign (Vkontakte)
Contacting a professional in pyrotechnic		

Next, the weekly schedule for the necessary activities was created. According to that check list the monitoring of preparation actions was conducted regularly.

Under the circumstances, listed in the first paragraph of the chapter; the event organization required involving of volunteers. Students of Saimaa University of Ap-

plied Sciences agreed to take part in event arrangement. Altogether, 20 people were attracted to the preparation process.

#### **5.4 Work with volunteers**

The preparation work with volunteers was done in five stages. At the first stage potential volunteers were contacted by the author of the thesis via Vkontakte and Facebook. The main requirements for volunteers were:

- language knowledge (either fluent Russian or Finnish, English language as additional)
- responsibility
- punctuality
- good communication skills, cheerful and positive attitude, problem- solving skills.

At the second stage, the first meeting for volunteers was arranged. During this meeting a brief description of the festival and a concept of the event were introduced. After that, volunteers shared their ideas and thoughts concerning event's scenario. These ideas were taken into consideration by the author of the thesis.

At the third stage, the second meeting with volunteers was held. By that meeting the final concept and scenario of the event were created. During the meeting the main roles and responsibilities of volunteers were divided according to personal abilities. A person responsible for the playgrounds and volunteer work was appointed. Besides, all volunteers were provided with essential telephone numbers for emergency cases and following timetable:

# Plan of the event

<b>10.00 a.m.</b>	Arriving at Holiday Club
<b>10.15- 11.15</b>	Preparation of playgrounds, tents, decoration, restriction of car traffic, etc.
<b>11.20- 12.00</b>	Rehearsal
<b>12.00- 12.45</b>	Changing the costumes, last preparations
<b>13.00- 14.15</b>	Event
<b>14.30-15.15</b>	Cleaning

Picture 4. Plan of the event

The fourth stage of the work with volunteers took place at the venue before the event. All the actions of volunteers were discussed once again.

Finally, the fifth stage consisted of getting feedbacks from volunteers about the event and handing out diplomas of participation in event arrangement.

## 5.5 Partners in cooperation

Saimaa Adventures Ky works in close cooperation with different companies in the region, including those that provide catering services. As mentioned earlier, Maslenitsa festival requires food and souvenir fair. Thus, Saimaa Adventures contacted professional catering supplier Karjalan Makkara Ry that could provide services for the event. The company's manager Jukka Moilanen agreed to take part in the event, therefore the company could get revenues from the sales and promote its business. Moreover, Jukka Moilanen is also a teacher in Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. Other companies that took part in the event were:

- Vipelen Talli (horse riding)
- MK Productions (music equipment)
- restaurant "Section 7" (food and drinks trade)

- Uutisvuoksi (local newspaper; took part in marketing of the event)
- Rakennus Varma
- K-market Pihlaja.

The souvenirs were supplied from Russia by three entrepreneurs.

## **5.6 Programme planning**

The event programme included three parts:

- performance and competitions carried out by leaders of event
- work of play grounds
- additional services (food, souvenir trade, horse riding)

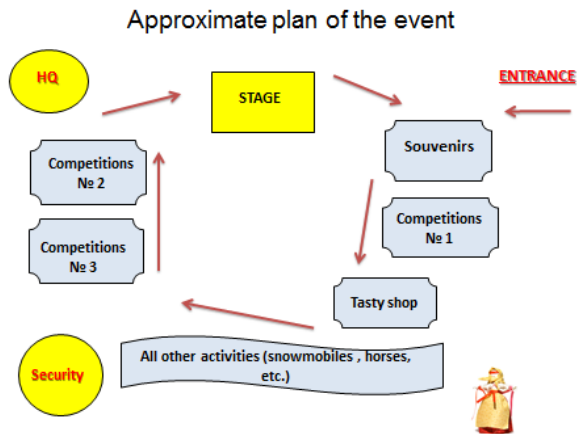
The event program started at 1 p.m. on 9<sup>th</sup> of March. The information explaining the ways of getting to the event was put in the brochures distributed in hotels and web page in V Kontakte.

The festival began from performance of the leaders of the event. The program was both in Russian and Finnish languages. Leaders introduced and briefly explained traditions and history of Maslenitsa celebration. That was made mostly for Finnish guests of celebration because they were not familiar with Maslenitsa festival at all. After that, leaders offered two warming up competitions for the audience. Adults and children from both countries actively took part in them. Then the work of play grounds started.

The play grounds were divided in to three sections (points) according to activities:

- 1<sup>st</sup> play ground: snow-shooting, snow-basketball, dodge-ball
- 2<sup>nd</sup> play ground: sack-race, "Snake", "Wheelbarrow"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> play ground: ride on the Finnish sledge, "Fighters".

Below is an approximate plan of the site.



Picture 5. Approximate plan of the event site

Every play ground was supplied with equipment and competitions for people of different ages. Besides, there were two volunteers that could speak Russian, Finnish and English languages, what made these competitions available for every guest. Moreover, every volunteer was given instructions concerning providing safety for the participants, meaning that they should manage people at the playground. Every participant and winner of competition got a ticket for a prize that he/she could change at the table of souvenir trade.

At the same time, the work of souvenir fair started also. Guests of the festival were offered handmade souvenirs such as traditional Russian doll “Matreshka”, soap with symbols of Maslenitsa, table cloths of different sizes, pictures made of fabric. The food trade was held on the other side of the ground in the tent. The menu consisted of pancakes with different toppings (sour cream, honey, jam), pancakes with salmon stuffing, grilled home-made sausages and hot drinks (tea, coffee, juice).

There were also additional services provided at the same time, for instance horse riding, horse sledge and snow-mobile sledge riding, hovercraft ride, parasailing.

Besides, 2 competitions that required a big number of participants were organized by leaders. They were:

- jumping rope (10 people)
- tug of war (10 people).

Third competition that was planned at first was cancelled due to technical problems. Anyway, the tug of war competition appeared to be so popular among audience from both countries that the leaders had to repeat it twice.

All the activities, performance and competitions, were accompanied with traditional Russian songs for Maslenitsa festival.

At last, the culmination of the event was burning of a doll of Maslenitsa. The doll was set on the lake Saimaa 150- 200 meters from the shore. Guests were invited and took position at a safe distance. A pyrotechnics professional made a show for audience with a trick of shooting from the cannon. Audience did not expect that and was astonished.

After burning the doll, arriving of a volunteer who performed spring was planned. The volunteer was supposed to arrive by snowmobile and make a small speech concerning the event. Unfortunately, that happened before burning the doll. Actually, audience did not pay attention at that discrepancy.

Finally, after the last stage of the event guests stayed at the venue as parasailing competition was still going on and some services were still available.

## **5.7 Budgeting**

Before starting planning a budget for event it is important to answer several questions. First of all, the type of the event should be identified. As Beloviene et al. (2008) state, there are different types of the events, for example:

- Scientific: congresses, conferences, seminars, etc.
- Cultural: exhibitions, guided tours, concerts, etc.
- Corporate: conventions, incentive travel, trade fairs, etc.
- Institutional: Flag Day, Historic Commemorations, etc.
- Sport: competitions, charity matches, sporting activities, etc.
- Ceremonies: weddings, banquets, etc.

As for Maslenitsa, it is definitely a cultural event as it represents traditions and cultural heritage of Russia.

Secondly, every event is different and requires different structure with different sources of financing. Thirdly, the size of the event, i.e. the number of participants should be agreed also. It is important to decide whether the festival is going to attract vast audience or just a selected group, for example, domestic or foreign participants. As the final programme, administrative procedures and social activities will depend on the size and characteristics of the event. (Beloviene et al 2008.)

Furthermore, both income and expenses will vary according to the dimension of the event (local or international, for example), and require different sources of financing. Finally, the character of the event will also influence the choice of possible economic support given by public or private institutions. (Beloviene et al. 2008.)

The aim of the event was to introduce traditional Russian festival to the residents of Imatra involving Russian tourists in the area also. Maslenitsa was planned as a small local event that had to attract around 100 people, both local residents and Russian tourists. Financial support was provided by Holiday Club Saimaa and Saimaa Adventures Ky.

Besides, the crucial characteristic is an identification of the purpose of the event. For example, Maslenitsa festival has social and cultural meaning. It was meant as non-profit event. Moreover, Saimaa Adventures managed to get some services that were free of charge and commission as this event was very small and was organized for the first time.

The total budget allocated for the event was 2,000 euros. As it was mentioned earlier, Holiday Club Saimaa along with Saimaa Adventures sponsored the event. Below, there is a table of income and expenses for the event.

<b>Maslenitsa festival</b>			
<b>EXPENSES</b>		<b>INCOME</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost (euros)</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost (euros)</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>			
Fuel	€ 10,00	Holiday Club Saimaa	€ 2 000,00
<b>MARKETING</b>		Saimaa Adventures	
Brochures	€ 50,00	Souvenir trade	€ 30,00
Social- media campaign	€ -		
Communication and media	€ -		
<b>LOGISTICS</b>			
Music equipment	€ 500,00		
Scenario	€ 97,90		
Presentation video	€ 36,71		
Games and competitions	€ 50,00		
Leaders of performance	€ -		
Volunteers	€ -		
Rent of costumes	€ -		
Doll of Maslenitsa	€ 15,00		
Prizes for competitions	€ 150,00		
Pyrotechnics	€ 200,00		
Souvenirs	€ 200,00		
<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>	€ -		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€ 1 309,61</b>		<b>€ 2 030,00</b>

Picture 6. Maslenitsa festival

This table is completely different from other budgets that are usually created for the events. As it was mentioned earlier, quite many services were provided for free by Saimaa Adventures partners. Besides, not all the money allocated for the event was used. That can be considered as a very rare case, as in general, companies need to expend their budget.

As a result, the company did not get profit. There were some souvenirs sold, but this amount did not cover the expenses. On the other hand, as it was mentioned earlier, the company did not use all the allocated money. Thus, 720. 39 euro was left after event organization.

## 5.8 Marketing and event marketing mix

As McDonnell et al. (1999) state, events do not appeal to everybody, that is why marketing planning activities of event managers must include understanding of visitor's behavior at event. That includes identifying those customer segments that can be satisfied by the event activities. The process of identifying of appropriate



target groups is known as segmentation. Besides, segmentation can be done by following characteristics:

- geography
- demography
- lifestyle (psychology).

In the case of Maslenitsa event, segmentation was made by geographical and demographical characteristics.

The main customer segments of the event were:

- Russian families with children (tourists)
- Finnish families with children (local residents).

### **Event marketing mix**

Getz (1997) gives definition of marketing for events in a way that marketing events is the process of employing the marketing mix to attain organizational goals through creating value for clients and customers. Product, price, place and promotion are the variables that event manager should manipulate and control in order to achieve event's marketing objectives. (McDonnell et al. 1999, pp.108-109.)

### **Product**

The product of an event is a leisure experience which was produced to satisfy a target market's needs. In event management product includes all the elements of the festival that are offered to the audience. (McDonnell et al. 1999.) In this particular case event's product consists of:

- performance with competitions
- work of play grounds
- additional services (food, souvenir trade, horse riding, snowmobile sledge riding).

### **Price**

McDonnell et al. (1999) state, that there are three types of pricing strategies:

- revenue- oriented (setting a price that will maximize revenue from a target market)
- operations- oriented (balancing supply and demand by offering low prices for the low demand products and high prices for high demand products)
- target market oriented (introducing different prices for different target markets).

First of all, Maslenitsa celebration was created as a non- profit event, meaning that the main idea of celebration was bringing and enhancing of cultural connections between Russia and Finland. Besides, entering the event was free of charge, participation in competitions and prizes were free of charge also.

On the other hand, other businesses that took part in the event were offering paid services. In that case, revenue oriented strategy was implemented. Entrepreneurs set the highest possible prices for their goods and services for the target market.

### **Place**

McDonnell et al. (1999) state, that place refers to both site (venue) where the event takes place and the place where customers can purchase tickets. As long as Maslenitsa festival did not require ticket purchasing, below there is information about the venue.

As it was mentioned in the previous chapters, Holiday Club Saimaa free territory was chosen as a venue for the event. Reasons for choosing that particular area are:

- Holiday Club was fully booked by Russian tourists for that period due to the holidays in Russia (Russian customer segment).
- The World Parasailing competition was held in the same territory at the same time (Finnish customer segment).
- The territory is safe for arranging of the event.

People could get to the venue by their own car, i.e. they could find the address in handed brochures. Besides, snowmobile sledge transfer was organized from Imatran Kylpylä.

## Promotion

According to McDonnell et al. (1999) promotion means to move forward or to advance. In marketing context, promotion refers to all communication activities that can be used in order to reach target market. These activities are also known as promotional mix or the communication mix of the event. It consists of following features:

- advertising (via Internet, newspapers, magazines, billboards, etc.)
- publicity (activities that are not directly paid for communication with the event's target market)
- sales promotion (activities that generate extra sales in particular target market)
- direct marketing (direct communication with potential target market via mailing, telephone, e-mails)
- personal selling.

Besides, Getz (1997) also points out the aims of promotional mix. They are:

- create or increase awareness of the event
- create or enhance a positive image
- inform target markets of details of the event
- generate demand for the event
- remind target markets of the event's details.

Promotion of Maslenitsa event was made by using advertising and personal contacting. The event had two particular customer segments:

- Russian families with children (tourists)
- Finnish families with children (local residents).

For each customer segment the ways of access were chosen.

Advertisement for Russian tourists was made first of all in Holiday Club Saimaa and Imatran Kylpylä due to the reason that particular customer segment was located there. Besides, these hotels are the closest to the venue. Marketing campaign in both hotels started two days before the event, as potential participants were arriving on those days. Then, this customer segment was also contacted via

such social- media tool as Vkontkte three weeks before the festival. GoSaimaa group in Vkontakte put advertisement about the event there. Moreover, author of the thesis created an event page also and invited potential customers to take part in the festival.

As for Finnish local residents, the advertisement was made through local newspaper along with World Parasailing Championship. Besides, the advertisement was also put in several bars, cafes and billboards in Imatra.

## **5.9 Risk assessment and management**

First of all, the main question of event administration is the ownership of the event. According to McDonnell et al. (1999) the legal owner of an event could be the event coordinator the committee, a separate legal entity or the sponsors. The members of an organizing committee can be personally responsible for the event also. It is very important to recognize that ownership of the event entails legal responsibility and therefore liability.

In particular, community and local festival events do not form a separate association, because they are able to function under the legal umbrella of, for instance local council. In this case, the event organizers get legal protection and administrative support. (McDonnell et al. 1999.)

In the case of Maslenitsa festival, Saimaa Adventures Ky performed a role of the legal owner of the event. The company took all the necessary responsibility and liability for the celebration. Besides, as it was mentioned earlier, both Antti and Ville Harinen have licenses that allow them to perform as personnel responsible for the security and safety.

Identification of threats and hazards is also a necessary part of event management. Referring to Beloviene et al.(2008) all hazards can be divided into following groups:

- physical: noise, vibration, lasers and electrical hazards
- chemical: toxic, corrosive, irritant, harmful materials and fire (sometimes considered as an individual category)

- positional: work at height, position near water, layout of site, vehicles and use of temporary structures
- environmental: heat, cold, wind, pollution and slopes
- health: fatigue, dehydration, injury, psychological stress, food and water poisoning, infection from other people, animals.

Some other hazards can be crowds, inexperienced management and volunteers, activities, animals, crimes, financial losses and alcohol (Getz 2004).

For instance, during Maslenitsa celebration in Imatra, it was decided to refuse from alcohol trade at the venue due to significant reasons. First of all, it was done from the security point of view in order to decrease hazards for the audience. Secondly, alcohol selling requires a big number of different permissions in Finland. Thirdly, due to ethical reasons, i.e. the event was supposed to attract families and children.

Besides, it is also essential to identify those groups of people that are the most vulnerable to variety of hazards. According to Beloviene et al. (2008) the most as-sailable groups are:

- children and those caring for them
- older people
- disabled people
- volunteers
- new and expectant mothers
- foreign guests at the event.

The importance of identifying those at risk involves:

- their different vulnerabilities to hazards
- their different competencies and understanding
- their different perceptions of risks
- their different abilities to respond to information
- their different behavior in certain situations.

Maslenitsa event involved several risks also. To begin with, burning of a doll of Maslenitsa was the biggest risk. That is why the doll was set up on the frozen lake, 200 meters from the shore. Secondly, in order to see the culmination of celebra-

tion people had to go to the lake, approximately 50 meters. Besides, snowmobile sledge transfer was also organized on the lake. In order to make sure that it is safe, the thickness of the ice was checked before the event. Thirdly, competitions that were organized for the guests of the festival involved risks, too. In order to eliminate them, volunteers, responsible for the play- grounds were given instructions on safe holding of the competitions. Fourthly, traffic restriction activities were done before the event.

Public health is a significant part of each event. As it was mentioned earlier, Maslenitsa celebration includes food trade also. It was a responsibility of the entrepreneurs that provided food to follow hygiene standards and regulations. Toilets for the guests were available in the restaurant Section 7 and in the office of the company Saimaa Adventures.

Other risks that also occurred during the preparation of the vent were:

- risk of time shortage
- weather conditions
- running out of budget
- low number of customers attending the event
- cancellation of partners taking part in event.

Actually, a few of predicted risks, such as cancellation of partners and time shortage, took place in event preparation. As it was forecasted, it did not significantly influence the preparation process in general.

### **5.10 Authorities (licences and permissions)**

Every event involves following number of regulations and getting permissions from authorities. The bigger and more innovative event, the larger number of regulations and permissions is required. It is the responsibility of the event manager or an organization company to get required permissions before launching the event. (McDonnell et al.1999, p.201.)

Maslenitsa celebration required a number of permissions also. The program of festival involved loud music and pyrotechnic elements. Ville Harinen, manager of Saimaa Adventures was responsible for getting those. Besides, at the same time

and place World Parasailing Championship was also organized by Water Skizoo Ky. Therefore, managers of both companies got one permission for both events from police station. The permission for the event organization in Finland is called Tapahtumailmoitus or Notice of public event.

Event organizer must submit a written notice of public event to the local police station. Usually, exceptions are made only to those events that do not require any measures to ensure public order and security or to prevent harm caused to third parties and the environment. (Police 2013.) Besides, those events that do not have any special traffic arrangements, due to the nature and the place of the event also do not require Notice of Public event. The notice must be submitted to police at least five days before the event. Moreover, it is also required to submit a complete notice about public event which is organized in public place. (Police 2013.)

The police may also require other documents, such as licenses required by other provisions concerning organizing public events, and also permission from the owner or holder of the place where the public event is arranged. (Police 2013.)

Finally, Ville Harinen, Antti Harinen and Jussi Honka (Water Skizoo Ky manager) have certificates of Safety instructor (Turvallisuusvastaava). This certificate proves that the holder can be responsible for security operations and risk management. Thus, these people were responsible for safety at the event.

### **5.11 Logistics**

Logistics in event management means getting the right goods or services to the right place, at the right time, and in the desired condition. Events' logistic management aim is providing all needed support for special events. The key objective is managing the flow and network aspects during the supply of the necessary materials, facilities and services. A special focus is also movement of participants (consumers) or suppliers to the event venue. (Getz 2004.)

Referring to McDonnell et al. (1999) logistics system includes following elements:

- supply of customers (marketing, ticketing, transport)
- supply of product (transport, accommodation, artist needs)

- supply of facilities (security, power, water, contractors)
- event site logistics (flow of audience, artists, and equipment)
- event shutdown (removal, cleaning).

In fact, logistics manager has to be a negotiator, equipment and maintenance manager, HRM manager, project manager etc. For a small event logistics can be done directly by event manager, but in a big event it becomes a separate area if the event is large and complex. The main task of a logistics manager is efficiently joining all areas of the event. (McDonnell et al. 1999.)



Picture 7. The lines of communication between the logistics manager and other managers for a multivenued event

As Maslenitsa was a small festival, logistics management was carried out by the event manager, i.e. author of the thesis. At some point, mistakes in logistics of the event took place that led to unexpected circumstances. They are going to be looked through below.

In order to avoid mistakes, there are some techniques that can be used for control and monitoring of logistics plan that in particular identifies milestones. For example, the Gantt chart that is usually used in project management as a tool for visual representation of the schedule. (McDonnell et al. 1999.)



The monitoring of the logistics plan is a vital part of overall control of an event. This is a task of the logistics manager to create a plan that enables logistics to flow without a need for active control (McDonnell et al. 1999).

The logistics for Maslenitsa event was divided between the author of the thesis and Saimaa Adventures Ky.

<b>Event manager</b>	<b>Saimaa adventures</b>
- supply of product (transport, volunteers, artist needs)	- supply of customers (marketing, transport)
- event site logistics (flow of audience, artists, and equipment)	- supply of facilities (security, power, water, contractors)
- event shutdown (removal, cleaning)	

Author of the thesis was responsible for the scenario, music, souvenir supply, costumes for the leaders, games, prizes and all the equipment that was necessary for the event competitions, including the doll of Maslenitsa. Besides, the transportation of the volunteers to event and back was also organized by the event manager. During the event, the author of the thesis was performing as a leader of the show, also managing flow of the audience.

Saimaa Adventures was responsible first of all, for supplying the partners or contractors for the event. Secondly, the company was responsible for the marketing activities, transportation of customers to the venue.

One week before the event, Saimaa Adventures and author of the thesis organized meeting for all the partners who were involved in event. They were informed in advance. Eventually, all the participants refused taking part in the meeting saying they were too busy. Therefore that led to the following consequences:

- souvenir supply (Finnish masters) cancelled participation one week before the event
- costume supply (local theatre) cancelled participation
- DJ cancelled participation
- tents for the food trade were set up in the wrong place.

As far as three first circumstances were predicted while identifying potential risks, Saimaa Adventures was prepared for them. Event was supplied with souvenirs, music equipment and music editor (one of the volunteers). Besides, the company has one costume of their own that they brought to the venue. Wrong location of the tents led to cancellation of one of the competitions that was planned in scenario and discussed in advance. It was substituted urgently by another one. On the other hand, in spite of location that did not influence the revenues of the entrepreneurs. The demand for the provided services was high, i.e. food suppliers started to run out of raw materials by the end of the event.

## **6 Results and evaluation of the project: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis**

The main result of the thesis project is the event organization in Saimaa region. The event was held on 9<sup>th</sup> of March at 13.00 in the territory of Holiday Club Saimaa at the shore of the lake Saimaa. The event attracted estimated number of audience (approximately 100 people) both local residents and Russian tourists. Furthermore, organizers, including leaders of performance and volunteers, received positive feedbacks from the audience. Besides, partners attracted to the participation of the event got an opportunity to present and sell their services.

Furthermore, such objective as creation of the event and implementation plan was reached and fulfilled. To sum up, the evaluation of the project is done by the author of the thesis with the help of internal and external (SWOT) analysis of different factors. This analysis is based on observation method, used during event implementation. The observation of audience behavior, their feedbacks and mood were taken in to consideration.

As it was mentioned earlier, the idea of Maslenitsa organization belongs to the author of the thesis. Besides, the author of the thesis was involved in the whole process of event planning, organization and also implementation as the leader of performance. Thus created SWOT analysis can be considered as a reliable source of information and evaluation tool of the work.

### **Strengths:**

- the idea of a festival and concept were interesting for the audience
- event attracted estimated number of participants both local residents and tourists
- positive feedbacks from the audience
- no emergency situations
- volunteers successfully managed with their tasks
- the weather was suitable for holding an outdoor festival
- the estimated costs were lower than budgeted
- the estimated time for the event was followed
- potential risks were predicted and avoided.

### **Weaknesses**

- no professional folk performers and actors at the event
- mistakes in logistics
- a low demand in souvenirs
- no proper music equipment (microphones were with wires)
- no food supply for event organizers.

### **Opportunities**

- invitation of Russian folk performance groups
- attraction of Imatra city authorities for the next event organization
- increase the number of potential audience
- organization of vast marketing campaign
- change the venue for the event (for example, city center).

### **Threats**

- refusal of the idea of event implementation in the future

- weather conditions
- running out of budget
- low number of customers attending the event
- cancellation of partners taking part in the event
- injuries of participants taking part in competitions.

To sum up, based on the feedbacks from the audience and volunteers, the implementation of this project can be considered successful. People from both countries enjoyed taking part in competitions and attending the fair. Moreover, they were thanking volunteers for the happening. Most of them did not expect that this celebration could be organized in Saimaa region. Some of the local residents even asked more questions from the Finnish speaking leader of performance. Besides, perfect weather conditions also led to the success of the event. What is more significant, there were no emergency cases at the event as the alcohol trade was not organized and volunteers managed to fulfill safety instructions concerning competition organization.

As for the risks, most of them were predicted and eliminated, but some, such as cancellation of partners in event participation were solved successfully.

On the other hand, there are still opportunities for organizing the event that could attract bigger number of audience and participants. It could advance cultural connections between countries. Besides, there are also opportunities for improving the event concept, for example attracting participants from Russia, such as folk music performers, actors and souvenir sellers.

Finally, based on evaluation of the project, further conclusions and recommendations concerning Maslenitsa celebration were introduced.

## **7 Conclusions and recommendations**

The main objective of the thesis was a creation and implementation of a plan for organization of Maslenitsa event in Saimaa region. It was mentioned earlier, that the number of tourists visiting Finland is growing from year to year, and Finnish Tourist Board statistics prove that. Therefore, there is an opportunity for service and infrastructure development. As it was also mentioned during the lectures of

Planning marketing and pointed out by GoSaimaa Ltd, the region in general needs more festivals, happenings and events. Besides, there are no festivals that could be interesting and attractive both for local residents and tourists. Above all, Maslenitsa is a family type of celebration, i.e. it can interest and unite people of different ages, generations and nationalities. Thus, adding Maslenitsa festival to the event calendar of the region could become a remarkable tradition and attraction for domestic tourists also.

In order to reach set objectives such methods as desk study and observation were used. The first method helped to study theoretical material on the issue. Books and articles related to event management contained not only necessary theoretical information, but also provided the event plan template. Based on the chapters of those sources, the implementation plan for Maslenitsa event was created. Additionally, this method was related to studying of materials concerning Maslenitsa celebration in Russia and other countries. Analysis of that information helped to create a concept of festival celebration in Saimaa region.

Finally, observation method was used to figure out audience opinion about the event and get feedbacks. People expressed their opinion during competitions and games. Some of them were thanking volunteers for the nice happening, others interviewing volunteers. Besides, after the event there was a meeting of volunteers where they gave their own feedback on event organization. Based on that data, evaluation of the project implementation was made.

It is worth mentioning that feedbacks by the audience were the main criteria of success measurement of the event along with number of participants, for example. The audience enjoyed the celebration. What is more remarkable, Finnish local residents who took part in the festival got interested in it and even were asking additional information concerning the celebration.

On the other hand, as in every project, some mistakes were made and some expected risks took place. For example, mistakes in logistics led to the wrong location of the food tent at the event and consequences of partners' cancellation were substituted with the one's own means.

As Maslenitsa event is a non-profit festival in general, it did not bring profit to the main sponsor Saimaa Adventures Ky. In order to avoid that in the future, local municipalities and non-profit organizations such as Imatra Region Development Company Ltd (KEHY) should be also attracted to event organization along with local entrepreneurs.

Overall, in order to make Maslenitsa celebration more attractive for different customer segments, following recommendations can be taken into consideration. First of all, Maslenitsa as a tradition has a great cultural value for Russian people. Therefore, this event could be organized with involving the town of Imatra and Russian consulate in Lappeenranta in order to develop and enlarge cultural connections between two neighbor countries. For example, embassy could provide some support, not financial but information for example or just members of consulate could arrive at the event and say a few words (importance of developing of cultural connections between countries, etc.) It was done like that, for instance, in Great Britain and the USA.

Secondly, cooperation with cultural centers in Russia such fund Russkiy Mir (Russian world) for example, which was established by Vladimir Putin in 2007 might bring more value for the event also. The aims of that fund are promoting teaching of Russian language within Russia and abroad, introducing Russian history through art and culture, reconnect Russian community abroad with the homeland, create and enhance connections with other countries through cultural and social exchange programs. (Russkiy Mir Foundation 2008.)

For example, invitation of folk performance groups, diverse entertaining program with dances, songs and actors in traditional Russian costumes could attract a big number of visitors to the event.

Thirdly, the venue for the event can be also changed from Holiday Club Saimaa to the city center. In spite of the fact that some program elements would then need to be changed, for example, the burning of a doll of Maslenitsa, it can be substituted with a great music performance and fair.

Fourthly, as it is possible to conclude from the result of event implementation, involving of volunteers and work with them should be an essential part of the prepa-

ration process. The volunteers should possess such personal qualities as responsibility, punctuality, good communication skills, cheerful and positive attitude, and problem- solving skills. In this particular case, the success of the project implementation at the venue is a merit to the volunteer's team as they were managing the audience, organized the competitions and took care of the safety of people at the playgrounds.

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Appendix 1 Brochures for marketing campaign in Finnish and Russian languages

## MASLENITSA - KOKO PERHEEN TALVIRIEHA VENÄLÄISEEN TYYLIIN!

**9.3.2013 KLO13**

**BLINEJÄ  
LETTUJA  
TANSSIA**

**MUSIIKKIA  
LEIKKEJÄ**

*Ravintola Hukka*

varjomakkarat ja  
hodarit  
Karjalan Mustaa  
Viipurilaista

**Käsiyömyyjä!**  
Suomalaisia ja venäläisiä  
käsitöitä edulliseen  
markkinahintaan!

**LAPSILLE JA  
LAPSEN  
MELISILLE!**

**Section 7**

**NUOTAN  
SAVUSTAMO**

Ravintola auki!  
A-oikeudet!  
Minttukaakaota!

Blinit  
Lettuja!  
Savulohta

**AKTIVITEETIT MARKKINAHINTAAN!**

 Rekiäjeluita 5-10 eur	 Noussuvarjoitus 60 eur	 Retkiluistelu 15 eur
 Ilmatyynyalus 15 eur	 Kelkkareki 5 eur	 ICEWAY

**SAIMAA ADVENTURES** **Holiday Club**

Kylpyläntie 34, 55320 Rauha  
05- 230 2555, info@saimaa-adventures.fi  
www.saimaa-adventures.fi  
Avoinna klo 10 - 16

**Pyäköinti!**  
Holiday Club Saimaan  
suurelle parkkialueelle!

## NOUSUVARJO

# MM

## 2013

### 9.3.

**HOLIDAY CLUB SAIMAA**

**HARJOITUKSET**  
KLO.9:00-11:00

**KILPAILU**  
KLO.11:00-16:00

**MAKKARAA  
MEHUA  
TYLEISOLENNÄTTYKSIÄ**

**OSMO'S COSMOS**

**WRC 12.000**

**SAAJA AJAA YLI 200...  
MOTOPARK  
Raceway**

**WATER  
SHZOO**

## Масленица – это зимняя забава для всей семьи

**9 марта, начало в 13.00**

**Традиционные  
русские и  
финские блины,  
музыка, танцы,  
игры!!**

*Ravintola Hukka*

– жареные  
сосиски

ресторан  
открыт

Сувенеры ручной  
работы,  
выполненные  
русскими и финскими  
мастерами

**Всё для детей  
и для тех,  
в душе еще  
ребёнок**

**Section 7**

**NUOTAN  
SAVUSTAMO**

– жареные  
сосиски

ресторан  
открыт

**Развлечения для всей семьи**

 Катание на лошадях 5-10 eur	 Полет на парашюте 60 eur	 Пеходные коньки 15 eur
 Воздушная подушка 15 eur	 Катание на санях 5 eur	 ICEWAY

**SAIMAA ADVENTURES** **Holiday Club**

Kylpyläntie 34, 55320 Rauha  
05- 230 2555, info@saimaa-adventures.fi  
www.saimaa-adventures.fi  
Avoinna klo 10 - 16

**Машины можно оставить на парковке  
гостиницы Holiday Club**

**Трансфер к месту проведения  
вызвания (на такси Куйола на  
территорию Holiday Club Saimaa) по озону на  
автомобиле**

**Стоимость – (взрослым) –  
автомобиль 5 евро, ребенок 2,5 евро**

## Соревнования по парасейлингу

# 2013

## 9.3.

**HOLIDAY CLUB SAIMAA**

**Тренировки**  
9:00-11:00

**Соревнование**  
11:00-16:00

**WRC 12.000**

**OSMO'S COSMOS**

**Jukan Lasipalvelu Oy**  
palveluvelo lasitusalan erikoisliike

**SAAJA AJAA YLI 200...  
MOTOPARK  
Raceway**

**WATER  
SHZOO**

**Appendix 2 A team of volunteers after the event**

