

Successful Event Promotions

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<p>The field of event promotions is a growing industry. As it is still a new area of business, the information available is broad and not very detailed. Promotions are usually seen as a bigger field in advertising and specific information about event promotions is more difficult to find. Today marketing is shifting from basic, traditional advertising to digital marketing and telling the brands' story by creating an unforgettable and positive experience. Companies are trying to come up with new ways of 'wowing' the consumers and making their brands memorable.</p> <p>Having worked for two of the biggest promotion companies in Finland in the same positions, gave the authors an insight of how things are managed and how event promotions work in practice. Moreover, after seeing failed or dysfunctional promotions, the authors were inspired to know how to manage them better. They wanted to research the criteria that would create a good event promotion. The aim of this thesis is to gather more information about event promotions and establish 'a guide to successful event promotions'. The main question is 'what are the steps that need to be taken to create a successful event promotion?'</p> <p>Initially, this thesis presents the theoretical framework, combined from academic writings of experts in the field. The theoretical framework consists of two parts; event management and promotion management. These parts will give the reader more knowledge about the industry and how events and promotions are managed, as well as the essential parts of them. The empirical part of the thesis was conducted as semi-constructed interviews based on the theoretical framework. The results of the interviews of four professionals were combined, compared and analysed with the theory and with the working experience of the authors to create clear and versatile conclusions. Finally, the product and summary of this thesis, 'a guide for successful event promotions' is presented.</p>	
Keywords Event, Promotion, Event sponsorship, 5 W's	

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1 Introduction

The field of event promotions is a growing industry. As it is still quite a new area of business, the information available is broad and not very detailed. Promotions are usually seen as a bigger field and information about event promotions is more difficult to find. Companies are trying to come up with new ways of impressing the consumers and making their brands unforgettable. It is also essential to keep marketing a brand so that it isn't forgotten. Leaflets and adverts are no longer enough and companies need to be where their customers are. Therefore, going to events and promoting a brand in a way where the customers can experience the atmosphere, the product and the brand in an exciting environment is essential. Today, marketing is moving from basic advertising to telling a story about the brand by creating an unforgettable and positive experience. Due to the growing influence of digital marketing, it is important to link the brand to various media and to get the consumer involved. Through social media, for instance, the experience of one consumer can be shared with many new potential consumers. According to Ferdinand and Kitchin (2012) this type of marketing has become a strong trend. In this thesis, the authors are discussing event promotions, which are promotions of different brands that happen inside another event.

1.1 The aim of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to gather more information about event promotions and what they consist of. Since the industry is relatively young, this contributes to it greatly. The main question the authors want to find an answer for is 'what are the steps that need to be taken in order to create a successful event promotion?' To deepen the information gathered, the authors also want to answer the following sub-questions; 'what are the key elements for a successful event promotion?' and 'what benefits do event promotions have for stakeholders, the brand that is being promoted and also for the event organiser?'

By reviewing the available literature of the industry and interviewing professionals the authors want to make a coherent statement of what successful event promotions need. The main goal in this thesis is therefore to provide a guide to successful event promotions. The aim is to make the literature, the results of the research and the personal experience of the authors combine together, resulting in a solid conclusion. The authors want to find repetitive theories and key points about the topic and mention possible new factors. In addition to targeting the knowledge given in this thesis to event organisers and companies who want to promote their products and services, the authors also want to open the topic to all the readers who are interested in this field.

This thesis has versatile base information: knowledge gathered from academic writings of the experts in the field, interviews of four professionals who work in promotions, and also the authors' own working experiences. The professionals interviewed were from both promotion management as well as from companies who use event promotions as marketing tool. With the intention of the thesis being both reliable and valuable the authors' aim is to analyse the views and descriptions from different perspectives.

1.2 The scope of the thesis

In this thesis, the authors divided the information so that they first covered the theoretical framework of the research. The theoretical framework consists of two parts; event management and promotion management. The terms event and promotion management will be further explained in chapters 2 and 3. These parts will provide the reader with more knowledge about the industry, how events and promotions are managed, and what the essential parts of them are. The theoretical framework is written by using the literature that exists in the field as the only source. This part is further written to support the results gathered in the later chapters.

The empirical part of the thesis is conducted in chapters 4, 5 and 6. The authors will explain the research process in chapter 4. This part includes the explanation of the research methods used in chapter 4.1, the interview framework in chapter 4.2, and the validity and reliability of the research in chapter 4.3. The discussion and presentation of the results will be carried out in chapter 5, and will give more weight and depth to the thesis by delving deeper in to the subject via the research. More in-depth analysis will be conducted in chapter 6. In this part the theoretical framework and research will be compared and analysed. Similarities and differences to existing theories will be highlighted. The final result and the aim of the thesis; 'a guide to successful event promotions' will be presented in chapter 6.2. This guide will then perform as a summary for the entire body of work. In addition to this, the authors will ultimately go through their unique learning processes during the writing of the thesis in chapter 6.4. Finally, a reference list and attachments are presented in chapters 7 and 8.

1.3 The authors' motivation for the thesis topic

The brainstorming and initial conception of the thesis topic was quite straight forward. Both of the authors already had experience in event promotions, and that common ground was valuable. They were both interested in the event and promotion industry and they

were both planning to work in this field in the future. As such they felt that this thesis would ultimately be very beneficial. Having working for two of the largest promotion companies in Finland gave the authors a better insight into how things are managed, and how promotions themselves actually work in the field. There was no discussion about choosing a different kind of field. Promotions and events are also clearly related to the authors degree programmes experience and wellness management as well as hospitality, tourism and experience management. In addition to the similarities, both of the authors are specializing in the experience management.

Establishing a framework for the thesis was the most difficult task. The authors knew that they wanted to research the event and promotion industry but didn't know what specific area to take, and how to place it into a larger field, after choosing a clear and specific topic. After many discussions with the thesis supervisor and between the authors, they reached the conclusion that the promotion and event industry needed a functional promotion package and more unified sense of information about event promotions. This information could function as a helping tool for professionals in the field of events and promotions, but also for the authors themselves in their future careers.

After seeing many failed or dysfunctional promotions, the authors wanted to research the criteria needed to produce and then manage a good event promotion. They identified an area in the industry that could be better filled and managed better. After doing several promotions as promoters for many brands, there are many things that could be completed in a more functional way out in the field for the promoters to understand the guidelines of each different promotion. The authors believe that majority of the misunderstandings and unclear instructions are largely a result of lack of knowledge, and in this matter, poor organisation. Often, office workers and organisers don't give clear and specific enough information to promoters to fully complete their task.

2 Event management

The second part of the thesis outlines the theoretical framework of event management. The chapter further defines and categorizes events, and explains why and how they are organized. In addition it includes an overview of how events are organized from financial management to marketing. First, the definitions of events are covered; followed by different types of events and the motivating aspects of different stakeholders; the organisers, as well as the customers. The final sub-chapter of this event management section examines the planning and organisational processes. The chapter includes an overall plan,

funding through sponsorships, marketing, event evaluation as well as a description of a good event.

2.1 Definition of events

An event is a phenomenon when people gather in one specific place, at a specific time, for a particular reason (Kilkenny 2006). Furthermore, Shone and Parry (2013) suggest that special events are non-routine phenomena which have cultural, personal, organisational and leisure objectives that make them stand out from daily life. Van der Wagen & White (2010) add to this by writing that events have aims that can be celebratory, entertaining, enlightening or simply challenging the experience of a group. They are experiences that happen once in a lifetime and usually during a short period of time.

Getz (2012) defines an event in a similar way; as something that has a beginning and an end. Therefore an event is a temporary phenomenon which occurs only once. Adding to this, Watt (1998) states that planned events are usually held in a particular space and that the programme has been scheduled in advance. Events not only exist, but they happen and, meaning that someone will have to be there in order to make them happen, through different actions. (Watt 1998.) They require good planning and include a significant amount of risk as there is a lot invested by those who are involved in organising and making the event happen (Van der Wagen & White, 2010.) Furthermore, Getz (2012, 40), explains that *“Planned events’ are live, social events created to achieve specific outcomes, including those related to business, the economy, culture, society and environment.”*

At the same time Shone and Parry (2013) have argued that events all have seven different characteristics in common. The features mentioned are personal interaction, ritual or ceremony, intangibility, a fixed timescale, labour intensiveness, ambience and service, perishability and uniqueness. Personal interaction refers to the fact that participants are themselves part of the process and that they are in continuous contact with event staff. Rituals and ceremonies come from the old traditions that are still done in today’s events. Modern events might not have traditional aspects, but have however devised new ceremonies that are interesting for visitors. Participating in any type of an event is an intangible experience instead of being something one can touch and see. Events often run on a fixed timescale, but the timescale can vary a lot. Labour intensiveness means that the need of labour peaks during certain times of labour requirement, which is mostly during the event, but also before and afterwards. To have the right ambience at an event is one of the most important things that affects the outcome. Events are temporary and unique

since they last for a certain amount of time and are unlikely to be repeated in the same way twice.

2.2 Different types of events

Events vary a lot in their content and aims, but there are also many similarities found between different events and therefore they can be categorised in various different ways. Events can be categorized by their size and scope or the motivation of the organiser such as entertainment or fundraising. They can also be classified by the event characteristics, whether the event is private, public, or whether it is a non-profit or a profit seeking event. (Van der Wagen & White, 2010.) Shone and Parry, (2013) however, have divided events into four distinct categories. These categories are leisure, cultural, personal, and organizational events. It must also be emphasized that when events are categorised there is always overlapping. This means that one event can belong to more than one category.

In contrast to the earlier mentioned categories, Getz (2012), explains that planned events can be divided into different categories by how they are programmed and by how they look. It is important that any event can fulfil many different purposes, that they can have multiple meanings and offer similar experiences. The event categories are arts and entertainment, sports and recreation, cultural celebrations, business and trade, political and state events as well as private functions. Unlike Getz (2012), Kilkenny (2006) divides events into two broad categories which are social or special events and business or educational events. Special events can either have a specific target audience with a registration fee or can be open to the public with no admission costs. Festivals and concerts fall into this category. Business and educational events on the other hand are usually corporate, industry or educationally related and are targeted for work-oriented and likeminded people. Examples of business events can be meetings and conferences.

2.3 Motivation for organising events

Events are time, energy and money consuming and therefore everyone involved needs purpose and meaning. There can be one or more aims and reasons for undertaking an event, but they need to be clearly outlined to the stakeholders. (Watt, 1998.) Adding to this, Shone and Parry (2013) divide the motivators for event organizing into two categories; primary motives and secondary motives. As an example, Shone and Parry mention that the primary motive to hold a dinner party can be entertaining friends, with the secondary motive such as increasing one's status. Therefore, it is common to have more than one motivator in organizing any type of an event. Each event has to have one or more

goals which gives a purpose to the event and helps in the planning process. These goals can be as mentioned, for example, entertainment, education or simply making a profit. (Kilkenny 2006.)

2.4 Motivation for attending events

Shone and Parry (2013) explain that there can be both primary and secondary motives for attending events. They have been divided into four different areas: social motives, physiological motives, organizational motives and personal motives. Social motives, for example, are based around status or social interaction, whereas relaxation and exercise are physiological motives. Organizational motives can be the need to make sales or status for instance. Looking for new experiences and education are in the last category of personal motives. Usually people have more than one motive for participating in an event. These motives can also be from different areas of motivation such as personal and social motives. Satisfying one need of a potential participant might not be enough but there should be more benefits and motivators offered.

Kilkenny (2006) states that *“you want to inspire, motivate and entice people to come and participate.”* Education, entertainment and raising money are some of the examples that she mentions as reasons for people to meet. One should include one or more of these motivators as the events' goals and objectives. When discussing the motivators Pine and Gilmore (1999) dive deeper into the subject of participation and state that experiences such as events are *“...not about entertaining customers, it's about engaging them.”* (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, 30) They have also created 'The Experience Realms' where they analyse the engagement of a customer. (Figure 2.) The level of guest participation is indicated on the horizontal axis. The vertical axis illustrates the connection between the customer and the event. The different sections that events and experiences fall into are escapist, esthetic, educational and entertainment. The best experiences include all four realms and this sort of event would land in the “sweet spot” in the middle of the four sectors (Pine & Gilmore, 1999.)

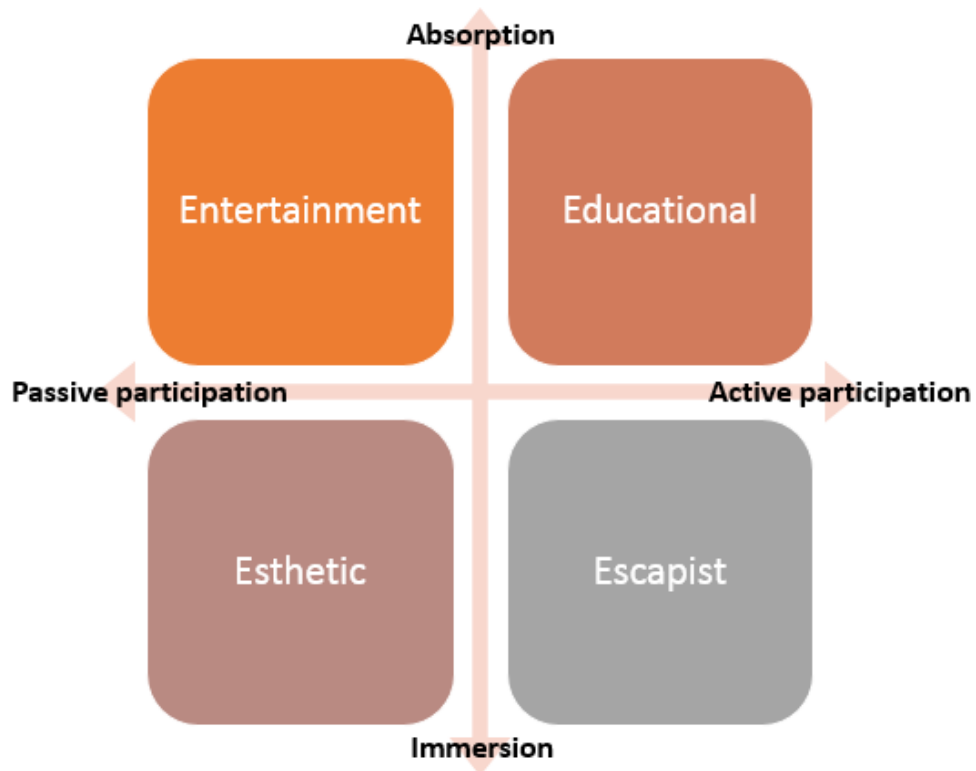


Figure 1. The Experience Realms (Pine and Gilmore 1999, 30)

Allen (2009) also states that one should develop anticipation and the highest possible guest attendance with the messages and purposes of the event. In order to do this, it is important to understand the potential customers' motives, expectations and needs as Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) also add. They state that events should satisfy all levels of need, but they don't necessarily have to be satisfied at the same time. Customers have different motives and expectations when they come to events and these might not all be met. (Raj, Walters & Rashid 2013.)

2.5 Event planning and organising

This part of the thesis focuses on how events are organised and what needs to be considered when planning and executing an event. Moreover, the chapter reviews the different parts of organising events from event planning to marketing. In addition to event evaluation, sponsorship is also discussed. Finally the characteristics of a good event are described with the required and necessary tools for creating it.

2.5.1 Planning the event

No event can be planned without answering five important questions: who? what? when? where? and why? (Kilkenny 2006). It is important to plan the event well, as the process reveals risks, problems and opportunities that shouldn't be overlooked. Before doing anything else, one needs to know why the event is being undertaken and what it is for. (Shone & Parry, 2013.) Why do we want to hold an event? *"Why? is probably the most important question of all."* (Watt, 1998, 4.) Furthermore Van der Wagen and White (2010) emphasize that the most vital factor in planning events is the purpose and that this should be the driving force of the entire planning process. It is important to know and plan what needs to be organised. There should be a clear picture of what is being planned and what has to be done. A clear picture of the event is the only way to get sponsors and participants interested. (Watt, 1998.)

The scheduling of an event is also crucial. There needs to be enough time to plan and execute everything before the actual date. There are also factors, such as other similar events that affect when the event should be held. Organising an event too close to another similar one can be disastrous. The date should be set so that it maximises the benefits of the organisational culture and the participants. (Watt, 1998.) There are different matters that need to be considered when setting the time for an event. These factors are the duration of the event, the time of the day, the day of the week and the current season. The date should also be scheduled so that there is enough time to plan the event. (Van der Wagen & White, 2010.) Where the event is taking place is also one of the vital parts. The venue, as well as the geographical location, are important. The venue should be easy to find and transportation to the location must be convenient. The venue should also be comfortable for the guests in order to be a success. Uncomfortable venue can lead to guests not wanting to participate next time. The organisers should first figure out what is needed for the event and then choose a suitable venue. (Watt, 1998.)

To have a successful event, there needs to be the right resources, and things that make it possible to stage the event. The mechanics and logistics have a big impact on how the event is organised and put together. All successful events need funding. It can be very dangerous to start organizing an event, if there is a lack of funding for it. A proper budget with income and expenditure has to be planned before starting anything else. After having answered the important questions for the event, it is time to start the real planning. Each event is planned and the important part is to decide what needs to be done and how these tasks will then be performed. During the planning stage the aims, objectives and methods are defined. This process should be carried out in a structured and logical way. *"Proper*

Planning Promotes Perfect Performance.” (Watt, 1998, 8.) For any large-scale event there are details that need to be investigated before organizing anything. The aims and objectives of the event need to be clearly stated and a feasibility study should be done. It is important to have clear aims when searching for staff and finance. (Watt, 1998.) The objectives of an event need to be SMART:

“Specific to the event.

Measurable in statistical terms.

Agreed (or achievable) by those involved.

Realistic (or relevant) to the resources available.

Timed around the event schedule.” (Watt, 1998, 11)

The objectives should also be simple in order to avoid confusion. If an events’ objectives fill these requirements, the event can be managed by these objectives. (Watt, 1998, 11) These will help to retain the focus of the organisers and measure the outcomes. The objectives could include targets such as ‘a level of media exposure’, ‘number of participants’ and ‘break-even or amount of profit’. (Van der Wagen & White, 2010, 26.)

2.5.2 Sponsorships and funding for events

As mentioned, a successful event needs funding. The biggest mistake in organising and planning an event is to commit before securing needed financial support. (Watt, 1998.)

“Events vary considerably in how they are funded. It is important to recognize that many events have more than one source of income or revenue – in fact there might be as many sources of income as there are costs associated with the event.” (Shone & Parry, 2013, 155.) In addition Watt (1998) state that there are some companies that event organizers usually contact when trying to get resources for income. These companies can be a local authority leisure department, a local or national tourist authority, sponsorship agencies or local enterprise companies for instance. In order for an event to get funding it is vital to have a clearly stated purpose and the event should also be considered valuable.

According to Shone and Parry (2013) people often think that it is easy to get sponsorships for events. In reality, it is quite difficult and time-consuming to get sponsors attracted to one’s event. It is crucial for companies to benefit from the event if they are going to sponsor it. The event and the sponsor companies should have the same target market so that the co-operation can be beneficial for both through media and marketing for instance.

Hospitality benefits such as free VIP-tickets can also be seen as perks for the sponsors.

“To get sponsorship the event organizer must fit (conveniently) into the sponsor's own

plans, as well as matching the event's objective." (Shone & Parry, 2013, 158.) Supporting this theory Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) also write that it is important for the event organisation and the sponsors to have the same strategic vision. In addition to this Goldblatt (2008) states that sponsorships are more valuable if the targets and objectives match.

An event organiser should consider the following issues; that the event matches the sponsor's image, the sponsor gets media coverage and advertisement, corporate hospitality and possibility to meet famous people, the sponsor company's name in the event title, and whether it is value for money for the sponsors (Watt, 1998). Adding to the theory, Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) call this kind of sponsorship relationship the "new media" and state that it should be used "...to enhance the event experience and acquire synergy with the customers." (Raj, Walter & Rashid, 2013, 195.) But there are also other sources for securing financial support for an event. It is possible to get grants from local governments or charitable bodies. Fundraising activities, volunteer work and donations can also be sources of income for events. (Shone & Parry 2013.) The subject of event sponsorship is discussed more in chapter 3.5 'Event sponsorship'.

2.5.3 Marketing for events

Marketing can be described as the management of the exchange relationship between the stakeholders and the event organiser, while trying to reach the event's goals. It is an ongoing development, and communication is a vital part. The exchange relationship means that the event offers something valuable to consumers and other stakeholders that they willingly buy or accept. It has to be mutually beneficial and in the case of events the possibility to enjoy experiences is what is offered. (Getz, 2012.) Then again Ferdinand and Kitchin (2012) define event marketing as "...a method of communicating an organization's message..." (Ferdinand & Kitchin, 2013, 125.) Ferdinand & Kitchin (2013) also mention an alternative definition for event marketing which will be explained in chapter 3.1. 'Definitions for promotions'.

According to Shone and Parry (2013) the crucial element in marketing events is to know the target market. It is important to know the target group to be able to reach and attract the right people. This target market should be put "...into convenient segments in order to best understand what techniques would make them aware of the event and attract them to it". (Shone & Parry, 2013, 196.) To enhance the theory, Allen (2009) explains that it is important to know what kind of events they enjoy to be able to create an event with style and appeal. In addition, Ferdinand and Kitchin (2012) state that the size, trends and communicative methods of the target audience should be researched. Watt (1998) has created a

marketing checklist which also includes the importance of knowing the target market and, then creating the event specifically for them. Other vital factors include knowing the event's goals and competitors, as well as keeping in touch with other businesses in the same area. Being innovative and creating a unique image for the event is also important.

Researching the market can lower the risk of failure and uncertainty. Research can also help in analysing the success of an event and it can help in creating a good marketing strategy. (Watt 1998.) In addition, it helps to understand what the customers need and want; and why would they choose your event (Getz, 2012.) An important part of marketing is analysing the current situation and how your event fits into it. This can be done, for instance, with a SWOT analysis which concentrates on the internal strengths, internal weaknesses, external opportunities and external threats at the moment. An internal strength could be for example, the local reputation whereas an internal weakness could be the limited financial resources. External opportunities could be the developing partnerships, and the external threat could be economic trends. (Watt, 1998.)

The marketing mix has different aspects which create a balance for communication and marketing activities. The main components are place, price, product and promotion. All of these factors need to be considered and balanced. When creating events the place has many aspects such as the venue, maps, car parking and accommodation amongst others. The product means the end result so the event itself. Promotion also has many different aspects such as advertising and generating publicity. When considering the price, it is important to think whether the customers will accept paying that price. (Watt, 1998.) The price ultimately *"...determines who can, or wants to, make the purchase. Price can also affect the experience in the sense that perceived value for money impacts on consumer's overall satisfaction."* (Getz, 2012, 291.) For services and especially events there are four more P's (People, Packaging, Partnership, and Programming) that have to be taken into account. People are vital in creating an event through customer care and team work. Packaging involves how the event is marketed, if it is a stand-alone venture or part of something bigger, like a festival. Partnership concerns matters such as having support from other businesses. The programming element highlights the scheduling of an event and when it will take place. If a manager balances all of these P's it is easier to extend the success of the event. (Watt, 1998.)

2.5.4 Risk management

"Risk management can be defined as the process of anticipating, preventing or minimizing potential costs, losses or problems for the event, organization, partners and guests."

(Getz, 2012, 302.) Risk management focuses on the pursuit of being conscious about the risks of something going wrong at an event. There should also be plans to prevent or minimize the effects of these contingencies. There are four different categories for these risks. Economical risks can be financial losses whereas performance risks can mean a failure for the event to even happen, such as entertainers cancelling. A psychological risk could be the bad reputation of the location and physical risks include security issues. (Shone & Parry, 2013.) It doesn't matter how well an event is planned but there are always things that can go wrong. They can vary from small issues to natural disasters. An event organizer needs to have a contingency plan and an emergency plan to cope with this possibility. (Kilkenny, 2006.)

When assessing risks it is vital to be aware of the possible issues and what kind of matters can go wrong. When doing this more relevant information can be gained from professionals such as the fire brigade or the police. An event manager can place different risks in to different categories which are marketing, staff and others, health and safety, catering, crowd management, transport and security. Estimating risks as well as their probability and severity can be done simply with risk analysis quadrant. In the quadrant the risks will fall in to one of the four categories; transfer, retain, minimize and control. (Shone & Parry, 2013.) Risk management for events has different phases. First comes assessment and second the evaluation. This leads to planning the control measures which can mean specific preparations during or before the event. The next phase is recording which will help in the future when planning new events. It is impossible to forecast all the possible risks which is why one needs to be cautious during the whole event. (Shone & Parry, 2013.) A vital feature in an event manager is the skill of coming up with alternatives and quick solutions for these issues and risks (Kilkenny, 2006).

According to Kilkenny (2013) event managers should always sign contracts with each cooperation partner and sub-contractor. This will protect everyone who is involved in the contract. The contracts are made with a sense of mutual commitment and they should include all of the details. If one party doesn't fully perform their responsibilities the other party should get compensation. To secure an event and its budget, there should be an awareness of the insurances needed. Examples of insurance categories that might be important for events are: event cancellation, weather and third-party property damage. Kilkenny also mentions more things that can go wrong when organizing an event: venue damaged by storm, a failure in the power supply and entertainers cancelling their performance.

2.5.5 Event evaluation

Event evaluation is important for each event. It should be kept in mind both during and after the event. The project should be evaluated and monitored to ensure the quality and to also make sure that the project is on schedule and on the budget. The evaluation after the event is also important and it can vary from a small questionnaire to a bigger market research. (Watt, 1998.) Shone and Parry (2013) support the theory by saying that the evaluation should be done a short period after the event (Shone & Parry, 2013.) In addition Kilkenny (2006) emphasizes the importance of evaluating the event straight away before starting another project. The information can be useful in the future when organizing other events. *“The purpose of evaluation is for managers to learn how an event went and to be able to improve on it for the future.”* (Shone & Parry, 2013, 313.) There can be different evaluations made; some of the activities might not need any improvements, some might need to be strengthened and some might have gone so wrong that these activities need proper adjustments. (Shone & Parry, 2013.)

“Customer surveys, staff debriefings and financial records all provide information that can be used in event evaluation.” (Van der Wagen & White, 2010, 359.) Watt (1998) presents the idea of hard and soft criteria for event evaluation. Examples of hard criteria are deadlines and resource constraints whereas soft criteria could be overall quality and staff commitment for instance. In addition Shone and Parry (2013) have divided the information used in event evaluation in a similar way into quantitative and qualitative information. Quantitative information can be areas like financial reports or visitor and participant data. Visitor perceptions as well as staff feedback are part of the qualitative information. According to Shone and Parry (2013) there are two main event evaluation questions which are: were the objectives met and what kind of improvements can be made? SMART objectives, when done correctly, will be possible to measure and assess. To get the needed information to evaluate these objectives, there are activities such as exit surveys, questionnaires and statistics. (Watt, 1998.) During the evaluation planning, one should decide what kind of information is needed for the future (Van der Wagen & White, 2010.)

Shone and Parry (2013) have created a figure for the different sources of information for evaluation. They state that there can be many sources event managers are not using for collecting evaluation information. Shone and Parry mention the following sources where one can get evaluation information from; sponsors, staff and volunteers, mystery guests from participant observation, visitor observation from questionnaires and visitor perceptions, co-ordinators, security/police about crowds, traffic, incidents, specialists and department leaders and finally council about parking, access and community views.

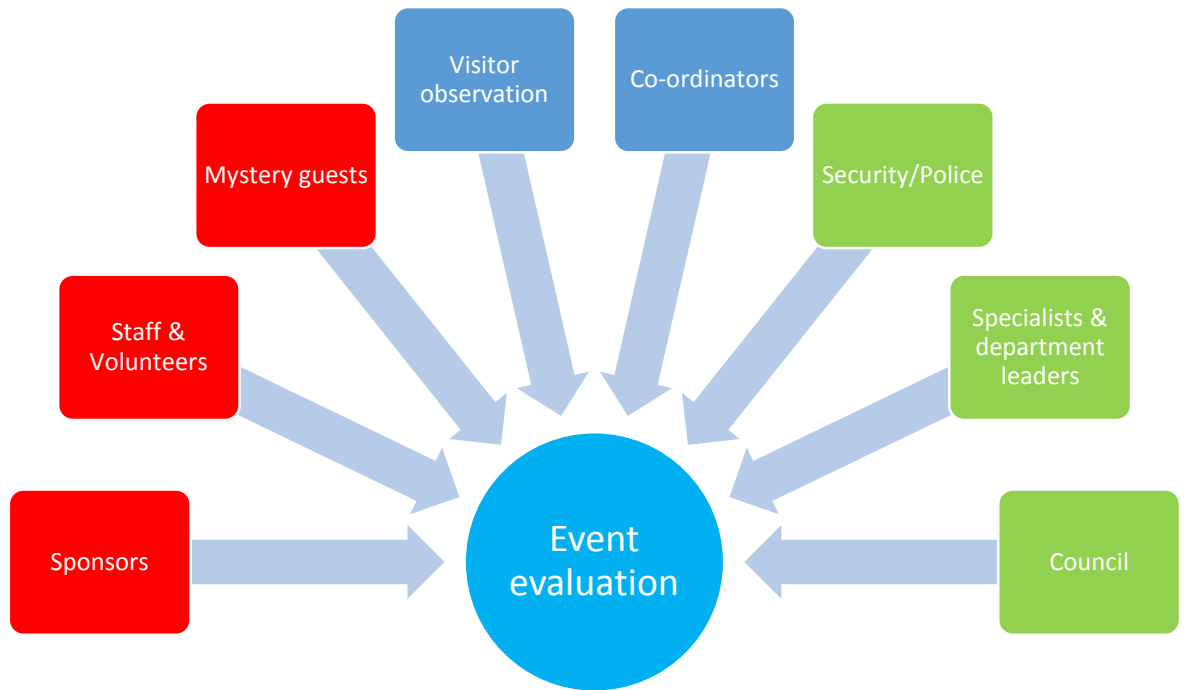


Figure 2. Sources of information for evaluation (Shone & Parry, 2013, 313)

For the success of an event it is important to know what is seen as its best and worst features. The issues that have arisen during the evaluation can be placed on a scale from the least serious to the most serious. The issues that are the most serious and cause the most problems should be sorted first. In order to be able to know what is the most difficult problem one should be able to measure the impacts of these different issues. There should also be someone designated to resolve the issue to avoid management only talking about it but not doing anything. The event managers may not always have time to solve all of the issues therefore, prioritizing is important. Some of the issues could also be given to other staff members to solve. (Shone & Parry, 2013)

2.5.6 A good event

The most vital factors for a good event are a clear vision and purpose. All of the staff members should be committed to the SMART objectives for instance. The organisation should have a flexible structure and it should be able to carry out the important tasks. In order to have a good event, the leader as well as the staff need to be committed. The whole organisation should feel united as well as focused and hardworking. The planning needs to be well detailed with a proper schedule, within the budget. To organise a good

event, communication is one of the most vital parts. It is also important to have a good public image and an efficient presentation. The staff and management both need to commit to the customer care as well as controlling and monitoring at all times. This can be concluded with a well done post-event evaluation. (Watt, 1998.)

According to Watt (1998) there are some things that can take you a long way in succeeding in event management. However Watt also mentions that luck and good judgement affect the success of one's event. The manager's skills are important, they need to be motivating, good at decision making and management but also have good interpersonal skills. The staff should be committed and work well in a team. Time management and scheduling play an important role in organising successful events. Enthusiasm and innovation together with a business plan are also important. Team members should be responsive to change and not get stuck in the old ways. In addition, strong vision and measurable target will be key issues in planning a good event. Shone and Parry (2013, 268) add to the theory by suggesting that anything can make a well planned event fail but the *"art of being a good events co-ordinator is to mitigate these problems where they occur, so that the overall experience of the participants is positive."*

"Getting everything in place for an event is not only a matter of the behind-the-scenes effort in terms of logistics, organization, preparation, layout and design; it is also crucial to the ambience and atmosphere that will be created and experienced by the participants, visitors or guests." (Shone & Parry, 2013, 263.) Nowadays it is more complicated to make a lasting impression on the visitors as there are more events everywhere. There needs to be more attention spent on creating a good experience although the visitors themselves affect a lot on the ambience of each event. The involvement and enjoyment of the visitors is a key factor in creating the right atmosphere. A good atmosphere has great impact on creating a successful event whereas a bad atmosphere could potentially cause the event to fail. The ambience is also affected by the setting and the physical elements in the event venue or site. All the five senses; smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch have an impact on visitors' experience. The environment, staff and the guests as well as their cognitive, emotional and physiological responses affect what the participants feel about the event and if they enjoy themselves and want to stay. (Shone & Parry, 2013.)

3 Promotion management

This third part of the thesis provides a theoretical overview of promotion management. Finding reliable sources for this topic has been challenging, because there isn't a lot that has been written about promotions at this date. There are also many terms and views about the type of promotion the authors are handling in the next part of this thesis, such as sales promotion or a sales promotion technique, event sponsorship, organizational event or an integrated brand promotion. The authors have pieced them together from multiple different sources to clarify and explain what these definitions mean.

In the following five chapters, the authors will go through the most common promotional terminology, have a general look at the world of promotions and advertising, and proceed to the planning of a promotion that consists of marketing and the organizational structure of a promotion. The subchapter 3.4 "Media in a promotion" handles the topics of media and applying a message to different media sources such as TV, Internet and radio. Ultimately, the authors will introduce the concept of Integrated Brand Promotion by O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009.)

3.1 Definitions for promotions

In this chapter, the most common key terms for promotion management will be defined. These terms are advertising, event marketing, event sponsorship, experiential marketing as well as sales promotion. Also other important terms, such as branded entertainment, integrated brand promotion and support media will be defined in the following chapters.

"Advertising is a paid, mass-mediated attempt to persuade." (O'Guinn, Allen, Semenik 2009, 9.) More precisely, O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) emphasize that something has to meet all these three essential criteria for it to be considered as advertising. They also state that advertising can be persuasive communication not only about a product or a service but also about an idea, a person, or an entire organization. If there is a promotion of any brand held at a music festival, it can be categorised as advertising. Ferdinand & Kitchin (2012) explain event promotion by using a term called *event marketing which means "...a particular type of marketing that organizations that participate in events undertake to promote their brands, products and/or services."* (Ferdinand & Kitchin, 2013, 125.) They also mention that this type of participation is usually done by sponsorship and that it has become a robust trend.

According to O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) event sponsors provide financial value for the event organisers in return of getting their brand name, logo as well as the brand message visibility during the event. According to them this is called event sponsorship. When emphasizing the term event promotion, the authors are mainly reflecting to event sponsorship, a promotion happening inside of an event. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik also discuss that event sponsorships are popular and increased means for reaching the target groups. Skinner and Rukavina (2003) add to the theory by saying that sponsorship brings buyers and sellers together while both of them gain benefits. They also state that "*...if you have the right people coming to your event as far as your sponsors are concerned (their potential customers), you are probably going to have happy sponsors.*" (Skinner & Rukavina, 2003, 2.)

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) explain that sales promotion means using different methods to ensure a greater brand value in the consumers' and distributors' minds. Alvarez and Casielles (2005) also point out that sales promotions are occasionally offered stimulations that reinforce publicity in order to promote purchasing of a specific product. The techniques used in sales promotions, such as price reductions or sampling have a direct impact on customers and they might lead to an increase in sales in a short period of time. "*If the consumer is capable of anticipating when a sales promotion action will take place, the results obtained will decrease.*" (Alvarez and Casielles 2005, 57.)

Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) go deeper into this and explain that "*The term experiential marketing refers to actual customer experiences with the brand/product/service that drive sales and increase brand image and awareness.*" (Raj, Walters & Rashid, 2013, 230.) They emphasize the difference of experiencing the product or service rather than just hearing about it. If experiential marketing is done right it is the best way to win brand loyalty, however this needs proper planning. If event organisers offer good experiential marketing strategy they should get better rewards in return. The goal is that these experiences affect the perception of the brand positively during and after the event. (Raj, Walters & Rashid, 2013.) Cova and Dalli (2009) further support the theory of experiential marketing by saying that consumers want to experience the brands in a positive way. They also state that "*when a firm or a brand only delivers products and not services, it should create its own premises (theatres of consumption) so that the consumer can experience its products without the intrusion of any competing influences.*" (Cova and Dalli, 2009, 478.)

When talking about event promotions in this thesis the authors mean and define them as a combination of these above mentioned explanations and descriptions since there is not

yet a precise interpretation of the type of promotions the authors are handling in this thesis. The closest definition to event promotions would be event sponsorships.

3.2 The world of promotions and events

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) argue that we are living in a post-advertising era, where consumers are more in charge and self-aware about advertising and communication. The consumers are taking part in advertising more than ever before, for instance buying things online, rejecting pop-up ads on the Internet as well as creating and distributing their own ads and videos on YouTube. Consumers are more demanding and they want the opportunity to choose which advertisements they want to encounter.

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) state that 'branded entertainment' is the most significant area of evolution in the advertisement industry. They introduce the term branded entertainment as a blending of advertising and IBP with entertainment. IBP, known as integrated brand promotion, means *"the use of various promotional tools, including advertising, in a coordinated manner to build and maintain brand awareness, identity and preference."* (O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik 2009, 695.) O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) further suggest that a part of branded entertainment is product placement, where customers can find an advertisement of a product hidden in a program, such as TV, radio or music. Red Bull TV is an example of branded entertainment where an internationally known brand is broadcasting programmes of their own activities, such as presenting live show from a Red Bull Crashed Ice race. In another example, in the 2015 motion picture *"Ted 2"*, the main character is sitting in a court room and starts playing Angry Birds on his iPhone. This is an example of the new era of advertising, this is so called product placement, since it is an advertisement for Rovio's virtual game Angry Birds and also for Apple's iPhone.

As already defined more closely in chapter 2.1, *"organizational events are a part of special events and their purpose is to enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people."* (Shone, Parry 2013, 6-7.) These organizational events can include for instance commercial, political or sales events such as sales promotions. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) introduce multiple sales promotion techniques. Coupons, samplings and point-of-purchase advertisements are often used in commercial promotion events due to their activation of the consumer to approach. The point-of-purchase advertising refers to the materials used as props or retail settings to entice the customers to buy or engage with the brand's product. Also, advantages in coupons and sampling are used to leave a positive impression of the product and to allow the consumer to try the product on a trial basis with no notable risk or commitment.

As Alvarez and Casielles (2005) conclude, a consumer's brand choice is often affected by sales promotions. Promotions may help the consumer decide between two equally attractive products. In addition to the techniques mentioned, Shone and Parry (2013, 7) discuss product launches as organizational events. According to them, a product launch is an opportunity to introduce an audience, such as the media, to a new product or service. Also, it may be aimed at an organization's internal management and staff, sales force or external dealers and customers.

Nicholls, Roslow and Laskey (1994) support the same view in their work about sports event sponsorships for brand promotion. Their research emphasizes that consumers participating in a sports event are more likely to choose a product from a brand that is being advertised at the event with for instance scoreboards, coupons, other offers and signs. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) add that there are various and different sized sports events held in the world constantly and this gives the advertisers "...*diverse opportunities to associate their brands with the distinctive images of various participants, sports, and even nations.*" (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik, 2009, 603.) Nicholls, Roslow and Laskey (1994) call this kind of marketing place-based media, and its promotional efforts can also be felt outside the event, when consumers are following the event externally via TV or social media for instance. The authors will return and reflect more on this topic in the chapter 3.5 event sponsorship.

3.3 Planning of a promotion

In this chapter of the thesis, we proceed to the planning part of a promotional event. At first, a process known as STP Marketing by O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009, 199-202) will be explained and the organizational structures and risks will then be discussed in the planning phase. Planning a promotional event can be very similar to planning events which was covered earlier in chapter 2.5, consequently this chapter will focus on underlining the most important points.

3.3.1 STP marketing

In short, STP marketing (**S**egmenting, **T**argeting, **P**ositioning) is a marketing strategy used mainly when advertisers focus their efforts on one subgroup of a product's total market. "*Markets are segmented; products are positioned.*" (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik 2009, 700, 199.)

For the marketing program and promotional event, target segmenting is the main focal point. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009, 199) stress that it is vital to focus on a strategy that would best represent the product and its' value to the selected target consumers, in a way that speaks to them personally. Positioning is the process of designing and representing one's product or service so that it will occupy a distinct and valued place in the target consumers mind. "*Positioning strategy involves the selection of key themes or concepts that the organization will feature when communicating this distinctiveness to the target segment.*" (O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik 2009, 200.)

According to O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009), using STP marketing as the framework for strategy development will help to find the right strategy and to also develop the right style of advertising. They still mention that shifts or changes occur all the time and that successful marketing strategies must be modified or sometimes reinvented in a competitive environment. Shone and Parry (2013, 115) talk about the critical path, which means "*the key time-limited route through a number of time-critical activities in the planning of the event.*" They also explain that sometimes planning and making strategies can be challenging and that changes may occur as early as the timing issue of the project.

3.3.2 Organisational structure and the team

According to Shone and Parry (2013, 274) it is unlikely that any two different promotional events, or any event in that matter, would have the exact same organisational structure or staffing. However, there is a high likelihood that the organisational structure would include five main functions: visitor services operations, support services operations, marketing, administration, and finance.

The structure forms the framework around which the various activities and services operate (Van der Wagen, 2005). In many cases there is a core body of officers, managers or coordinators who organise the activities and supervise paid, casual, and part-time staff or in some cases, volunteers. This body is sometimes called a cadre. This structure can be quite conventional since in most events or promotions unfamiliar, people perhaps from different companies, will be working together.

Each member of the promotion team needs to know who is in charge or responsible for different things in order for the event promotion to be successful and for the impression of the promoted brand to be a positive one. For that, it is also vital to pay attention to the organisational structure as well as if the staff is more co-operative and social or whether

they have bureaucratic aims. Although the cost would be reduced when having different people to volunteer at different events where they are motivated. It is harder to cultivate them in to the culture of the event organisation with a shorter period of time. This may lead to having less control over the outcome. (Shone and Parry 2013.) Shone and Parry proceed that on the other hand, while promoting a brand, having the volunteers motivated and as a part of the movement, may result in them being advocates of the brand. This serves to the brand's own interest when the promotion team is highly motivated and contacting the consumer in the right way, with the right words to say, and by truly believing in the product themselves.

3.4 Media in a promotion

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) talk about applying the Internet and media to advertising and their roles. Today we are living in a digital era where traditional media tools, such as print and broadcast media, are stagnating and new digital media tools, such as social media and Internet ads, are developing and creating an increased efficiency to advertisers. Digital media is nowadays a go-to tool for event sponsorships as it allows advertisers to make fast changes and turn the campaign global easily, which would take several months when using traditional media. *"Advertisers are fast adopting the belief that digital media – primarily Internet ads – offer a more cost-effective way to reach target markets."* (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik, 2009, 486.)

Digital media is the core channel to reaching the right target groups and to choosing the right media for the right target audiences. Social media is a powerful Internet tool and for example Facebook has made marketing easy for advertisers, they can pretty much just click the age, gender and the amount of money they want to use for this marketing, and sponsored advertisements will appear on these consumers' newsfeeds. (O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik 2009.) Ferdinand and Kitchin (2013) support O'Guinn's, Allen's and Semenik's perspectives by introducing a survey published in 2010 by the Event Marketing Institute that presents a term event marketing as the most effective marketing tool for building customer relationships. They specify that social media marketing tools are regularly enhancing event marketing's effectiveness and on the contrary. Consumers frequently express themselves and their feedback by communicating through the hosting organisation's web page.

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) still mention that although the digital media has high potential and that its tools are effective and powerful, the importance of traditional media must not be forgotten since it is the base for advertising. They introduce the term support

media, which is an example of a promotional message being delivered by reinforcing some other media, such as a traditional street poster connected to an Internet campaign. As discussed before in chapter 3.3.1 STP Marketing, positioning can also tap into latent (hidden) demand, described by Shone and Parry (2013), if the targeted group has not been aware of the product before. At the positioning phase, advertisers can get help for choosing the right media to reach their target groups. *“To be really good you need to be able to see the media buys in the strategic context of brand communication and consumer behaviour goals.”* (O’Guinn, Allen and Semenik, 2009, 457.)

3.5 Event sponsorship

O’Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) emphasize that event sponsorship can have varied forms, it can be local or international. Brands can promote in displays, screens or even face-to-face. An event is usually noted in public media, both printed and digital, and due to this, a promotion held in an event can yield simultaneous and follow-up publicity.

“A major sweet spot in event sponsorship comes when significant overlap is achieved between an event’s participants and the marketer’s target audience.” (O’Guinn, Allen and Semenik, 2009, 603.) O’Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) further argue that sponsorship provides a considerable opportunity to nurture brand loyalty since the events contain emotional experiences and by attaching the sponsor’s brand successfully to an event, the consumer can have a permanent positive feeling about the brand. To obtain this, the marketers should research the event attendees to ensure that they are reaching the well-defined and desired target audiences. Overall, events are an opportunity to grasp target groups, which could be hard to reach through other channels.

O’Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) also mention the importance of leveraging or activating the sponsorship by calculating if the collaboration with an event would actually provide a cost-effective way to reach the target audience. For determining the event sponsorship’s success, they present *“a checklist of guidelines for selecting the right events and maximizing their benefits for the brand”*

- “1. Match the brand to the event.*
- 2. Tightly define the target audience.*
- 3. Stick to a few key messages.*
- 4. Develop a plot line.*
- 5. Deliver exclusively.*

6. *Deliver relevance.*

7. *Use the Internet.*

8. *Plan for the before and after.*" (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik, 2009, 607, exhibit 18.9)

Event sponsorship is known as a part of a wider approach called integrated brand promotion. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) define Integrated Brand Promotion as the process of using a wide range of promotional tools working on together to create widespread brand exposure. These tools include advertising in mass media, sales promotions, direct marketing, podcasting and event sponsorships. The definition of Integrated Brand Promotion stresses the importance that every single tool has to work together with other tools and by that, they will create a consistent and compelling impression of the brand and reach the right consumer groups. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) continue that advertising and IBP are not only marketing messages, but that they are also a social communication process that has evolved through the decades.

The popularity of sponsorships is growing and the main reason for this is the need for companies to find different ways to promote, inform and sell their products and services. Many events wouldn't be financially viable or the quality wouldn't meet the customers' expectations without sponsorships. (Goldblatt, 2008.) There are many types of sponsorships, and it is not always used directly to increase sales and the competitive advantage. It can also be used to maintain public image by linking an event to a certain brand. Sponsorship has become a tool for driving products and services to the right consumers. (Raj, Walters & Rashid, 2013.)

To look at the subject of sponsorship from a more practical point of view, Skinner and Rukavina (2003) have created a figure for the ultimate sponsorship an event can have. (Figure 3.) This framework gives a good overview of what is required. Skinner and Rukavina (2003) include 8 important factors for the ultimate event sponsorship: seeing through the sponsor's eyes, giving added value for the sponsors as well as staying in touch with the sponsors, networking to open doors, creating a good image, giving results for sponsors, having outstanding staff and being seen as the best. They emphasize that *"...The most important thing to remember before you even attempt to sell sponsorship is that you must create an event that is better than the rest."* (Skinner & Rukavina 2003, 2.)



Figure 3. For the Ultimate in Event Sponsorship (Skinner and Rukavina 2003, xi)

4 Research Process

In this chapter, the authors will explain the research process as well as its aims and goals. In the subchapters, the research methods as well as the precise information about the research are explained in further detail. The reliability and validity of the research are also discussed and analysed. The last part of this chapter introduces the interview framework that is used in the research process.

To make it easier for event organisers, as well as for companies who want to promote their products and services the authors wanted to research how to create a successful promotion that would benefit both parties and have a win-win solution. The authors have experience of event promotions and are also acquainted with the companies, how things are handled and what kind of problems can occur in the running of a project. The idea of the research was to become more familiar with event promotions; what are the elements for creating successful event promotions and what are the benefits of organizing them. The idea of the research was to get more specific information about event promotions, as

most of the information in literature is about promotions in general and consequently the information is very generic.

4.1 Research methods

While writing the theoretical framework for the thesis the authors started to think about what kind of research methods would be used during the process. In order to get the best and most accurate results for this type of research the authors decided to use a qualitative research. Qualitative research gives more in-depth information to the person conducting the research. The research is centralized in experiences as well as emotions. (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008.) Qualitative data usually focuses on getting larger amount of information from a smaller group of people (Veal & Burton, 2014.) During the thesis process there was also another research method used. The authors consistently applied their own experience to the research process. This observation and exploration was done during their work experience in the field of event promotion.

Veal and Burton (2014) further explain qualitative research as being used when the researchers are doing exploratory theory building or when the research is centralized in meanings and attitudes. Therefore, this type of research is the most suitable for this particular thesis. Veal and Burton (2014) also frame the idea of qualitative research quite well: *“Qualitative research is generally based on the belief that the people personally involved in a particular (cultural/event) situation are best placed to describe and explain their experiences, motivations and world view in their own words...”* (Veal & Burton, 2014, 218.) This is exactly what the authors wanted to do: to hear what the professionals themselves think about the field, what kind of experiences they have had and how they would describe the term event promotion. Since the authors realised while forming the theoretical framework that there is no clear and similar information about promotion, it was important to get the professional answers themselves, and to reflect their own experience in the field. Therefore choosing the qualitative research method was the obvious choice.

According to Veal and Burton (2014) qualitative research has four parts; planning, collecting data, analysing the data, and then writing up the results. When planning the research the authors had to choose the type of qualitative method that would be best for this thesis. The different qualitative research methods are ethnography, textual analysis, participant observation, group interviews, and the chosen method for this thesis; in-depth interviews. (Veal & Burton, 2014.) Interviews are the collection of data by asking questions related to the topic and then listening to, as well as recording them. Interviews allow the transfer of information about experiences, knowledge and situations. (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008.)

Interviews can further "...provide information regarding the meanings and definitions that people give to events and behaviours." (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008, 107.) The authors were seeking these types of answers and therefore choosing the in-depth interview felt both natural and prudent. They wanted to encourage the interviewees to talk about their experiences and to explain situations as in-depth interviews are supposed to do (Veal and burton 2014.)

The interviews were designed to be semi-structured. This type of interview is usually conducted when patterns, relationships and insights are researched (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008.) According to Veal and Burton (2014) in the semi-structured interviews the interaction is conversational or partly formal. When doing a semi-structured interview there are different topics that need to be covered but the questions and their order can be changed during the interview if needed. Although the questions should always be designed in advance. (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008.) Two of the interviews were conducted face-to-face as the authors preferred to be there in case more sub-questions would come to mind or in case the interviewees wouldn't answer the question properly. The other two were conducted via email due to the schedule constraints. As Altinay and Paraskevas (2008) also state that interviews can take quite a lot of time. The authors contacted the people via email and asked if they would like to participate in the research process of their thesis.

To get the most detailed results the authors decided to interview different professionals in the field. Knowing many people in the industry, it wasn't too difficult to find people to interview. The most difficult part was to choose who would be the most suitable person to be interviewed for this particular research. After some discussion the authors decided to interview 4 professionals to get different viewpoints for the thesis. When choosing the participants, the authors were looking for those who had many years' worth of experience in the industry and who knew a lot about how promotions are managed. It was also important to find people with different job descriptions and diverse views in the industry. In the end the authors decided to interview people from promotion companies as well as their clients who are different suppliers that use event promotions as a marketing tool. Since this field of events is basically business-to-business, the next division was the most relevant one. The authors chose 1 person from both of the promotion companies they have worked for in the past or presently. The other 2 participants were suggested by the thesis instructor Pasi Tuominen and then decided by the authors of the thesis according to the suggestions' links to the promotion companies.

Both of the authors participated in both of the face to face interviews to ensure the accuracy of the data. To secure the data in the two face-to-face interviews they also recorded

the interviews. Each participant was interviewed individually at their own work place in a closed and private room, or via email. One of the authors was tasked with the questions and the other one was making notes or leading the interviewee with sub-questions in order to get the answers to the right questions. This way it was easier to ensure that all of the questions are answered in a versatile way. Both of the authors asked more detailed questions whenever needed. In the beginning of the interview, there was some small talk with each participant to create a comfortable atmosphere. This way the participants would feel more open to answer the questions and they wouldn't feel the need to talk about things in a way that is not their normal way to discuss. The email interviews were sent to the participants and both gave the authors quite extensive answers. Although a face-to-face interview with all participants could have guaranteed more in-depth information the authors were satisfied with the answers they were given.

Three of the interviews were conducted during the same week and the last one was during the following week. Both meetings took lasted from half an hour to an hour which included some small talk and the actual interview. The actual interview took about 30 minutes. According to Veal and Burton (2014) in-depth interviews can take from around half an hour to several hours. After the interviews were conducted the authors transcribed each one of them to make the research easier and clearer. Both of the authors then checked the accuracy of the transcript in order to avoid missing or faulty information. All of the transcripts were put together to find frequencies and similarities as well as differences in all the interviews.

The first interviewee was Aniko Lehtinen who is the head of product activation for Sinebrychhoff. She organises a couple of events a year and participates in other events as a consultant. Lehtinen also plans promotions for events that are organised by others. The authors also interviewed Milla Gröndahl who is an executive producer at Kohu-Live. She has a background in graphics for an advertising agency. Gröndahl has worked as a producer for around 6 years and does various events a year. The third participant was Kimmo Kautiainen, the key account manager from Altia Finland. Kautiainen started his job in 2000 and has two major customers the S-group and Restel. He also has a background in doing promotions for different kinds of events, such as Formula 1 racing for instance. The fourth interviewee was Mika Karpoff, who is an executive producer for Irokeesi. He has worked for Irokeesi for over 8 years now and has experience the field of event promotion.

4.2 Interview frame

The interviews were executed as semi-constructed interviews based on the theoretical framework. The authors had the same topics which they wanted to cover with each one of the participants but the order and the phrasing of the questions weren't necessarily the same. To get answers to the main questions of the thesis; why and how event promotions are organised and what they actually are, the authors constructed the questions in a way these topics would get covered. The authors wanted to make the interviews as clear as possible for the participants. The interview had to ask the principal questions to stick to the point and to not be too long. The interview frame was designed according to the theoretical framework of the thesis. The questions were combinations from both main chapters; event management and promotion management.

The interview (attachment 1.) had six main questions or topics which could be clarified with a set of sub-questions if needed. All of the questions asked, were open-ended questions, in order to get as much information as possible. In the beginning of the interview framework process, there were more questions designed but the authors narrowed it down to these six main topics. This way the interview would be clearer. The authors pursued to make questions that were easy for the interviewees to understand. With these questions the authors wanted to get all the relevant information from the participants. The interview questions were structured and set in a way that the interview would follow some sort of a common vein.

The first topic was the occupation and experience of the interviewee. The importance of this part was significant to certify the accuracy of the research results based on the experience of the participants. It was also important to know what kind of backgrounds each of the interviewees have. The question was also there to start the interview with an easy topic to make the participants feel relaxed. Altinay and Paraskevas (2008) also state that asking a background question first develops trust between the interviewee and the interviewer. The questions under this topic were: "What is your experience in the promotion and event industry?" and "What is your current job description?" It was also essential to know the interviewees' job descriptions in case there were major differences in their answers. The viewpoint of the interviewee could then be a significant detail.

The second topic in the interview was the definition. The authors planned to dive in to the subject by first letting the interviewee define and describe how they see the concepts of events and promotions. As a proper definition for the word event promotion can be difficult

to find the authors wanted the professionals to describe what the term means for themselves and to then possibly create a combined definition. The authors asked the questions: “How would you define the term event promotion?” and “How would you define the term event?” They also asked the participants to give examples from their own experience in the industry.

The third topic was motivation for organising event promotions. The authors were trying to get answers to the question: why event promotions are organised in the first place. This was one of the core topics as it is always important to know why you are doing something, what all the efforts are for. Watt (1998) stated that all stakeholders need to know why an event is being organised. The authors asked the interviewees: “Why do you think event promotions are organised?” and “What benefits do each partner get from event promotions?” These questions should lead to figuring out the aims and motivators for these stakeholders.

The fourth question covered event promotion risks. Risk management is a crucial part of any business especially when one is dealing with events and promotions that have to go smoothly at the time they are held. The authors wanted to find out what were the most common risks and what an organiser should be aware of when planning event promotions. They tried to start a discussion about risks and to see which ones were on the top of their minds when executing these promotions. This section had only one question which was: “What risks are there when creating event promotions?” This could of course be filled with sub-questions if it was deemed necessary by the authors.

The fifth part covered the co-operation when doing event promotions. In this section the authors wanted to combine the two areas of promotions and events. There is a close co-operation with these two stakeholders and the authors wanted to get answers to how the communication works and what kind of things can affect the co-operation. The interviewees were asked questions like: “How do you feel the co-operation works between the promotion organiser and the event organiser?” and “Is it functional or is the communication difficult?” These questions were also followed by questions such as “how?” and “why?” if further information was needed.

Last but definitely not least was possibly the most important section of successful event promotions. This part was planned to start a conversation about steps to a successful event promotion and to find out key elements that are needed for it. The authors wanted to find out how the interviewees saw a successful promotion. They asked the participants questions along the lines of. “When do you think an event promotion has succeeded?”

and “What elements does it require?” This section was the final one and it concluded the interview by asking the participants to describe ‘the perfect package’.

The structure of the interview worked well in the face-to-face interview. Sometimes the authors had to guide or ask the interviewees sub-questions to stay on the right track or to answer the right questions. Most of the time they were just listening to the interviewee to let them talk about what comes to their mind and to not guide them too much to make the interview unreliable. The questions were modified in some of the interviews to better fit the situation.

4.3 Validity and reliability

When conducting research one should consider the validity and reliability of the process. Veal and Burton have described validity of research as follows; what was supposed to be presented is accurately presented in the research. Reliability is also defined as whether or not the research can be replicated. (Veal & Burton, 2014.)

It is important to pay attention in the internal factors such as where the information was collected from when studying the validity of research (Veal & Burton, 2014.) In this research all of the interviewees were professionals in the field and have had years of experience in the industry. Some also state that information collected through qualitative research is more often valid than when it is collected through quantitative research such as small questionnaires (Veal & Burton, 2014.) In depth interviews, the method chosen for this thesis, can increase the understanding between the researcher and the participant, in this case the interviewer and the interviewee. (Veal & Burton, 2014.) Having recorders at the interview also increased the validity since the authors were not trying to memorize what the interviewees have said. The words of the interviewees were on the record which minimizes the false interpretation and mistakes. Also having two interviewers there lessened misunderstandings. After the interview, transcribing the interviews word-to-word provided ultimate confirmation that the answers are not reflected wrong. The email interviews, then again, were already black on white which decreases mistakes in writing down the research results.

There is always an issue with the external validity when studying a small group of people. It has to be considered that is this specific research applicable to other people too, and can it be generalized. But then again it can always be said that these specific things are true for some people in the population. (Veal & Burton, 2014.) In this research sample of

people interviewed was four people so it can't be generalized to the whole population or to the whole industry. This should be kept in mind when reading and analysing this thesis. Although the study didn't focus on people inside one company or organisation. The people interviewed are from different companies and in different positions which makes the research more reliable. The interviewees' different viewpoints enrich the research. According to Veal and Burton (2014) in qualitative social research exact replicability is almost impossible but some sort of logic or similar findings can be done.

The research and interview process started after the authors had studied and written the theoretical framework for the thesis. Therefore, they already had proper knowledge of the subject from academic writings and also from their own practice from the field of events. All of the answers used in this thesis are the ones the authors got from the interviewees. The authors have not changed anyone's answers. Each one of the interviews were transcribed to strengthen the validity. It is also important to remember the effect of the interview situation and the atmosphere on the results. When thinking about the validity and reliability of the thesis one should also consider the materials used in the theoretical part. The authors have used multiple sources and tried to find the most reliable ones amongst all the literature available. They looked for the latest sources to make sure the information was relevant and not outdated.

5 Results

In this chapter the authors will go through the results gathered from the four interviews conducted. They will review the five different topics of the interview frame. Before going into the questions one interviewee wanted to add that *"one has to remember that there are many types of promotions...It is a very large field but the aim is the same in all of them; that the product is shown to the customers..."* They also mentioned that some people might think an event promotion is done by two girls handing out Marianne candy at a fair but it is a lot more. There are various ways of doing event promotions.

When defining the terms event and event promotion, the interviewees approached the subject with different examples based on their own experience in the industry. Music festivals were mentioned as events and many emphasized that promotions are something that happen inside an event. It was also mentioned that there can be many different kind of promotions inside one event. One divided events into two groups; events with an admission fee and free events. This person also states that sponsorships by different brands and companies are vital for these types of free events. A few said that event promotion is a section or a stall and one of them explained that in that case a company is *"....pursuing*

to rise a products recognisability, sales or to get as many customer contacts with the product as possible.” The Tough Viking obstacle race was also stated as an example of an event and inside the event there is one of their sponsors’, in this case Budweiser’s, promotion area for instance. Another gave an example of Fanta day held in Kamppi’s Narinkkatori, an event as a promotion.

There were different motivations given for event promotions but there was repetition in some key points. To get the brand known to the customer was one of these key points. Creating the right kind of image for the brand and somehow connecting it to the event were both seen as reasons to organize event promotions. This was stated to be beneficial to both the brand promoted as well as to the event organisers. Another point was that a company should approach the event with the right brand and product. One interviewee said that they have employees researching new trends and finding out what kind of a profile an event has and what kind of people will visit the event. It is also essential to get the customer familiar with the product or service and to test it possibly too, not to forget the financial value of these promotions. An executive producer mentions that the reasons for promotions always come from the customers, which are the companies with products and brands promoted. A few of the interviewees said that when dealing with new products these event promotions can be some sort of kick-off to the product awareness. Increasing the information that the customers have about the product and creating contacts with people are also stated as possible reasons. A brand can aim for an improved image and financial value through a single promotion.

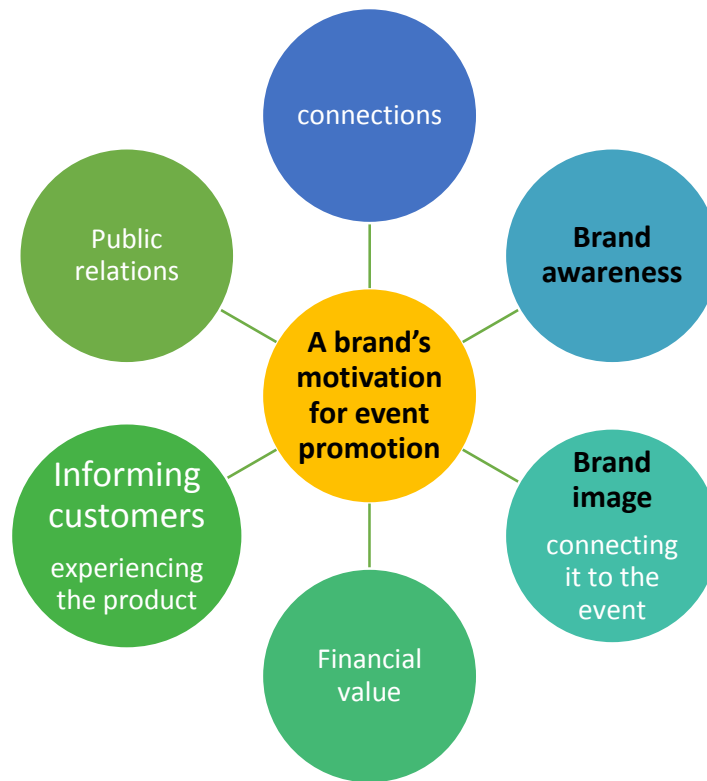


Figure 3. A brand's motivation for organising event promotions according to the interviewees

One interviewee mentioned the importance of marketing and promotions as otherwise the brand will soon be forgotten by the customer. They also stated that there are six most important reasons for event promotions; *“financial value, image, contacts, and in fact the overall conception of the product, the information and PR.”* One of the interviewees said that the brands that are sponsoring an event, if chosen wisely with the same target markets as the event has, can make it much easier to reach customers. This way the co-operation between them can increase the marketing channels. There are also other benefits for the events such as providing services for the event's customers and satisfying their needs and wants. Another interviewee adds to this statement by saying that the promotion can bring added value for the event. Also the matter of financial help for the event was stated; *“rent, marketing, logistics and project management is divided to all the brands.”*



Figure 4. Event organiser's motivation for event promotions according to the interviewees

When considering the risks related to event promotions the main risk was the previously mentioned target market. Another risk mentioned by many interviewees was being at the mercy of the weather. There is not much that can be done to avoid this risk of for example pouring rain. But the weather can also provide great opportunities. A beautiful sunny day might leave a consumer with an everlasting positive association with the promotion and the brand. One interviewee mentioned that safety is an important risk to remember. It should not be escaped from as it is a serious matter. The Tough Viking obstacle race was given as an example here. Even though the customers do the race at their own risk the event organisers would never want to see anyone get hurt. One interviewee also mentioned the practical things that can go wrong such as the wrong serving temperature of beverages. Any sort of dysfunctionalities like these practical issues can cause a negative atmosphere and therefore one should try to make sure the promotion is seen as a positive experience. One of the executive producers of a promotion company said that ruining or tainting a customer's image can be considered as a big risk. Doing something wrong during the promotion can cause negative impact on the image of the customer's brand. Nobody wants to *"bring our customer negative publicity..."*

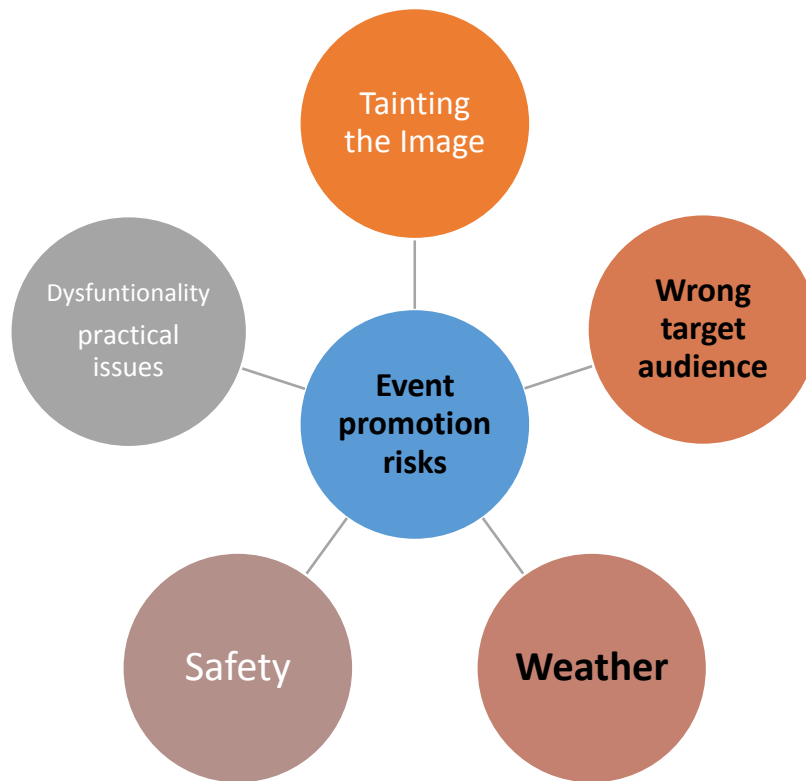


Figure 7. Event promotion risks according to the interviewees.

The co-operation between the promotion companies and the event organizers as well as the brand companies was seen to be working well in general. Many interviewees thought that the longer a person works in the industry the easier the communication gets as one gets to know the people and their customs. One interviewee highlighted the fact that all of the stakeholders have the same aim; a successful event in all aspects. They also mention that everyone just has to take care of their own responsibilities in order for co-operation to work well. A couple of interviewees added to this by saying that the co-operation works when there are people who are professionals and understand the industry. Good communication leads to *“a good outcome and in this way we ensure that the customer chooses the event partner and for example the festival/fair also next year.”*

All of the interviewees mentioned that it is essential to know the target audience for a product when thinking about suitable events for a promotion. They all emphasized that this might be the biggest risk in organising events and promotions. Two of the interviewees went deeper in to the topic and explained that the wrong customer group can make it more challenging to sell the product or to get them interested in the activities of the promotion. It is essential to know the event’s target audience as well as the brand’s target audience. The brand’s target market should always suit the event. It is also vital to market through the right channels to these specific customers. Two of the interviewees from the both sides of the table, one from a promotion agency and one from a wine and spirits

company, mentioned that staff from both parties must have a good level of social intelligence so that communication is clear and that the focus is on the project rather than on the social misunderstandings. A person from a wine and spirits company summed it up by saying that *“people are just people”*.

When discussing the important elements of a successful event promotion there were some key points mentioned more often than others. All of the interviewees mentioned the importance of the team and the co-operation. One of the interviewees said that it is the most vital thing in any promotion. *“I would summarise that it is the people who do this thing and it is very important. There is the furniture and machinery and all. But especially in promotions the person needs to talk about the right things and know how to recommend and tell, be pleasant in every way...”* A couple of the interviewees said that good planning and execution are essential. The planning is then emphasized in the overall execution of the event. *“If everyone knows their role and what is coming and what they are supposed to do schedule-wise, then yes that is quite a recipe then.”* The good atmosphere at the event and within the team is essential according to some. In addition good staging and props were mentioned to be important for a promotion.



Figure 5: Elements of a successful event promotion according to the interviewees

All of the interviewees agreed that when there is good feedback and talk about the product after the event the promotion has succeeded. One of the interviewees mentioned the fact that all stakeholders should be pleased in order to reach a successful promotion. The product should sell during the event as well as after. The product or the brand should “...start living its own life” by creating a buzz around the product and selling well after the event. Positive feedback, such as people asking for the product in stores is a sign that a promotion has worked well. One interviewee believed that the brands visibility should be raised in a way that suits the event’s style. One of the executive producers mentioned how much more difficult promoting is nowadays. Now it is also important to succeed in social media and not just at the promotion site. The person emphasized that event promotions are one of the most important ways of raising brand image and awareness. Another interviewee said that a successful event promotion should achieve set goals. A successful promotion will be remembered by all the stakeholders.



Figure 6. A successful promotion according to the interviewees.

6 Conclusion

This chapter goes through what has been discovered in the research and how the results of the interviews met with the assembled theory that the authors had gained from academic writings of the experts from the field of event marketing. The authors will also question and compare their own experience in the industry in relation to the information gained from research as well as from the literature. It has to be remembered that there can be many viewpoints to the subject of event promotions. Both when thinking about the results of the qualitative study as well as the conclusions made by the authors. This discussion of the results is gathered from the qualitative research, the theoretical framework as well as from the authors' own experiences. There were multiple aspects in which the theory and the experience of the interviewees met. As one would expect to happen, when it comes to a fully functioning and currently thriving industry.

The mind-set of the interviewees and their answers tend to link the most to the writings of O'Guinn's, Allen's and Semenik's (2009). Although the terms used were not the same, the purpose and meaning are broadly the same. The authors felt pleased with of the answers because of the similarities with the theories they had found, chosen and combined from the academic writings. Events were described fairly briefly by the interviewees as they mostly gave examples of different events such as festivals. According to Kilkenny (2006) festivals belong to a group of special events but there are also many other types of events. One interviewee supported the theory by Van der Wagen and White (2010) by saying that there are events that have admission fees as well as events without fees. All in all the authors would say that the interviewees have a very practical idea of events not so theoretical. No one explained the main idea of events happening once, in a certain period of time and them requiring planning like a lot of the literature defines it. (Kilkenny 2006, Shone and Parry 2013, Getz 2012, Van der Wagen & White 2010)

In the course of the research, the interviewees described a promotion to be something that happens inside and event. They also said that the idea of a promotion is to increase recognisability as well as the knowledge about the brand to the customers. This supports the theory by O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik that "*event sponsorship means providing financial support to fund an event, in return for the right to display a brand name, logo or advertising message on-site at the event.*" (O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik 2009, 694.) In the research it was also mentioned that promotions are there to give financial support to the event organizer. Like O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) mention there is something

given in return to the brand for the financial help. This was also explained by the interviewees as they said that there are benefits for both stakeholders in this sort of arrangement. One of the interviewees also support Ferdinand & Kitchin's (2013) theory about event promotion being a trend, by saying that it is one of the most important tools for brands to raise their image nowadays. In the research another important factor mentioned was the image of the brand. As Watt (1998) also states, that a good event needs good image and presentation. The interviewees also support the theory by Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) when talking about promotions being used as a tool to raise and maintain the image of the brand.

Other motivating factors that were mentioned by the interviewees but are not in the theoretical framework are financial value from the promotions as well as new connections. Although getting financial value from promotions can be quite obvious as it is usually the idea of most businesses. When discussing event management and the motivators in organising events there is support for Kilkenny's (2006) idea that one of the motivators for events is profit making. As one of the interviewees mentioned too that event promotions themselves can be seen as small events. Then event promotions could possibly be categorised as events too. The other factor that did not support the theoretical framework; connections to possible consumers on the other hand are probably explained by brand awareness and knowledge in the literature. In this research the interviewee explained the idea of connections with an example of people promoting companies at fairs and trying to get contact details for communication later. This would hopefully lead to customer relationship later on in the process. Consequently this could be added to the brand awareness and knowledge sector.

When discussing the motivations for events to organise promotions on their event site one of the interviewees also supported a theory by Raj, Walters & Rashid, 2013 by stating that if promotions are done right for the right target markets they can also work as additional channels for marketing the event. The interviewees mentioned that event promotions help to satisfy visitors' needs and wants and can also work as some sort of added value for the event. These factors add on to and deepen Goldblatt's (2008) theory about events not being able to meet consumers' expectations about the event without sponsorships. This can also support the theory by Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) about event promotions enhancing the customer experience at the event site. Financial help was also stated as one of the four main motivators for events to have promotion points at the event site. As Watt (1998) states events need funding to be successful. This is where promotion companies step in and form a co-operative bond where both stakeholders get some benefits from it.

The elements of a successful event promotion by the interviewees can be compared with Watt's (1998) and Shone and Parry's (2013) descriptions of a good event. Careful planning of the event as well as the promotion was seen as being very important by the interviewees. This was highlighted in the theory parts 2 and 3 as well and especially in the chapter 2.5.5 A good event. "A clear picture of the event is the only way to get sponsors and participants interested." (Watt, 1998, 6.) Watt (1998) also emphasizes the importance of planning in his book. The interviewees stated that the atmosphere has a big impact on whether the event is successful or not. People as well as other factors are there to create the atmosphere. This complies with Shone & Parry's (2013) theory about a good event. Watt (1998) also states that an event also needs luck to be successful which is what the interviewees also support when talking about how sometimes everything else can go well but there can be some incidents that one just can't prevent from happening such as the weather conditions. The interviewees also mentioned the importance of good staging and props which complies with Cova and Dall's (2009) theory about creating "theatres of consumptions".

A couple of interviewees highlighted the issue of co-operation and the team when discussing the topic; "when is the promotion successful?" They mentioned that good co-operation and stakeholders who know each other well are the base for a successful communication. This also enhances Watt's (1998) theory about the need for good communication between the stakeholders in addition to carefully structured plans and aims. One of the authors, Pakarinen, has organised and managed two big projects in the summers 2014 and 2015, one was a 4-month promotion tour for the brand Haribo. The other one was a 3-month alcohol promotional tour in nightclubs for the brands Tuborg and Battery. Both brands had multiple promotions in different festivals and she can relate to the interviewees' statement about the collaboration between both parties, the organiser and the client. Smooth communication is indeed crucial. The misunderstandings as well as forgetting things are matters that are minimized when the stakeholders have discussed everything thoroughly before the actions. It is important to understand what exactly the client wants from the promotion and what the main focus areas are.

When discussing the topic of successful event promotions, many interviewees mentioned the right target market as a key factor. Instead of trying to change the mind-set of the consumers, they try to research and find consumers who already have a need or want for the product. All of the interviewees emphasized that the target audiences should be approached with the right brand or the product. Knowing the right target markets was found crucial in all the interviews. It was clearly the most important factor according to the interviewees as it was repetitively mentioned during different interview topics. One interviewee

from the spirits and wine company said that the event organizer must know their target audience like they know their brands' target markets. As O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009, 605) emphasize: "*Since various types of events attract well-defined target audiences, marketers should also monitor event participants to ensure they are reaching their desired target.*" This strengthens the theories by Shone & Parry (2013), Raj, Walters and Rashid (2013) and Goldblatt (2008).

In chapter 3.4 Media in a promotion, the authors presented the views of the experts about digital marketing and its growing use on today's marketing strategies. O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) discussed Internet and social media being good go-to tools because of their cost-effectiveness compared to older marketing tools such as printed media and because of their ability to let the consumer be involved, for example by commenting and giving straight feedback to the event's websites. The executive producer mentioned in the interview that using the right digital marketing channels is important for reaching wanted target groups. He continues that due to the rise of digitalism, the promotion needs to be fortunate in social media and in other media too. According to him, the event promotion should create "good fuzz" in social media before and after the event to be a successful one. In addition, Shone and Parry (2013) and also Watt (1998) discussed this in their books that today it is harder to make an impression on the visitors, one needs to work on more with involving the visitors to the promotion and do a complete post-event evaluation.

The last one of the crucial elements of successful event promotions mentioned by the interviewees was thought to be a great team. This subject somehow goes together with the subject of co-operation. But the subject of the team is more for the actual promotion team, rather than co-operation between the brand and the event. Like discussed in chapter 3.3.3 Organisational structure and the team, Shone and Parry (2013) also emphasize the importance of a great organisation behind the event. Watt (1998) also supports the theory of a good organisational structure which is mentioned in chapter 2.5.5 A Good Event. All of the elements of a successful event promotion supported the theoretical framework, although some of the issues might have been covered in a different way.

O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) discuss the satisfaction of each partner by writing that the needs and the aims of all the stakeholders, in this case the people working in the same occupations as our interviewees, should be achieved. When the needs of all of the parties are fulfilled they hit "*the major sweet spot*" as O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009) describe it. No one is forced to do anything they would not want to do and the market is controlled by themselves, even if not directly. The interviewees also supported this theory by saying that an event is successful when all the stakeholders are satisfied. Although, the

interviewees didn't mention or highlight the importance of evaluation of the event promotion as much as the academic writings. Shone and Parry (2013) emphasized that an evaluation done in a short period of time afterwards is highly important for the organisers and other stakeholders. A market research or even a short survey could reveal and explain how the event promotion was managed, what was successful and what could be improved for the next time.

Whereas the safety issues were mentioned only briefly in the theory section by co-operating with the fire department or the police, the "why" emerged more vividly from the interviews when one of the speakers pointed out that even in an event like the Tough Viking obstacle race, where the target group is quite likely to consist of danger-loving and self-defying individuals, nothing should be overlooked. It may result in tainting the image of the brand and associating the brand with these safety issues. The interviewees also mentioned the possibility of ruining or tainting a customer's image in other ways, such as bringing the customer negative publicity. The psychological risks in the theoretical part also focused more on the pre-existing reputation and images that for example the used venues might have, but not so much on the possibility of tainting the image of a brand or an event. The focus was more on the available tools and possibilities. Of course if they are used correctly the event will be a success. Interviewees might, in this case, seem to reflect on their past experiences from the field and also from keeping the end result in mind as well as what comes after that in other terms than just the financial loss. An essential need for the right target group mentioned in the theory was also highlighted as a risk by the interviewees. The right product has to go to the right consumer, and it has to live up to its quality also at the event.

The weather was pointed out as a risk both in the theoretical framework as well as in the interviews. It can either help to bring out the best in the brand, make it seem invaluable, or associate it with bad memories. Then again a rainy day can help to make everyone a part of the target group, if the brand promoted serves relief from the extreme weather conditions or sells umbrellas for instance. Weather can make cold refreshments and beverages practical for either cooling or hot beverages for giving warmth in the cold. The right product, at the right time, for the right consumers. This harmonious outcome can also be ruined if the staff and promoters are not well trained or motivated as mentioned in the theoretical framework. It can be risky if the employees don't share the same mind-set. One of the interviewees in fact stressed that since it's the people who are organizing the events, promoting the product and also attending the event as the possible consumers, there is a

chance that misunderstandings and problems may arise. The interviewee described a horrible scenario where a promoter doesn't believe in or like the brand and tells the customer about it, which again would result in a negative association with the brand.

The theory discussed in chapters two and three of the research, seemed to serve more to the business aspects, focusing on meeting the criteria from the more capitalist side of this same coin, whereas the interviewees kept more to the social aspect as well as practicalities and emphasized that the reasons for the promotion always come from the customer. The customer in this case is the company who owns the brand. Their reasons again come from the analysis of the target market. As one of the interviewees mentioned that their researchers explore the consumer behaviour in several countries and try to find out what the trends are and what consumers want. Both of these approaches can prove to be successful and the business aspects have to be designed to the needs of human values since the business has emerged from the society itself.

One of the authors, Pakarinen, gives an example of a company called Innocent, who is currently a client of a company where she works. As the name hints, Innocent is a socially aware company, focused on recycling and charity. One of the company's main goals is to spread good feelings to the consumers by giving, for instance, complimentary cards to cheer the day. This gives them more value in the eyes of the consumers for they themselves may have the same hopes and dreams of a better world – and they are giving at least 10% of their profits to charity. They give the consumers a chance to make extra effort and according to Kelly McGonigal, a health psychologist from the United States of America, who presented in her 2013 Ted talk called "How to make stress your friend", that people get more satisfaction from giving to others than they do from personal gain. According to the key points that the interviewees pointed out, the promotion company can then present the beneficial nature of the product and then connect this brand to that positive feeling leaving a good memory of the promotion. One interviewee also mentioned that a sunny day and a good weather all-in-all helps the event promotion to succeed. This was as well presented by O'Guinn, Allen and Semenik (2009, 605) that *"When marketers connect their brand with the potent emotional experiences...positive feelings maybe attached to the sponsor's brand that linger well beyond the duration of the event"*. This topic was considered in the chapter 3.5.

7 A guide to successful event promotions

This chapter introduces the summary of the thesis, the guide for successful event promotions. The guide is targeted to different brands and their marketing teams as well as to the promotion agencies working in event promotions. The aim of this guide is to introduce the collaboration motives of both parties, the benefits of event promotions and to ultimately explain how to create a successful event promotion with a positive outcome for everyone. As the basis for this guide, the authors have combined three areas: the academic texts of the experts that can be found in chapters 2 and 3, the results and conclusions gathered from the interviews of professionals that can be found in chapters 5 and 6.1, and finally the authors' own experience of working in the field.

This guide also uses Kilkenny's (2006) five essential questions in planning an event: who, what, when, where and why illustrated in figure 8 as well as the authors' own output a process of a Successful Event Promotion shown in figure 10. This guide's purpose is to provide more understanding and present the essential knowledge of the thesis to the reader. As Kilkenny (2006) writes in her book that before planning an event there are five key issues that need to be considered. These questions can be modified and used in event promotions as well. The stakeholders should consider these five things together: who, what, when, where and why.

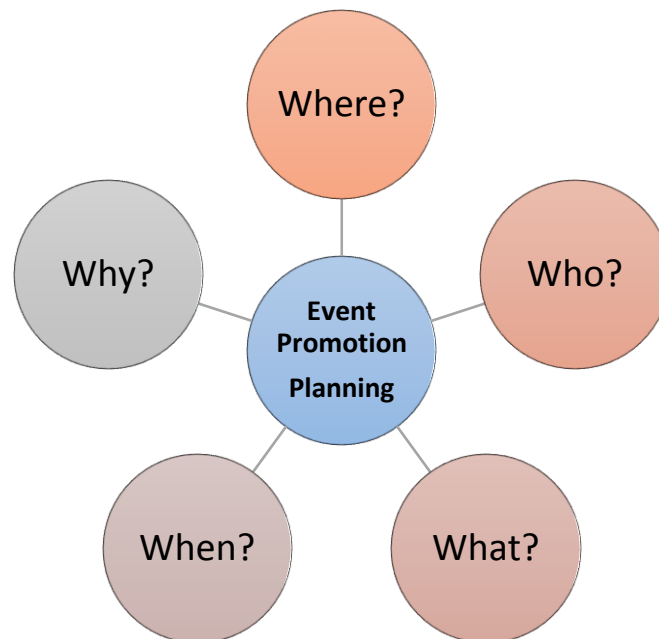


Figure 8. Event promotion planning. (Modified from Kilkenny, 2006.)

A well-planned event promotion includes research before execution. The first part in the research is 'what?' and 'who?' The consumer behaviour and the customers in a specific event are investigated and considered for being applicable with the product. The right target group and the right event are chosen for the right product or service. Before starting any kind of co-operation between different stakeholders one thing needs to be researched and assured. The event and the brand promoted need to have the same target market. There should be no reason to start this sort of co-operation without a mutual target group as it can lead to bad sales and wrong associations. The right target market is a key factor and the first step for a successful event promotion. When it has been chosen carefully by both stakeholders the benefits can be major.

When considering the question 'why?' the stakeholders start to think about the reasons for co-operation. Primarily, the stakeholders, the client and the promotion agency as well as the event manager, should be aware of the benefits that a paid event promotion will have before signing the contract of cooperation. It is challenging to be motivated for something if one doesn't know what the benefits for the company are and how it actually works. If the parties have worked together in former projects, the collaboration is easier and smoother when both stakeholders, the event organizers as well as the brand representatives know each other's working styles and can communicate by speaking the same business language. A good cooperation also means anticipating one another's desires and suggesting development ideas from the parties. Also, foreseeing the things that can be forgotten by the other stakeholders is an important factor for succeeding in the event promotion project.

At heart, an event promotion is an exquisite opportunity for the brand to earn more value and visibility. When a promotion is held inside an event there are also benefits that the event organiser gets from the co-operation. Figure 8 presents the key points and benefits of the co-operation between the event organiser and the brand. It must be understood that today we are living in an era where the consumers are more aware of marketing and advertising, they want to take part in it and try themselves. Marketing is becoming more experiential and that is what event promotions are increasingly focused on.

For the brand promoted the main benefits are the financial value, awareness and visibility the product or service gets. The financial benefits can be the greatest motivator but by the end of the day the other benefits are equally important, such as creating brand knowledge and brand loyalty. A promotion is a relevant way especially for new products to gain

awareness as consumers will have an instant chance to get to know the product and even try it. This can create a so called 'buzz' amongst the consumers and bring the brand to the knowledge of the potential consumers. Every event promotion is a chance to create connections with consumers as well as with possible collaborations with other companies. Also, if the brand image needs raising or maintaining an event promotion is quite a simple way to bring the brand to peoples' eyes and even change the whole image of the brand. Associations with different events and possibly other brands at the event can also be a so called image booster. Due to this it is important to remember the target audience.

There are also major benefits the event organiser gets from co-operation such as this. Otherwise there wouldn't be no reason to offer event promotion opportunities. The main benefit for the organiser would be the financial help given by the promotion, but there can also be other important factors. The promotions provide added value to the event in terms of different services offered to the customers. The customers' needs and wants can be satisfied by different promotions. Co-operating with different brands that have the same target market can also improve the marketing channels as well as the access to the right customers. Consequently the co-operation of event organisers and brands has benefits for both stakeholders. The important thing to remember is that functional co-operation like this requires knowing and having a mutual target market.



Figure 9. Benefits of co-operation of event organisers and brands (event promotion).

The other issues to be considered in the planning phase are 'where?' and 'when?' These questions consider issues like which events to choose for the promotions, where they are located in and when they are organized. The date for an event promotion should be set so that it maximises the benefits of the organizational culture and of the participants. There are different matters that need to be considered when setting the time for an event such as the duration of the event and the day of the week. To decide these issues one should go back to the target market analysis and figure out which times and places best suit their interests. At this stage one has covered the two first steps of the process of a successful event promotion (figure 10.)

In addition to what has been mentioned, risk management should always be remembered. The organising team should think about various possible situations of what can go wrong in the promotion. There are some things that one can't help from occurring, such as a stormy and rainy day, but plan B's for many occasions can be done, for example a contingency and an emergency plan, as well as insurances are vital. A talented organising team is able to make quick solutions as well as changes and well-trained promoters are aware of informing the organisers of any risky circumstance. It is vital to gather a committed group of people that can work as ambassadors for the brand. One wants to create a team that provides a memorable atmosphere, serving the brand's vision. Choosing the right type of promoters for the brand is as vital as choosing the event. All in all, promoters are the ones that the consumers see and meet and even relate to. Promoters should be trained properly to feel confident at their work and be fluent with their words. They need to know what to say and how to say it to the consumer. After all the promoter might be the only touch point the consumer has with the brand. Good communication is essential within the whole organising team and the staff throughout the whole process and it should not be overlooked.

A vital factor at an event promotion or any type of an event is the atmosphere. As mentioned before, the promotion team should be there to create a good atmosphere. But in order to create a good atmosphere different aspects of a promotion should be well managed. An event promotion can be considered as a successful one when the set goals have been met and all the stakeholders are satisfied with the results. These set goals can be financial, awareness or image related goals for instance. When the company has approached the event with the right brand and when the attendees are from the right target audience, an event promotion usually has the most successful consequences. After a successful event promotion the brand and the event have created a 'buzz' amongst the consumers. A discussion about the brand and the event on social media or Facebook for instance can possibly spread a positive word, reaching those who hadn't even participated

in the event. Feedback can also be given in traditional forms such as customer satisfaction surveys or discussions, and spreading the awareness can be started by word of mouth.

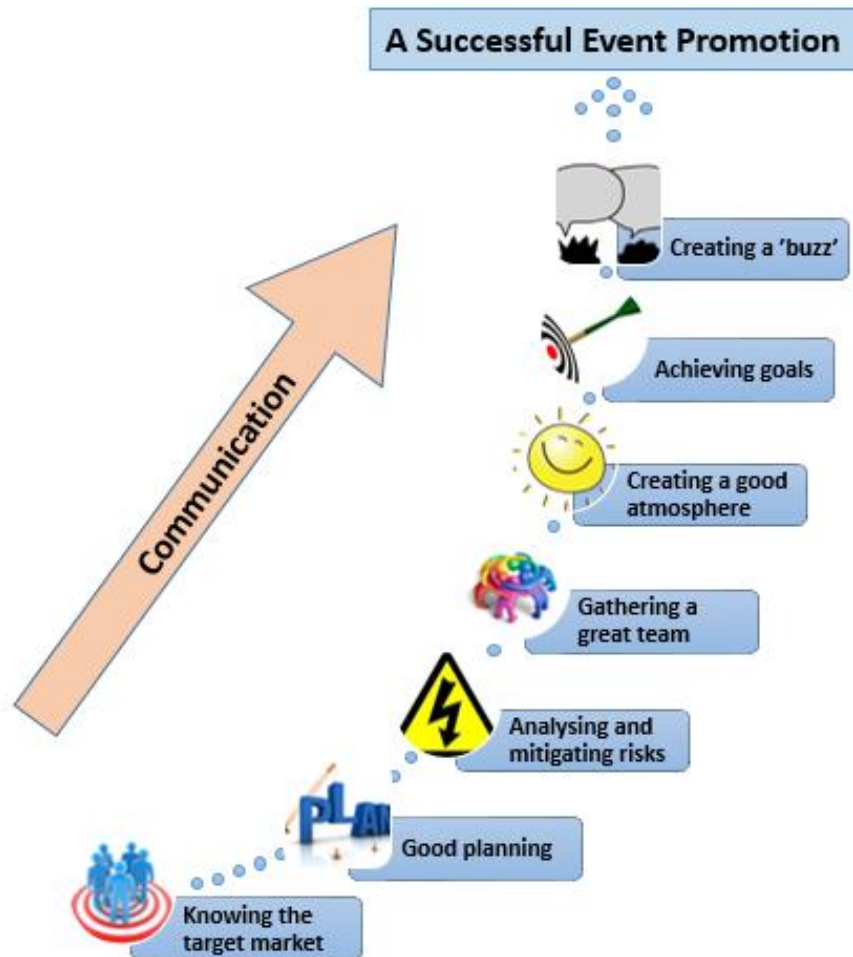


Figure 10. Process of a successful event promotion

Evaluation is something that didn't come up in the interviews but is mentioned in the theoretical framework. It is also a very important part of event management as well as event promotion management, especially if they are repetitive events. The authors think that this is important and something that should be added to the process of successful event promotions. Although there are some sort of evaluation and feedback done after promotions but maybe they are not given enough value, since the interviewees didn't mention them. To support Kilkeny (2006) and Shone and Parry's (2013) theories evaluation helps in the planning of future events and could help in the planning of future promotions too. The par-

ties have a chance to discuss things that functioned well and what and how specific issues could have been improved. Feedback and evaluation can be an opportunity to find out if the cooperation could continue in the future as well.

Finally without exception, events and event promotions are mostly about experiences and feelings and therefore it is essential that the promotion creates positive associations in the involved consumers' minds at the promotion area during and after the venture. Those feelings could in the best case scenario become everlasting memories and have an impact on the brand loyalty over years, making the consumer only choose this brand instead of any other.

8 Learning process

In this chapter the authors will discuss the process of writing the thesis. They will analyse and go through the learning points as well as the key discoveries that were made during the project. Both of the authors have had some experience in event promotions. Anna Vitikainen did her internship for one of the biggest event promotion companies in Helsinki, Kohu-Live for 3 months in the summer of 2014. Siiri Pakarinen has more experience in the field, having worked as a promoter for the biggest promotion company in Finland, Irokeesi Oy for over a year and a half. Pakarinen has also 8 month experience of running projects both in a team and independently as a project coordinator in the same company. Both of the authors have experience in planning and co-ordinating events whereas Pakarinen has also worked as a promoter for various ventures. Consequently the learning process had started before the thesis subject was decided.

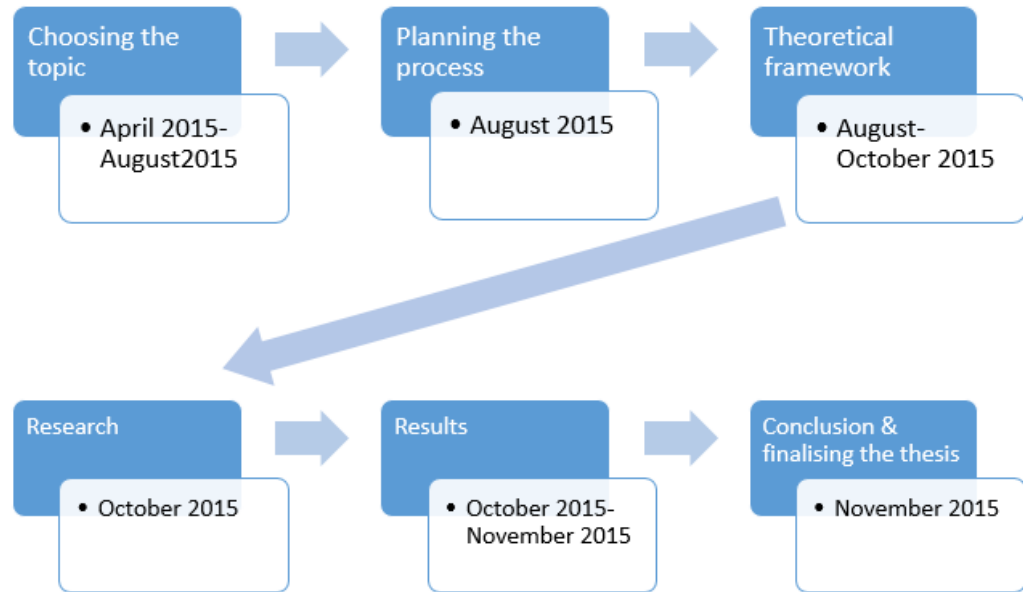


Figure 11. The thesis process timeline.

The actual thesis process began in the spring of 2015. The vague idea of the thesis was formed in May 2015 but the actual topic was chosen and the writing started in August 2015 after discussing about ideas with the thesis instructor. The authors dedicated two months, August – October 2015, to finding the appropriate sources for the theoretical framework in a matter that they would also link to each other. After the theory part was written in the end of October 2015, the authors carefully chose four professionals in the field and created an interview for them that supported the theory chapters. The results of these individual interviews were put together and analysed with combining them to theoretical framework by the beginning of November 2015. The authors used three weeks for conclusions and finalising the thesis, by checking that all of the relevant information had been presented and explained in the final version of the thesis.

The amount of learning during this whole process was tremendous. The authors started from a point where they had almost no idea about what a thesis is supposed to be like and ended up writing a whole thesis. There were many things learnt during the process from small things like marking one's sources to bigger things such as conducting and analysing a qualitative research. Many things that one needs to do during a thesis writing process have been studied in the university courses but one might not always remember the rules and the ways these things should be done. This process has been like any other report or assignment but on a much bigger scale. Overall the authors see the thesis process as some sort of review or recap of the three years in the University of Applied Sciences.

A person learns a lot about the theories and the literature in the industry by writing the theoretical framework. It is such a big learning process when one studies numerous amounts of books to learn as much as they can about the subject. In this way one also learns how to search information about the subject and how to be critical towards the information instead of choosing any kind of source. Even though the subjects were familiar before the thesis process was still very educational for them. Especially the industry of promotions was something that the authors had never read about in the literature and didn't have a clue of what challenges they were about to face when writing about promotions. Event management however was something that both authors had studied and read about before. Nevertheless the thesis project gave the authors deeper information about the subject.

Time management was one of the biggest learning points during the thesis process. Smaller assignments have been easier to manage as one doesn't need much time for completing those. Firstly, the writing schedule was set quite tight because Vitikainen wished to graduate by Christmas, and so the deadline for the finished thesis was a date they both wanted to hold on to and commit to. The most difficult part was to understand how much time would be spent on the writing and researching. It was also challenging to break the project in to smaller segments in a way that the thesis will be written on time. One had to consider obstacles such as scheduling a time for the interviews with the busy event professionals. A big task was also scheduling the writing process so that it would fit the authors' timetables. Both of them were doing courses and working at the time of the thesis project, therefore the time management was quite difficult. Even though the authors set a writing schedule, it didn't always work. At some point of the process they were quite a lot behind the schedule but managed to catch up by doing extra work later. The authors also realized that when one has a break from writing it is much more difficult to continue and therefore it was better to continue writing on a daily basis.

The theoretical framework was the slowest part of the thesis as searching the right kind of information and shaping the text to be coherent when using multiple sources was very time consuming. The authors divided the theoretical framework so that one focuses on event management and the other on the promotion management. This way it was easier to keep track of what areas have been covered already. The other parts were written quite freely. The authors then edited each other's text and added points when needed. This way the thesis would be more coherent and it would also smoothen the process of writing. Having two people do the thesis was good as one gets new ideas from another and there is a possibility to discuss and come up with new viewpoints. Dividing the parts was quite

easy as the authors were willing and interested to write any parts and in the end they both contributed to all the chapters somehow.

Another issue the authors faced during the project was how to narrow down the subject. Event management is a field that has been studied quite a lot, therefore it was hard to decide which information should be left out and which would be crucial for this thesis. Whereas the part of promotion management had the opposite issue. There is not much information about the kind of event promotions the authors were looking for. The promotion subject was seen as any kind of promotion not as event promotion in most of the books. This issue was quite difficult to deal with as the authors are not native English speakers and might not know all the words used for this kind of event promotion. The authors tried to search for information and synonyms for event promotion together with the thesis instructor. The promotion management part needed a considerable amount of source searching and reading since it was challenging to find if the book or article was actually about the right topic for the thesis just by reading the abstract or the title. In the end the authors were happy with the information found and this difficulty also proved a point why this thesis is relevant.

Having two authors was also a challenge as both authors might not have same objectives and same working styles. During many group works and reports the authors have learnt that not everyone has the same working style. When doing a big project like this it is crucial to work together and have the same kind of a mind-set. This was quite difficult from time to time and it required adaptation from both authors. But then again when one is doing a big project like this with someone else the pressure is higher as one's work quality and speed affect the other person. In the beginning of the process the authors set a deadline for the thesis which made the goal clear in a way that both of the authors knew it had to be ready by then no matter what. This made the co-operation a little bit easier.

When doing any kind of projects with another person communication is always crucial and this was somewhat challenging with such different timetables. Therefore the pressure grew when the final weeks were on hand. Moreover, understanding each other and supporting when the times were challenging created a motivation and a willingness to finish the thesis by the deadline. During the final week of the process both authors felt very motivated and excited as the thesis was close to being finished. After all they thought the amount of theory and processes learnt at that point were vast and even though the project required hard work and a lot of time it was all worth it.

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10 Attachments

Attachment 1. The interview frame

We are Degree Programme in Experience and Wellness Management and Degree Programme in Hospitality, Tourism and Experience Management students from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. We are writing a thesis about event promotions.

The area of event promotion is such a new field and it can be difficult to find proper and precise information about it. In our thesis we are researching and pursuing to clarify how a successful event promotion is organised and what it requires. We want to answer the questions how and why they are executed and what the term of an event promotion means.

This interview will be recorded and the recordings will be used only by us for the thesis research purposes. We would like to ask for your consent to record the interview and to use your name in the thesis.

To get accurate information about the industry we would like you to answer these questions according to your own experience.

Occupation and experience

What is your experience in the promotion and event industry?

What is your current job description?

Definitions

How would you define the term event promotion?

How would you define the term event?

Give an example from your own experience.

Motivations

Why do you think event promotions are organised?

What benefits does each partner get from event promotions? (Event manager, the supplier of the product or service promoted, the promotion company)

Risks

What risks are there when planning and creating event promotions?

Co-operation

How do you feel co-operation works between the promotion organiser and the event organiser?

Is it functional or is the communication difficult?

Why? How?

A successful event promotion

When do you think an event promotion can be considered a success?

What elements does it require?

Thank you for your participation!