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EVENT MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE
Project “Jeppis Russian Night”

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ABSTRACT

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<p>The main objective was to get theoretical knowledge about event management and implement it through organizing an event. The subject of the thesis was to have a cultural-based event organized for local people of Pietarsaari. The purpose of the event was to introduce Russian culture to locals by offering them Russian dinner set of 3 dishes accompanied by Russian movie with English subtitles.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the thesis was concentrated on the event management as a profession, as well as all elements it consists of. Theoretical part also included research on Event Marketing as an alone standing subject. The event creation, as a practical part, was solely based on previously conducted research.</p> <p>The empirical part was done using both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to get a full picture of the event. The results showed generally high evaluation of the event, even though it was organized by someone who had no previous event organization experience.</p>		

Key words

Cultural Event, Cultural Tourism, Event Management, Event Marketing

ABSTRACT
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1 INTRODUCTION

Ever since the beginning of time, human beings have had the need to mark and celebrate the important events in their lives, such as the phases of the moon for example or as simple as a birthday. These are just one of the simplest ways to celebrate certain milestones in our lives that gives us people sense of achievement. From small things like this it leads to bigger events as a way for societies to celebrate together and bond simultaneously giving people the sense of belonging. In the modern day world the special events organized in different countries have taken an important role in our lives and our culture, since nowadays people have more leisure time and often they desire to spend it somewhere outside their everyday life routines.

The aim of the thesis is to get familiar with the event management through planning and production of an own event. The goal was to answer such questions as how to organize a successful event, what details have to be considered, how to make proper plan and what audience would the event attract. The objective was to bring theoretical knowledge about event management into real life and as a personal objective, to introduce people living in Pietarsaari to Russian culture. Therefore, “Jeppis Russian Night” event was organized with a help of sponsors who wished to not be mentioned in a written form of our project. The event took place in “Svenska Gården” on 21st of May 2016. In order to evaluate the success of the event, a qualitative and quantitative researches were performed in the end of the event.

The thesis consists of written and practical part. Written part covers theoretical knowledge about event management, event’s project plan and evaluation. Practical part consisted of coming up with a define project plan, test cooking, photo shoot for marketing means, calculating product prices, distribution of tickets, advertising and performing the event itself. The project was carried out together with my partner, who later on decided to not pursue this project as a subject for her thesis work. It was decided to split the workload equally according to our desires, abilities and possibilities, however we helped each other out whenever needed in order to reach our main vision.

First thing we did was the discussion of the project plan and the timeline of our actions, as well as drawing up the budget of event. The budget of the event consisted of rent, product purchase and other costs. I have contacted “Svenska gården” to check the availability and to set up a meeting in order to view premises. Due to my unavailability, my partner went to the meeting and signed the rental contract for the chosen date.

For our marketing means, it was important to create marketing materials, as we wanted to use authentic digital materials. Due to my own personal interest and capability I was in charge of the test cooking. Having prepared the dishes, they were later on during the same day used for the photoshoot. When the marketing materials were done and the online marketing was already in action, we created a schedule for the ticket sale and shared the responsibility of being at the sale point at the advertised time. Chapter 5 THE EVENT AS IS HAPPENED will tell more about how my partner and I have shared responsibilities during the event.

2 EVENT MANAGEMENT

Event management is an integral part of tourism and hospitality services and was not recognized as a separate industry due to wide range of suppliers involved. However, high demand for professional event planners and managers made it become an independent business in the past decade. Together with evolvement of the industry, event support organizations developed according to new levels of expectations from event managers and event planners. (Shone, Parry 2013, 6.)

The industry itself consists of many linked services and goods, but in overall events organizations can be divided into categories such as Production, Distribution, Venue services and ancillary services. Companies within mentioned categories either present the full service of organizing an event or just one component required for event planner.

Event Management Companies (EMCs) organize events on a professional level according to wishes and goals set by a client. Such organizations are usually hired by high-profile clients due to EMCs level of expertise and ability to plan and implement event for any theme including taking care of venue and other additional services. (Shone et al. 2013) Among EMCs there are also production companies, which provide a full service of producing an event. As above mentioned companies work out the whole process of implementing event, in this thesis we will focus on how we used theoretical knowledge in order to organize our own event on a professional level and perform as Event Organizers.

2.1 Event Management as Profession

According to G.Bowdin (2011, 36) “Event management is, therefore, about the processes that are used to create and sustain an event”. Event management as a profession can be defined by three areas.

First area is called Events management’s body of knowledge (EMBOK), created by O’Toole and Silvers. It is an information center about event management structure and its objective is “to create a framework of the knowledge and processes used in the event management that may be customized to meet the needs“(Bowdin et al. 2011, 37). Second area is “Methodology”, which is about actions and techniques that can be learned and later on implemented. Third area is knowledge, which can be acknowledged only on the “spot”. Knowledge gained during performing an event plays a crucial part in evaluating of the event. All this areas shape the nature of event management as a profession, how-

ever it was the ‘methodology’ area that has turned event management into a profession, which can be studied and taught.

2.2 Fundamental Elements of Events

Every event is unique and different in their purposes, sizes and costs but each one of them consists of fundamental elements. Using these elements allowed to consider all important aspects of event production. The following elements were also used to structure the work of this thesis. Knowing the theoretical foundation of event management, these elements were customized according to the needs of particular event.

First fundamental element of an event is to have a clear vision of an event, event organizer should understand the purpose of the event he/she is going to organize. Since I myself was an organizer of an event, the purpose of the event was clear from the beginning – to present Russian culture to locals through food tasting and showing a movie. In case with ‘Jeppis Russian Night’, the second fundamental element, which is goals and objectives, is aligned with the first element.

Next element is connected with the physical characteristic of an event because any event requires a venue. Venue selection plays crucial role in the success of the event, as well as participant’s satisfaction. Hence, it is one of first most important steps in both planning and preparation of the event. Supposedly, goals and objectives of the event are set. Depending on those, a list of venue requirements should be made. Event manager should ask themselves certain questions, such as “What kind of location is needed?“, for instance. Depending on type, size and budget event manager will start a search within the geographical area; if one is not familiar with the venue market of the area, there are companies, which specialize on venue search. Visiting the venue before agreeing on it will save a lot of trouble and help plan better. In case with ‘Jeppis Russian Night’ event, most important criteria was location, availability of kitchen, and sitting spots.

Two other fundamental elements: Promotion and Participants, are closely connected to each other, as without one there cannot be another one. All events are organized for someone, therefore there would not be an event without any participants. So how do you get people? By spreading the word. The amount of attendees will speak directly of the success of your marketing actions.

The 'Budget' being a fundamental element of an event is crucial to any project, especially if the event is not meant to bring profit. In this case, relying on your own finances or finding sponsors is recommended.

Last but not least element of an event is Food and Beverage. Whatever you will serve just some refreshments and snacks, or serve several dishes meal, the Food and Beverage element cannot be excluded from your event. For the 'Jeppis Russian Night' event this element played very important role, as it was one of the main parts of the program. (Kilkenny 2006, 34-35.)

3 EVENT MARKETING

Marketing has a vital role to any kind of businesses or events, or basically anything that one would want to present to the public. In simple words, Marketing is a tool of presenting something to someone. According to CIM (Chartered Institute of Marketing) we can identify Marketing as a “management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying consumers requirements efficiently and profitably” (Bowdin et al. 2011, 365-366). In non-event marketing, company’s main concern is to sell product or service best way possible in order to achieve high profit. However, compared to non-event marketing, in Event Marketing main product becomes experience. Considering the difference, back in 1997 Hall gave a new definition to Marketing in terms of events. “Marketing is that function of event management that can keep in touch with the event’s participants and visitors, read their needs and motivations, develop products that meet their needs, and build a communication program, which expresses the event’s purpose and objectives” (Bowdin et al. 2011, 367).

The first step in developing a marketing strategy is to define your target market. That can be done with a help of Market segmentation. The first market segmentation is based on geographical principal. Organizers of the event who would use such segmentation should mostly target local residents of the area; other possible groups are short time visitors, domestic tourists and at a time of the event incoming from abroad tourists. Second segmentation group is based on demographics. Target market groups based on demographic segmentation are based on age, occupation, income and other measurable features. Third segmentation group called ‘geodemographic’ is following the rule that people who are living in the same neighborhood are more likely to have something in common than those who live far apart. Last segmentation group divides market based on people’s lifestyle, opinions, hobbies and interests; it is called psychographic segmentation. (Bowdin et al. 2011)

A crucial part of a successful marketing strategy is a marketing mix. Marketing mix is a foundational concept of marketing; first introduced by McCarthy back in 1960 as 4Ps of Marketing: Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. Considering wide range of operations involved in implementing an event, more components were added to initial 4Ps. Therefore, when it comes to marketing an event a marketing mix should consist of following factors: People, Place, Product, Price and Promotion. (Preston, 72).

As described before, in event industry “Product” becomes an experience, and “experience of every different attendee is personal to them, and can be different to the next person”. (Jackson 2013, 78.) In terms of event marketing “Place” equals to the venue, as well as the place of ticket distribution. It is important to remember that in this case chosen venue plays a core role in the event. “Price” is amount of money required to attend the event. Potential attendees will evaluate the value of money for suggested event.

Under “Promotion” go all available tools that are used to attract an attention of potential participants. Such tools as advertising, public relations, direct marketing were particularly used in our event. Therefore, when developing promotional campaign for public, which in our case will include brochures and posts in Facebook, it is important to follow 5Ws of Marketing, which helps to prioritize type of information that shall be presented to public. (Hoyle, Preston 2012, 67-71)

WHY? When creating marketing materials the information displayed in/on it has to catch potential guest’s attention. At first glance materials have to automatically give viewers an answer on why they should attend this event.

WHO? Marketing strategy varies depending on target market. Understanding for which group(s) of people the coming event is for will help to develop sufficient marketing strategies and materials.

WHEN? Date and time.

WHERE? Location e.g. address.

WHAT? Clear and well defined concept of the event.

“People” is what shapes an experience of guests. Ideally, event should be managed by professional and experienced staff. However, in case with our event, my partner and I will be the ones interacting with the audience.

Marketing schedule is another aspect to which organizer’s attention should be paid. It helps to take into consideration the time required for developing and designing marketing materials, outline the timeline of presenting materials to public and so on. Introducing public to the event should be done at the right point; doing it too early might attract people’s attention but they can forget about it or lose interest, and doing it too late might not get desired number of participants.

Identifying all above mentioned points will in the end form a marketing plan. The purpose of Marketing plan is to have a clear vision of marketing goals and activities, it helps to have control over implementation process and move towards set goals.

4 PROJECT JEPPIS RUSSIAN NIGHT

Project “Jeppis Russian Night” was created in order to introduce local people of Pietarsaari to Russian culture. The idea of combining dinner and a movie was born during a trip to Portugal, when my partner and I were having a dinner at a local restaurant that had a small stage, for concerts presumably, which gave us an idea, of how great it would be if they would be showcasing a movie, while we had our dinner. This idea was quite random and at that time we just let it go. After some time had passed and we came to the point where we needed to start to work on our thesis idea, this situation in Portugal however came back to our minds. Therefore, we decided to organize an event where we would serve a dinner and broadcast a movie, and since we both have Russian backgrounds, the theme for our event became from the beginning “Introduction to Russian culture”.

After studying three years Hospitality Management in Centria we decided to implement our knowledge, as well as educate ourselves in matter of Event Management as standalone profession. We also wanted to try out something new and see how our idea would come to life and since Pietarsaari as a town is culturally quite rich and the population is open to cultural events, our idea seemed to have potential. Since we both have the same cultural backgrounds it was easy for us to come to an agreement on what food we are going to present during our event, as well as choosing the right movie. Apart from having common national backgrounds, we have also worked together on multiple projects and assignments before and that helped us to perform better as a team for this last, most important project at the end of our studies.

Our first idea was to co-operate with Café After Eight, which has popularity to work close together with students from schools and organize all different kinds of events. Unfortunately, this time they were not interested in cooperating with us, therefore we had to think of another venue option, which would suit our needs, such as having a kitchen, space for guests and audio/video equipment for broadcasting a movie. The second only logical option was to rent out Svenska Gården. The event was not

intended to be profitable, but the final budget turned out to be higher than planned initially, therefore at the end we decided to have an entrance fee of 5 EUR along with a sponsorship from local restaurant.

4.1 Project Plan

Planning of the event should firstly be done by sitting down and discussing our visions about the event. Through sharing our ideas we make a draft list of steps that we will have to do. Contacting venue suppliers for instance is our priority, because we need to book the date of the event in advance. This is done so that we will have the appropriate amount of time to develop our idea as well as choosing the marketing strategy, advertisement and distribution of tickets. Another important matter is to decide what kind of dishes we are going to cook and what movie we should present.

Lastly, we will have to discuss our ideas and expectations with our supporting group. Within our project we decided that development of posters for marketing means would be completely genuine. Since food we will be serving is one of crucial components of our event, we want to arrange a professional food photo shoot. As we don't have any technical knowledge of making a professional photo shoot nor creating posters, we would contact our colleagues who specialize in photo and design. Therefore, contacting support group in advance is time matter crucial. The TABLE 1. Project Plan below is the timeline of the project "Jeppis Russian Night", which consists of main tasks and its deadlines.

TABLE 1. Project Plan

Deadline date	Task
18.03.2016	Check out venue and availability, set the date
19.03.2016	Test Menu→Food Photo shoot for posters.
20.03.2016	Calculate the cost of production per person
22. -23.03.2016	Design posters and tickets
28.03.2016	Put out posters and announce event on social media
04.04.2016	Start ticket sale

16.05.2016	End ticket sale
21.05.2016	Implement the event

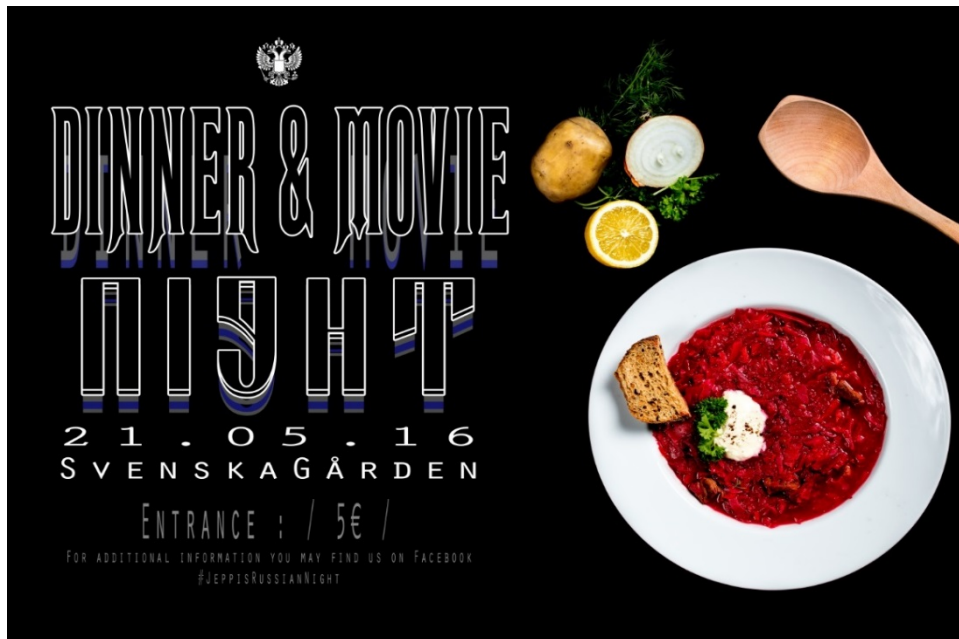
First step was to meet with the representatives of Svenska Gården to check if the venue suits the event and if they have all tools and technical support that would be needed for event implementation. After our first meeting we have set the date of the event with time space of 2 months. After agreeing on the venue, we came to decision to have limited amount of people because the space that we signed off on has maximum capacity of 35 people. Since we will have to cook food right before the event starts, having a limited amount of tickets to be sold made perfect sense. Number of pre-sold tickets gives us number of dishes to cook. We hired out the kitchen premises and separate room with tables and chairs that also had a white screen with a video projector.

Next step was to decide on the menu and the movie. We wanted our guests to get to know the most common dishes in Russia, and as a result in order to offer full experience to our guests it was decided to make a three course dinner; starting with the salad then soup, and lastly the dessert. Therefore, we chose most known soup called “Borsch”, salad Olivier and pancakes with condensed milk as our dessert. Along with that, we had set the date for food photo shoot.

It is important to know how much time we will need for preparations and how much it would cost to produce three courses set per person, so we can set an entrance fee. We decided to run a Test Menu with timing; we also kept all receipts for further calculations. After cooking everything at our home, our next step was to meet at Campus Allegro for the photo shooting with the help of our colleague from Novia. We shared our vision and presented ideas of how we want our posters to be, and started working on creating the shots. After productive work in studio, our photos were ready and we just had to wait for our colleague to edit them. Later on, we wrote down all used ingredients and calculated the costs per person based on Restaurant calculations. When we got edited pictures, it was time to contact our colleague from Design department. We presented to him our pictures and designed the poster together with his help after which we also made the entrance tickets.

On a set day we have put up our posters in all targeted places, as well as created event page on Facebook. All that was left to do was to attract participants, sell the tickets and run the event. On the scheduled dates, that were advertised through event’s Facebook page we were present in Campus Allegro to

promote and sell the tickets. When selling the tickets, we also made sure to write down all the names, as well as inquire about any possible allergies.



PICTURE 1. Poster for the “Jeppis Russian Night”

Event’s poster (PICTURE 1.) represents the ready version of poster, which was used for marketing means of the event. Number of posters were printed out and placed around Pietarsaari town.

4.1.1 Menu

The following images represent the menu that will be served during the event, starting with soup followed by soup and dessert.

PICTURE 2. Salad

Salad Olivier (PICTURE 2.) is a traditional salad dish of a Russian cuisine, which is why we chose it as our starter dish. The starter dish will be served within first minutes of the movie.



PIC-
Tradi-
soup
TURE
guished

of the most known Russian dishes among foreigners.

TURE 3. Borch
tional Russian
'Borch' (PIC-
3.) with distin-
red color is one



PICTURE 4. Pancakes with condensed milk

Pancakes with condensed milk (PICTURE 4.) are one of most favorite desserts among Russians, however in Russia it is quite often served for breakfast and can also be made into a full-dish by stuffing it with meat.

4.1.2 Movie

The second important part of the event was streaming a Russian movie. Since the idea of the event was to share Russian Culture, it was decided that it would be more reasonable to show an old movie. Soviet cinematography is very rich and takes special place in the hearts of Russian people. Soviet movies of 20th century are widely praised and known not only within the country but also outside its borders. Therefore, movie called “Diamond Arm” was chosen to be event’s main entertainment. It was released back in 1969 and stars many Soviet Union’s actors. The plot of the movie tells a story of a couple of smugglers who tried to transport diamonds in an arm cast. The movie portrays the Soviet Union, its people, culture and humor. The success of the movie was so high that it turned out to be one of the best comedy movies of those times, and even till today’s day people still re-watch it and call it iconic. Even though Soviet Union has fallen over 20 years ago, it is still an important chapter in the lives of Russian people. It is what shaped today’s Russia and that is why we wanted to share it with our guests.

4.2 SWOT

SWOT is a traditional marketing tool used to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of business. In Event management SWOT-analyses can be used to analyze the event.

Strengths of Event should show unique value of the event in comparison to any other possible similar events. Identifying weaknesses of the event will allow event organizers to understand areas for improvements. Opportunities show possible future opportunities, while threats tell us things to be aware of in present and future.

TABLE 2. SWOT analyses of "Jeppis Russian Night" event

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locals respond well to cultural events • Event is organized during the weekend, which allows more people to come • The venue is well known and in the city center • Aimed to anyone who is interested in Russian culture • A 3 course dinner for affordable price • New type of cultural event
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not professional cooks • Not everyone might understand the movie • Not everyone might like the food • No experience in catering • The venue might be too small
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging more cultural events • Innovative – new type of event
<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential equipment might get broken • Video/Audio equipment might not work • Lack of experience in organizing this type of event

When we take a look at our SWOT-analysis we can tell that there is some amount of strength regarding our event, especially emphasizing on the innovative part, since there are not many known cultural events that would usually include a dinner and a movie combination. In addition this event also gives a chance for local people to experience something new, like Russian culture, which is also not so com-

mon in Ostrobothnia region. We have high hopes, that people will get interested in experiencing this new type of event and that this event will attract people who are interested in tasting the cuisine of Finland's neighboring country while watching well known classical Russian comedy.

Regarding the weaknesses of event, we face a challenge of stepping into new kind of area of expertise, which is the catering part, since neither of us have much experience in this field. However, we hope to achieve the best possible result by planning our event carefully so it will flow without too many obstacles, though it is expected that we will most probably face some along the way. We also hope that our event will encourage the students to be innovative and take risks in trying out something that is out of ordinary and at the same time giving the residents of the local area new kind of experiences and perspectives on cultures. Since Pietarsaari has quite many international students, we believe it could be used as an advantage to share each other's cultures, through organization of cultural events.

Though we are very optimistic about our event, we are still well aware of certain threats that we might face during our event. The innovative part of this event can also be a threat as well as strength, since people are not familiar with an event like this, they might hesitate to attend, since we will charge for the ticket. We also both lack of experience in organization of events and also since this kind of event has not been so common we need to plan it very carefully step by step and come up with best possible solutions, so that we achieve the best kind of atmosphere and enjoyable event for our guests. The biggest challenge will be the catering part especially, since it will happen during the movie, so planning the serving times is essential in this case.

Altogether when looking at all perspectives and considering all possible challenges we might face, we believe that as long as we have an optimistic mindset and studious working approach regarding the organization of this event, we have a great chance of organizing a successful event.

4.3 Marketing plan

The event is targeted mainly to the students of Campus Allegro, which includes University of Novia, Åbo Academy and Centria University of Applied Sciences, however we also hope that the local residents of Jakobstad will be interested in participating in the event. The aim of the event is to introduce Russian culture through a unique cultural event that includes a three course dinner that will be served during a Russian comedy movie.

In our marketing we will be using geographical segmentation, focusing in the Jakobstad area only. We decided to do this because of the size of the venue; the event is expected to be fairly small type of event, therefore marketing our event outside the town is not necessary. Marketing will be done by setting up posters around the campus and around the city center approximately two weeks before the event in addition to making a Facebook page for the event around the same time. We believe that two weeks is enough time for people to notice our event and get interested in purchasing a ticket, since there will be a limited amount of places, which will also be marketed heavily to get people's attention and hopefully make them react in purchasing their own ticket on time.

The Facebook page is important to keep active during the advertisement period and we plan to do this by posting pictures of the dishes that will be served at the event, as well as introducing the movie that will be showcased in addition to the event related posts, such as the ticket sale information. The marketing plan template has been done and can be seen below.

TABLE 3. A one-page marketing plan template (adapted from Ivana Taylor, 2008)

“Cultural Event”	
Category	Strategy
Target Market	Local residents and students of Pietarsaari
Positioning Statement	A unique cultural event aimed for anyone who is interested in experiencing Russian culture.
Offering to customers	3 course dinner and a movie
Price Strategy	Entrance fee of 5€
Distribution	Posters and social media (Facebook to be more specific)
Sales Strategy	A great opportunity for locals to taste Russian culinary

Service Strategy	A three course dinner for fairly cheap price
Promotion Strategy	To make students and locals of Pietarsaari aware of our event
Marketing Research	The use of geographic segmentation

Marketing plan (TABLE 3.) shortly describes the strategies that would be used for the successful marketing of the event.

In this Chapter we have used earlier received knowledge and applied it in the planning phase of the event. With the help of Project Plan (TABLE 1.), SWOT-analysis (TABLE 2.) and Marketing Plan (Table 3.) we have analyzed the situation and created thorough plans for our eve

5 THE EVENT AS IT HAPPENED

This chapter will include a description of the event as it happened. The following description will also include problems that came up right before and during the event, as well as a short self-evaluation of the described events.

On the day of the event, my partner and I made a trip to a grocery store in order to buy everything we need for food preparation. After getting everything we need, we made our way to the venue. The choice of the event venue was made right, as the venue kitchen had everything we need for cooking, so we didn't need to worry about bringing our own kitchen tools. The kitchen was really spacious and pleasant to work in. Right after coming to the venue and settling in, we came across our first problem. Since one of the main parts of the event was to show a movie, we realized that the whole wall of windows in the main space is making the room too bright, and it would be almost impossible to see anything on a screen. Another problem we realized right in the beginning was the table allocation, as the video projector was in the corner and thoughtless table placements would leave half of the guests without a possibility to see the movie. Except for the view angle, we also noticed that certain table placements would make the process of serving food too disturbing for our guests, as the food was supposed to be served along the movie. However, chance of such problems was taken into consideration

and there was still time to find solutions. We managed to find table positions, which wouldn't block the guests from viewing the movie, as well as we found an easy fix for the lightning in the room.

Meanwhile my partner was preparing the room for the guests, I was in the kitchen preparing the food. The fact that we have previously prepared the testing menu has helped a lot, since it was much easier to calculate the amount of time I would need to prepare everything, as well as control the portions. I have started the food preparations roughly three hours before the event was supposed to start. Firstly, I have prepared everything for the salad, as it was the first dish to serve and it was supposed to be served cold, so after mixing all the ingredients and portioning it, I have putted it all to the fridge to let it cool down. After that I could start preparing the soup, which was the main dish of the menu. It was crucial to prepare all the ingredients for it beforehand, because we did not want to re-heat it, but rather serve it hot and just from the stove.

At around 18.45 people started showing up and my partner along with some of our friends, whom we asked to help us out were having little chit-chat before everyone who bought the tickets arrived. By 19.00 everyone arrived and the guests took their places. At 19.05 my partner and I welcomed all the guests and gave a small introduction speech in regard to the event, as well as small introduction of the movie and the food that will be served. According to the contract that we have signed up with the venue, we could also use tea and coffee services, so before starting the event we asked our guests who would prefer what, so we could serve it in the end. After that we putted on the movie and returned to the kitchen to get the dishes out of a fridge and prepare to serve them. During planning phase it was decided that the salad will be served within first 5 minutes, as there was a long musical intro, that way we wouldn't distract the guests from concentrating on the introduction part of the movie.

After getting all salad plates out, I had about 50 minutes to finish cooking the soup, because having pre-watched the movie once again, we determined the timing for serving the main dish without too much distraction from the plot of the movie. However, at the same time I had to start preparations for the pancakes as well, because the time slot between main dish and dessert was much shorter, as we didn't want to leave desserts for after the movie, but rather serve them right by the end of it.

Fifteen minutes after serving the first course, my partner collected all the plates from guests, meanwhile I was finishing up preparation of the soup. When it was cooked, I have prepared the plates to be served and after some time my partner served the second course and I could fully concentrate on dessert preparation.

The cooking part went on smoothly without any problems thanks proper planning and time-calculation. The serving part was as well quite successful, as we have discussed and planned thoroughly the way it would be done.

When all the food was served and the movie came to an end, my partner and I came out to the guests for some mingle, suggest move tea/coffee and discuss their experiences. We also gave a ‘thank you for coming’ speech and asked our guests to leave us some feedback, as well as fill-in the online survey. Survey’s results, its analyses and further conclusions about the event will be discussed in following chapters.

6 EVALUATION OF PROJECT “JEPPIS RUSSIAN NIGHT”

Research is one of the essential parts of many events and projects. This is quite important, especially when organizing a special event or first time event, because it can give the organizers valuable insight on how they succeeded and also on possible improvements. After analyzing the data made by the researchers, certain conclusions can be made, which can help with the planning of future events. Research can be done by using different methods, such as qualitative research methods or quantitative research methods. In this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were performed in order to get in-depth evaluation of the event.

6.1 Qualitative research method

Qualitative research method is a very broad term to define simply, since this method covers so many different techniques and philosophies. However, in wide speculation qualitative research is a method that allows the researcher to examine its subject’s experiences in detail. This is done by specific set of approaches, such as in-depth interviews, observation, visual methods, analyzing the content, discussion within the focus group and life histories or biographies. Besides some of the previously mentioned techniques used in this research method, one of the main features of this method is that it allows the researcher to identify the issues from the perspective of their study participants in addition to under-

standing the meanings as well as interpretations that they give to behavior, events or objects.

(Monique H., Inge A., Ajay B., 2011, 9.)

Open feedback as a form of qualitative research method was used right after the event. By giving audience an opportunity to freely express their thoughts about the event, my partner and I got valuable information on how this event was experienced by our guests.

The following are some of the feedbacks from the guests in the free form:

“Thank you for the experience. The food and movie experience was nice. And the food was really delicious”

“Jätte fint evemang. Soppan va jätte got”

“Really tasty food. Every dish was delish. The movie was also aömost good, since I kind of have a soft spot for old goodies. All in all a good event!”

“Todella mukava ilta, kiitos! Ruoka oli todella hyvää, erityisesti keitto! Elokuva oli hauska! ”

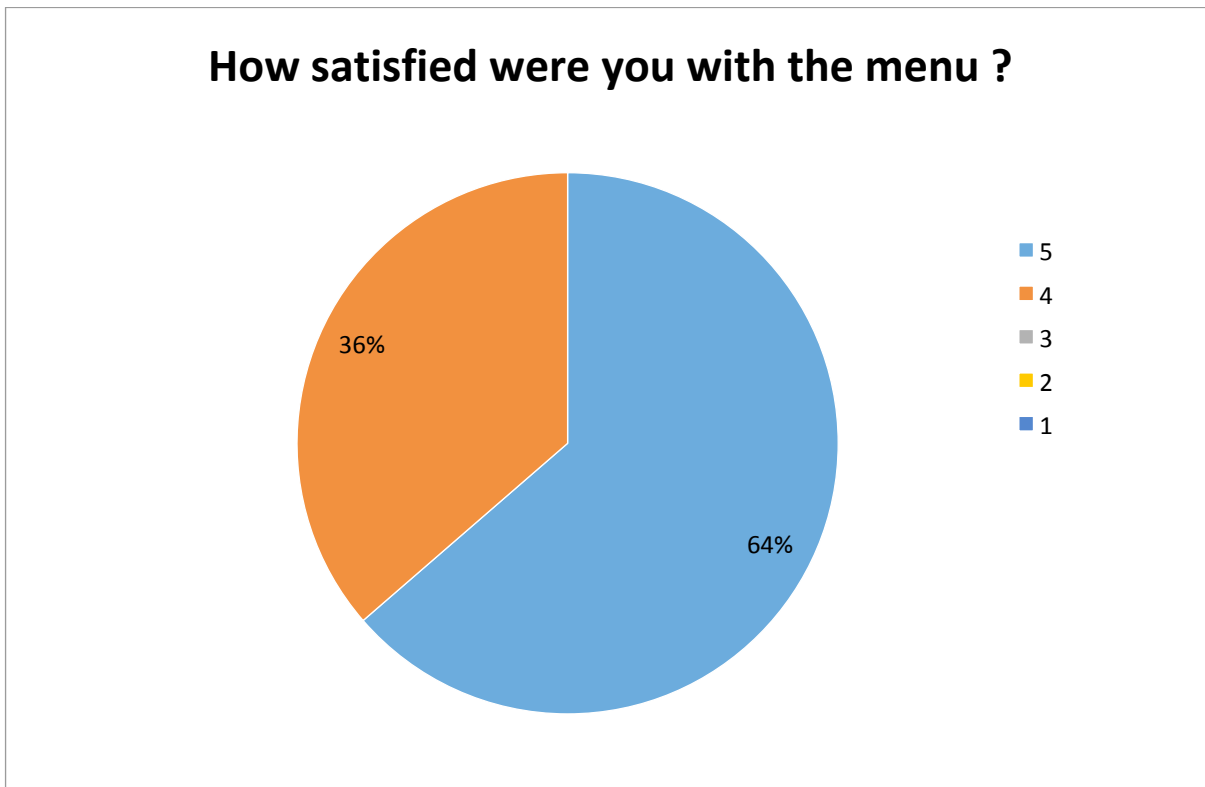
”We loved the food and idea. Thanks for this”

6.2 Quantitative research method

Compared to qualitative research method instead of looking any deeper in the understanding of the subject, the quantitative research method is based on numbers and statistical methods, using numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena, like an event for example. The researchers role is to observe and measure and his or hers “objectivity” is utmost concern. Some of the aspects of this method are careful sampling strategies as well as experimental designs that are aimed to produce generalizable results. (Murray Thomas, 2003, 2.)

7 ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH RESULTS

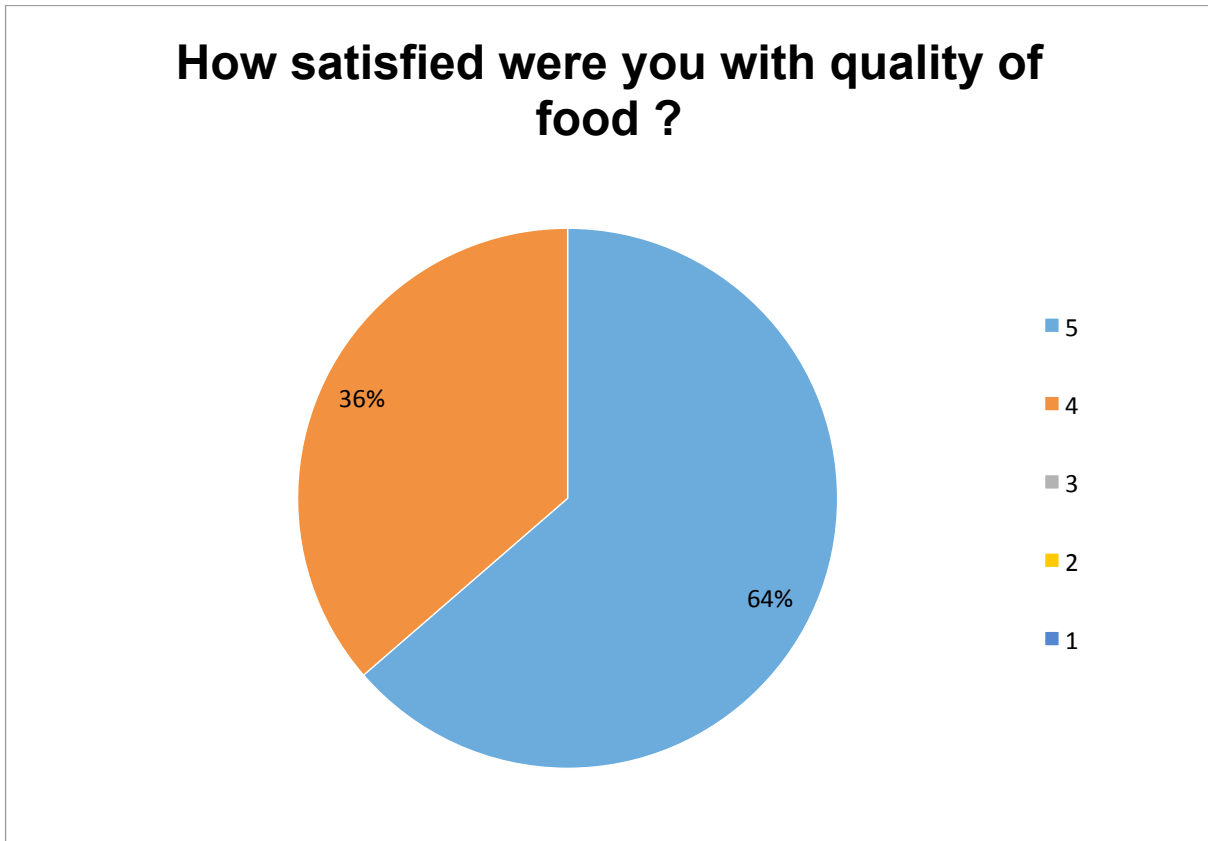
The following chapter includes analysis of the survey that was organized right after the event. The link to the survey was sent to all event participants. The survey included nine questions with different answer options. Unless stated otherwise, the scale 1 to 5 was used for evaluation, where 1 corresponds to 'not satisfied at all' and 5 corresponding to 'very satisfied'. The aim of the survey was to get anonymous evaluation of the event.



GRAPH 1. The audience's satisfactory level towards offered menu

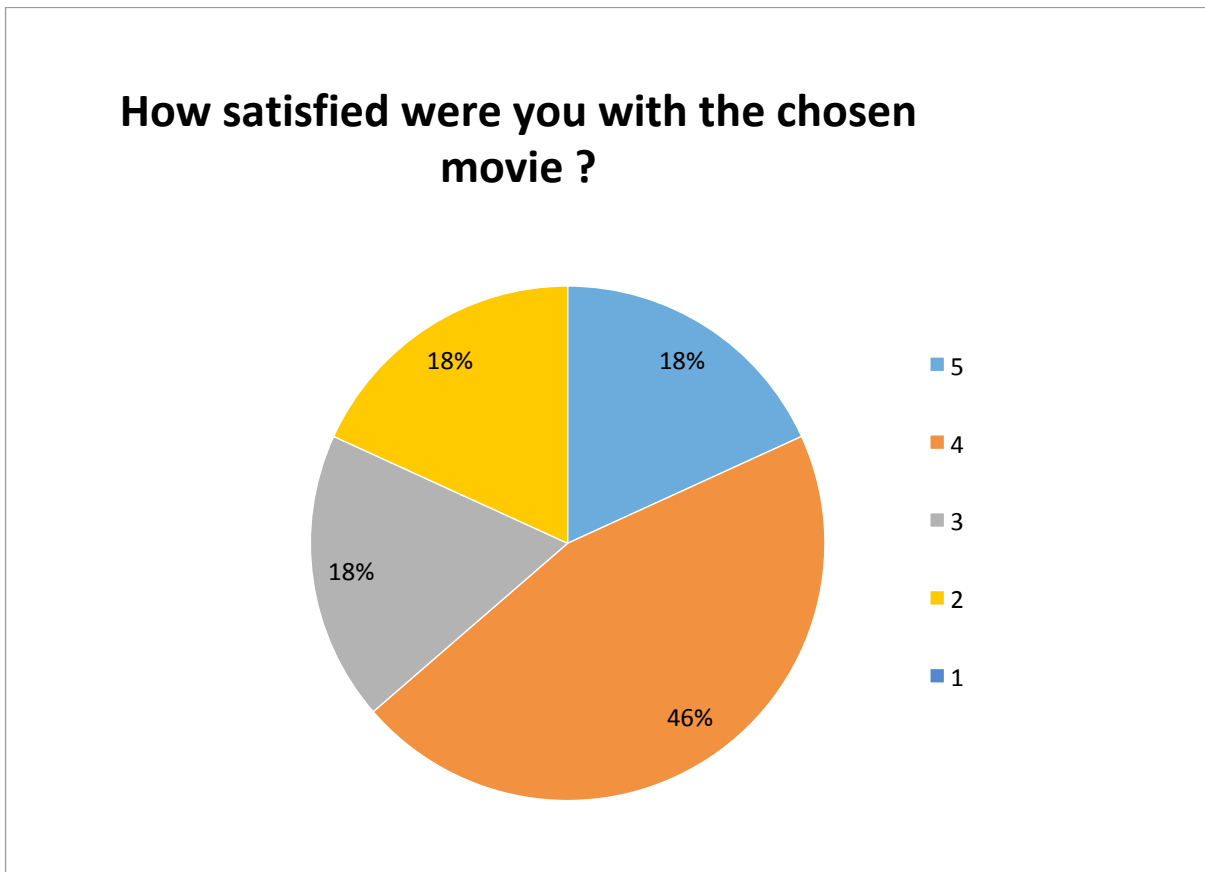
As shown in GRAPH 1, more than half of the participants were very satisfied with the menu, while rest 36% rated it at a somewhat satisfactory level.

This result showed us very positive attitude towards the dishes that we picked to present and make. We were pretty sure that our guests would rate food pretty high, as it was one of major components of our event and we wanted to choose the most popular dishes out of Russian Culinary.



GRAPH 2. The audience's satisfactory level towards the quality of food

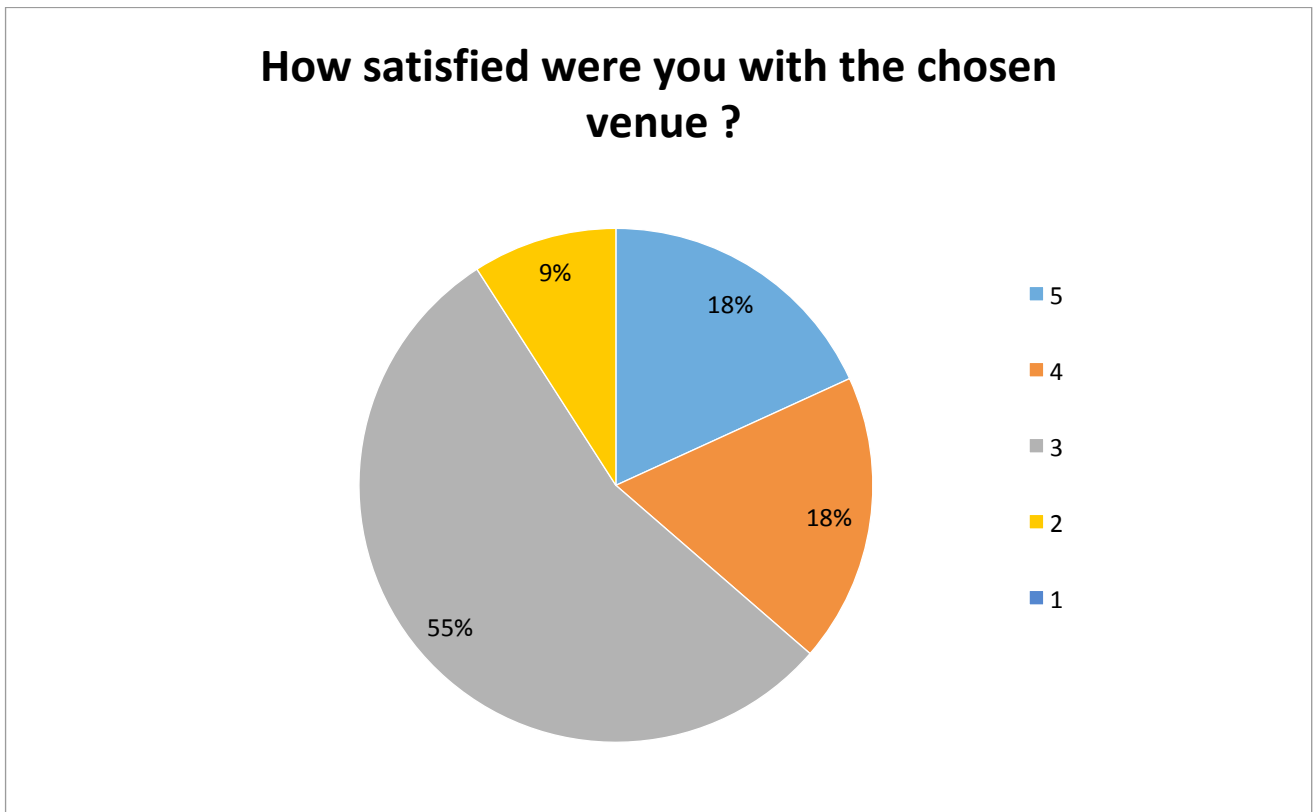
According to GRAPH2 the level of satisfaction with quality of food corresponds with the levels of the satisfaction with the chosen menu.



GRAPH 3. Audience's satisfaction level towards chosen movie

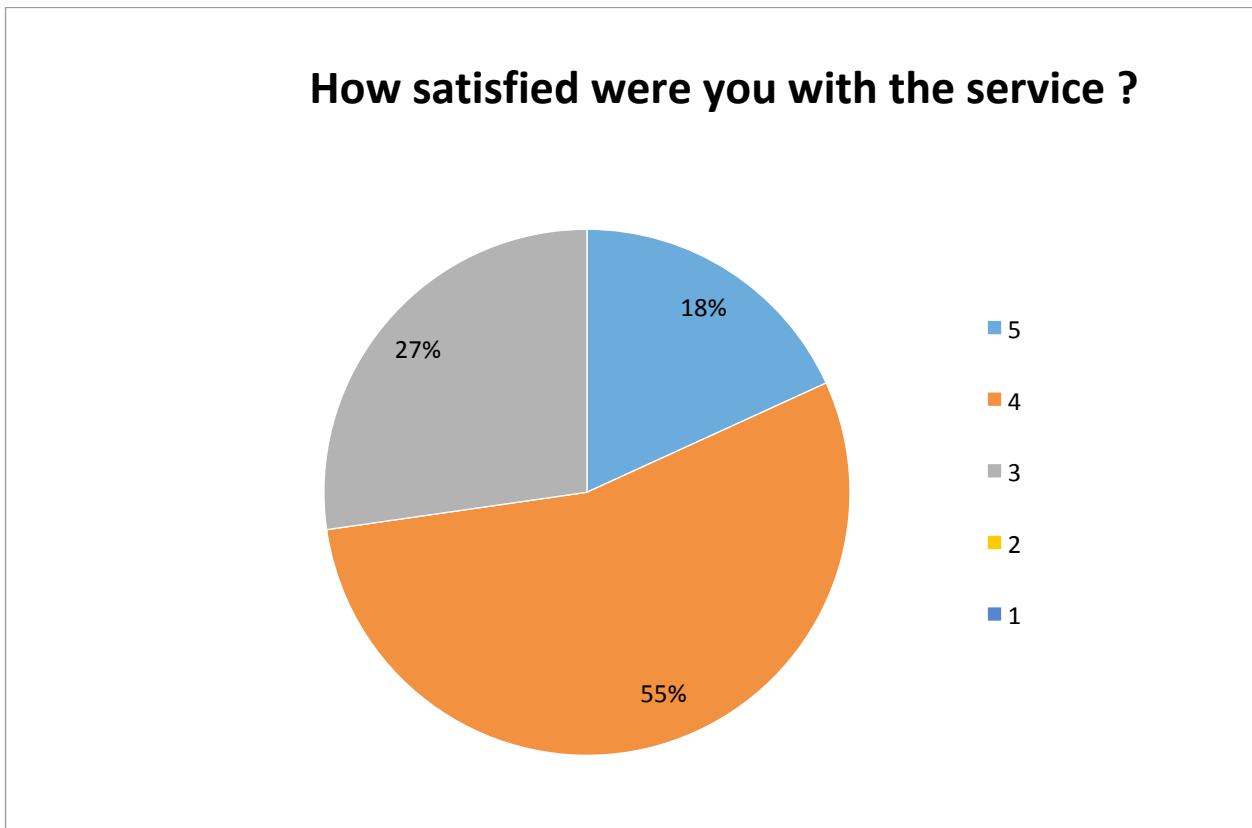
As shown in GRAPH 3, about half of the participants rated chosen movie as "4", which corresponds to "somewhat satisfied", while other half of audience got divided in 3 equal parts by choosing either "very satisfied", "satisfied" and "not satisfied".

Choosing the movie for this event took some time, as we were not quite sure how to approach the introduction to Russian cinematography in best way possible, considering cultural differences. According to GRAPH 3 there were several people who were not so happy with the choice of the movie, but that was expected. In overall, it can be said that guests were satisfied with it on average level.



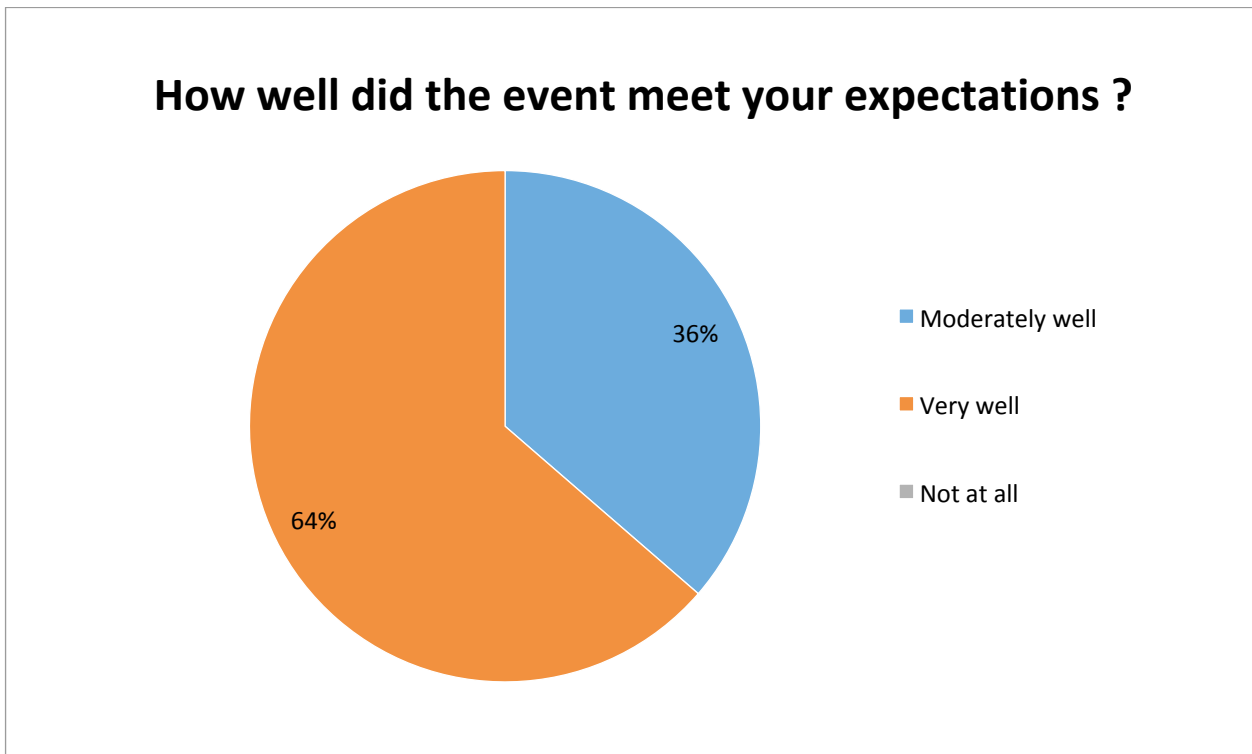
GRAPH 4. Audience's satisfaction level towards chosen venue

Half of the audience was semi-satisfied with the chosen venue. The other half was split in opinions, with one third being fully satisfied with it, other third finding it 'good' and the rest finding it satisfactory.



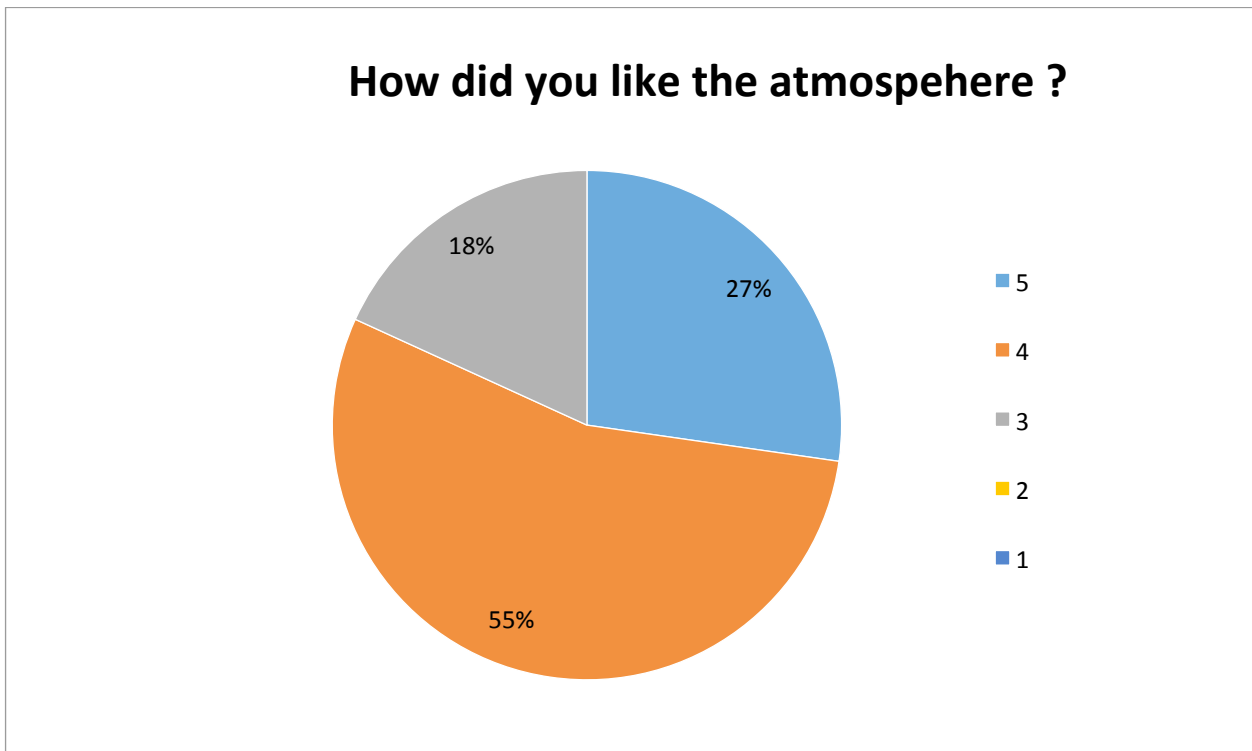
GRAPH 5. Audience's satisfaction level towards service during the event

According to GRAPH 5. most of the respondents were quite satisfied with the level of service during the event.



GRAPH 6. Audience's satisfaction level towards their expectations in regard to the event

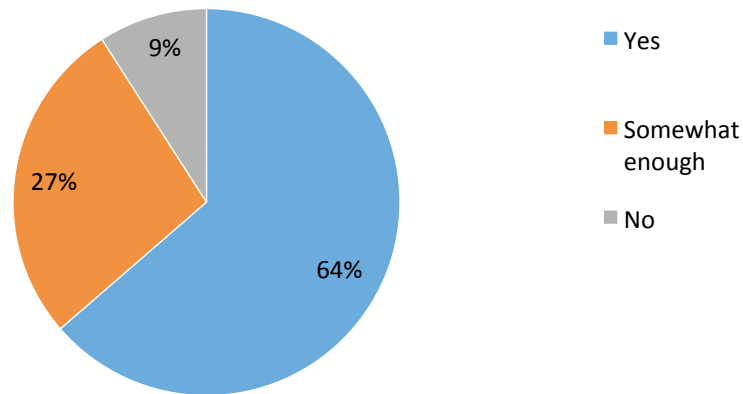
According to the graph above (GRAPH 6.) all guests' expectations were met, with majority of respondents saying they were 'very well met'.



GRAPH 7. Audience's satisfaction level towards atmosphere at the event

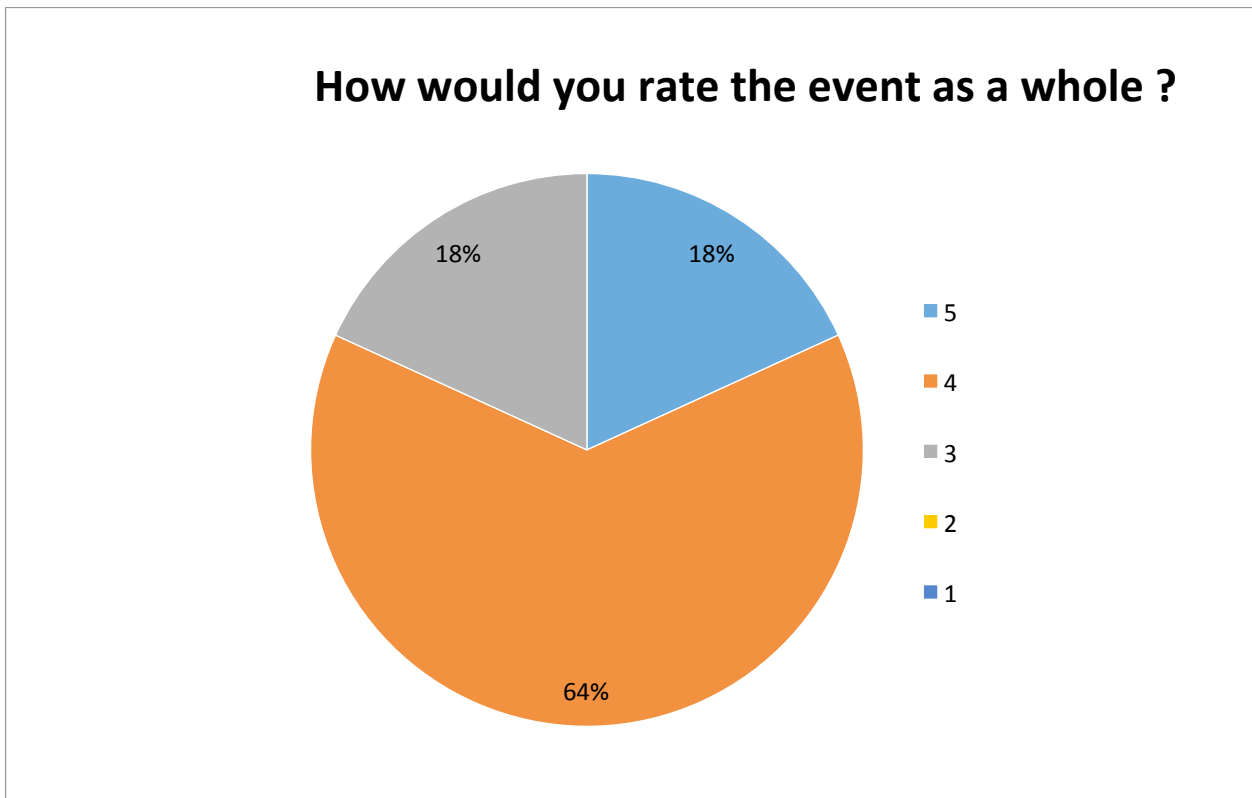
GRAPH 7. Shows us the level of satisfaction with the overall atmosphere of the event, with 55% of respondents being well satisfied, 27% being very satisfied and only 18% somewhat satisfied.

**Did you think the combination of chosen movie
and food was enough to get a little sense of
Russian Culture ?**



GRAPH 8. Audience's opinion about the concept of the event

According to graph above (GRAPH 8.) majority of the audience found the concept 'Movie+Food' to be enough for getting a little sense of Russian Culture, while 27% of respondents answered 'somewhat enough'. However, 9% of the audience found this combination to not be enough to learn a little bit of Russian culture.



GRAPH 9. Audience's evaluation of the event

GRAPH 9. represents audience evaluation of the event as a whole. Majority of the audience gave to the event high evaluation scores.

8 CONCLUSION

The main aim of the thesis was to research theoretical knowledge about event management and with a help of that knowledge create own event. Another important goal was to familiarize local people of Pietarsaari with Russian culture through showing them Russian movie and serving traditional Russian food. The empirical part of the thesis consisted of important theoretical knowledge about event management, and since event management is such a broad area, related to the “Jeppis Russian Night” event information was in priority.

Prioritized information was divided into two parts, such as ‘Event Management’ and ‘Event Marketing’. In the ‘Event Management’ part the focus was made on the industry from a professional point of view, as well as fundamental elements of event were described. ‘Event Marketing’ was chosen to be studied separately due to the scope of the subject, which basically made Event Marketing a self-standing subject. The empirical part was concluded with the research methods used to evaluate the event.

The practical part of thesis consisted of actions and processes implemented during event creation, as well as the implementation of the event itself. The level of the event completely depended on previous knowledge and knowledge acquired through the theoretical part of the thesis. As described in Chapter 2, Event Management as a Profession is also shaped by the knowledge received ‘on the spot’, hence it makes sense to share conclusions about the knowledge received during the event.

Having followed theoretical knowledge of event management, and have implemented the event of my own, I came to the realization that the nature of Event Management is rather unpredictable due to the high dependency of different aspects on each other. In order to organize a perfect and high-level event, one needs to be highly consistent and detail-oriented. The phase before the event is the most crucial as it all concludes to just several hours of the event in the very end. In case with “Jeppis Russian Night”, two months were reserved for preparations for just roughly two hours of the event. Having that in mind, I have definitely learned the importance of properly drawing up the timeline of event production.

As for the other goal of this event, which was to familiarize locals with Russian Culture, I found the event to be successful based on the results from both research methods, as well as my own judgement. Such event as “Jeppis Russian Night” definitely gets into the category of ‘Special Events’, events,

which don't happen on regular basis and tend to spark interest in the public. In my personal opinion, having considered all areas for the improvements, as well as problems that came up during the day of the event, the repetition of this event could be even more successful, because local people of Pietarsaari seem to have interest for other cultures and they are ready to experience it.

In the conclusion to this project, I would like to say that learning by doing is the best method. Therefore, I can confidently say that I have learned a lot during preparation and implementation phases of the event. I am sure that acquired knowledge will be useful for my future projects, whatever they are connected with event management or project management.

In the end I would like to say many special thanks to my dear friends Nina, Josefine and Yiannis for helping me organize and run this event. With this thesis I would also like to honor the memory of My Dear Friend Asif Hossain, who have helped to create the photos for the marketing of the event. Person with a big letter and even bigger heart. A Son, A Father, A Friend and AN ARTIST. Rest In Peace.

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