

# **Events as a marketing tool. The analysis of the MBLT DEV 2018**

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<p>This is a research-oriented thesis which focuses on event marketing theories and provides the analysis of impacts of the MBLT DEV 2018 Conference. The event was organised by e-Legion Ltd. The company is based in St. Petersburg, Russia and concentrates on mobile application development. To share the knowledge and spread the most important news of the mobile industry e-Legion has organised many events and schools for developers. I was doing my internship in the company and I was one of the organisers of the last MBLT DEV 2018 Conference held on 28 September 2018. The thesis objective is to understand the business and marketing impacts of the MBLT DEV 2018 on e-Legion. The research questions are designed to understand the concept of event marketing and how to measure the effects of the events.</p> <p>The theoretical framework explains what events are, how to set goals for events, and how to evaluate them. The concept of event marketing, event history, and trends are explained. The role of events within branding, marketing communications and marketing relationships is investigated. Additionally, literature review covers how to evaluate and measure the effects of the events, and business value of events. The evaluation process is time-consuming and costly. One of the methods to measure impacts of the events was developed by Ph.D., Chairman in ROI Institute Jack Phillips in 2008. His approach is based on ROI pyramid with six levels: target audience, learning environment, learning, behaviour, impact, ROI. This approach is used to measure the MBLT DEV 2018 impacts.</p> <p>Quantitative research is the selected methodology for the research. Surveys for the participants were used as a data collection method, the surveys were designed according to the J. Phillips ROI methodology presented in the theoretical part.</p> <p>The research findings chapter represents the overview of the MBLT DEV 2018 event on the basis of the theory. The MBLT DEV 2018 is a business-to-business event but can also be considered as a business-to-customer event. The event has several business effects including marketing effects. Marketing effects of the event were analysed from the perspective of three types of marketing: marketing communication, marketing relationship, and branding. e-Legion engage with the mobile development community within the event. The outstanding performance of the MBLT DEV 2018 has helped to build a good reputation of the organiser's company. As such, brand image and brand awareness increase with the help of the event.</p> <p>Additionally, the survey analysis is presented, and business values are discussed. From the business value perspective, the event has brought a good ROI. It increased the revenue by 81%, generated 50 leads to the sales department, and attracted 31 students to the e-Legion Academy.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Event marketing, event, marketing communication, marketing relationship, branding	

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# 1 Introduction

Today event marketing is considered by many businesses as a powerful marketing tool. Events give companies an opportunity to provide their customers with a unique experience which will lead to changes in their behaviour (Toner & Walker, 2017). According to Bizzabo (2017) an average Chief Marketing Officer in the USA assigns 24% of their total annual budget to live events to connect with customers and educate attendees and generate new leads. Companies like Apple, Microsoft, Red Bull, HubSpot, Eventbrite, Google, Mercedes, and many others understand the value of live events and have dedicated themselves to marketing strategies that place face-to-face interaction front and centre (Bizzabo, 2017).

This research was conducted to analyse the business impact of the International Mobile Developers Conference MBLT DEV 2018, organised by the Russian IT company e-Legion Ltd. The company is focusing on mobile application development and is based in St. Petersburg, Russia. The event was held on 28 September 2018 in Moscow, Russia. e-Legion organised the MBLT DEV 2018 for the Russian and international mobile application community. The MBLT DEV 2018 was the eighth conference held by e-Legion. The marketing team with the help and support of the whole company in five months prepared a successful event which gathered 600 participants. The conference was educational and the target audience was not considered as a potential customer for e-Legion itself, the event was held for the community of mobile developers.

This study is based on a theoretical framework about events and event marketing definitions together with the history and trends of events. Then event marketing impact is discussed, and measuring methods are reviewed. The focus of the thesis is to analyse the effect of the MBLT DEV 2018 event to the company e-Legion.

The initial idea and the concept of the thesis emerged in December 2017. I was one of the organisers of the MBLT DEV 2017 and thought it would be interesting to analyse the impact of this event. After one year I was one of the organisers of the MBLT DEV 2018, thus the idea to make a research about the most recent conference emerged. e-Legion puts a lot of effort into events' organisation every year. The MBLT DEV is an annual conference held in 2018 for the fifth time. I considered that event marketing is an essential marketing tool for e-Legion. However, I could not fully understand how that particular event impacts the company. In this thesis I will analyse the MBLT DEV 2018 and highlight all of the impacts of the event.

## 1.1 Research problem and objective

Event marketing theories are considered to have some research gaps despite that event marketing is becoming more and more useful marketing tool. There is a shortage of structured knowledge and appropriate conceptual framework on event marketing (Gupta, 2003). Therefore, there is a lack of theories about the event's measurements and analysis tools. However, there seems to be a growing interest in event marketing and this study will cover marketing impacts from a corporation's view, which are already developed. Moreover, the literature review presents measurements approach and ROI Model of Jack J. Phillips, Ph.D. Chairman of ROI Institute and measuring business values of the events.

Holding a live event takes much effort, time and money for the companies. e-Legion annually organises events with more than 600 participants. However, event marketing in e-Legion was not discussed in depth. The research objective is *to understand the impact of the MBLT DEV 2018 on e-Legion*. To meet this objective following research questions are proposed:

- How the MBLT DEV 2018 influenced e-Legion?
- What is the marketing purpose of the MBLT DEV 2018 for the e-Legion?
- What is the business value of the MBLT DEV 2018?
- How to measure the impact of the MBLT DEV 2018?

Answering this question will give a clear view of the effects of event marketing and provide the knowledge to analyse the impact of the MBLT DEV 2018.

## 1.2 Significance of the study

The thesis introduces event marketing impacts on the businesses. The theoretical part will cover event and event marketing definition together with theories about the marketing perceptions of event marketing.

Firstly, this research is significant for me, because I will understand an event marketing position and how it can be used and how to measure the impacts of them. I am working as a marketing manager, therefore to understand one of the essential marketing tool (events) is vital for me.

Secondly, the empirical part of the thesis provides valuable information for the e-Legion company and its annual event the MBLT DEV Conference. The research will demonstrate the marketing impact of the MBLT DEV 2018 on e-Legion. The study will provide the company with the analysis of the MBLT DEV 2018 conference and evaluation of participants'

impression. The thesis can be used as a template for the future growth of the event marketing in e-Legion.

### **1.3 Limitation**

The research presents the analysis of the MBLT DEV 2018 event from a perspective of event marketing. Event marketing can be considered as the marketing of events and marketing with events (Cornwell & Maignan, 1998). This research observes the MBLT DEV 2018 Conference from a 'marketing with events' perception. The theory part will cover the explanation of event and event marketing (marketing using the events) terms, events history and event trends of 2018, and event types. To limit the general framework event marketing types and the goal setting process is discussed only for corporate events type.

The theoretical framework does not give a proper description to the terms such as marketing, marketing communication, marketing relationship, brand, branding, brand awareness and brand equity. The research is done with my knowledge of marketing gathered through studies and work experience and the event marketing theory is presented with a proper literature review.

For the measurements, the model of Jack J. Phillips is used. The event analysed with the steps presented in that model. For data collection method survey is used. However, I expect that the analysis will not be able to give a whole view of a marketing usage of the MBLT DEV 2018. Thus, the research will be provided with own discussion and observation.

### **1.4 Structure**

Introduction chapter highlights the idea of the research, objective, thesis research questions, limitation and the significance of the study. After the commissioner company is introduced, organisers of the event. In that chapter, I present an overview of the company, its goals, SWOT analysis, and educational events of the company. The theoretical framework presents theories relevant to the study. The chapter starts with an introduction to event and event marketing, with the following marketing purpose of the events and methods of measurement. Following is the thesis research design and methodology chapter which introduces methods and tools chosen to analyse the MBLT DEV 2018. Then research findings chapter presents the analysis of the MBLT DEV 2018, and the evaluation of the survey is presented. In the last chapter results and suggestions are discussed.



## **2 Company presentation**

The commissioner of the project is e-Legion Ltd. It is an IT company founded in 2005 and is based in St. Petersburg, Russia. e-Legion mainly operates as a business-to-business company. e-Legion empowers its clients with comprehensive and market-ready apps. The company focuses on building apps that have authentic customer experience and boosts business growth. e-Legion provides an excellent service based on four main pillars: careful analytics, UX/UI (user experience and user interface) design, secure development, and detailed testing. There are 250 employees in e-Legion, and more than 70 clients all over the world. The minimum project price is \$25,000. (e-Legion Ltd., 2018)

### **2.1 Company history and achievements**

The company started its journey in 2005 with conducting custom development for Partners Health Care and a well-known German automobile holding company (e-Legion Ltd., 2018). Since the end of 2009 e-Legion one of the first in the industry began experimenting with one of the first versions of the Android OS; thus, today e-Legion is one of the leaders in the custom development of mobile applications in Russia (Ruward, 2017). For more than ten years the company is developing software for different types of businesses. Through this experience, the company has built effective structures for interactions with the customers and high-performance project management. e-Legion developed more than 100 mobile apps for millions of users (e-Legion Ltd., 2017). The company used to create for iOS, Android and Microsoft platforms together with web development. Now the company is focused only on development for iOS and Android platforms. (e-Legion Ltd., 2018)

Through more than ten years of experience e-Legion won a lot of Russian and international competitions, awards and certifications. e-Legion is certified as a Google Developer Certified Agency since 2015 (Google Developers Agency, 2015). e-Legion won second place in the World Top Google Android Certified Development Companies (Clutch, 2018), third place in the World Top Financial App Developers (Clutch, 2017), sixth place in the World Top Android App Developers (GoodFirms, 2017) and seventh place in World Top iPhone App Developers (GoodFirms, 2018). Key clients of e-Legion: IKEA, Raiffeisen-Bank, Yandex, BMW, LinguaLeo, Bank of Moscow, Globus, Tele2, Yota, DPD, Auchan.

### **2.2 Mission statement**

e-Legion mission is to successfully solve business problems focused on mobile development. Long-term relationships with customers are the best proof of this achievement. e-

Legion has been working with Yandex since 2010, with Raiffeisenbank since 2012, with the Bank of Moscow since 2013, with the Mail.ru Group since 2012, with Yota since 2014.

The company is building an educational system around it. e-Legion participates as a sponsor, speaker or as a guest in many mobile community conferences holding in Moscow or St. Petersburg. Starting from 2012 e-Legion organises its international mobile conference MBLT. Russian and international experts present their talks in the MBLT Conference. Among them: Twitter, Facebook, SoundCloud, Deutsche Telekom, BlackBerry, Yota, HTC, Megafon, Microsoft, Opera, TechCrunch, Dentsu, Samsung, Rovio, Distimo, Airbnb, Spotify, Line, Microsoft, Mail.ru Group and other. In the autumn of 2014 e-Legion organised a conference for developers MBLT DEV. Through four years MBLT DEV gathered together experts from such companies as Twitter, PayPal, VKontakte, Soundcloud, Artsy, Parallels, Google, Intel, ViaForensics, Aviasales, and Realm. Moreover, e-Legion annually organises free schools for developers. In March 2015, together with Google, e-Legion launched an online school for Android developers. Best students of the schools continue to work with e-Legion.

To understand e-Legion market position SWOT analysis was made. Figure 1 presents the closer look at the company strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

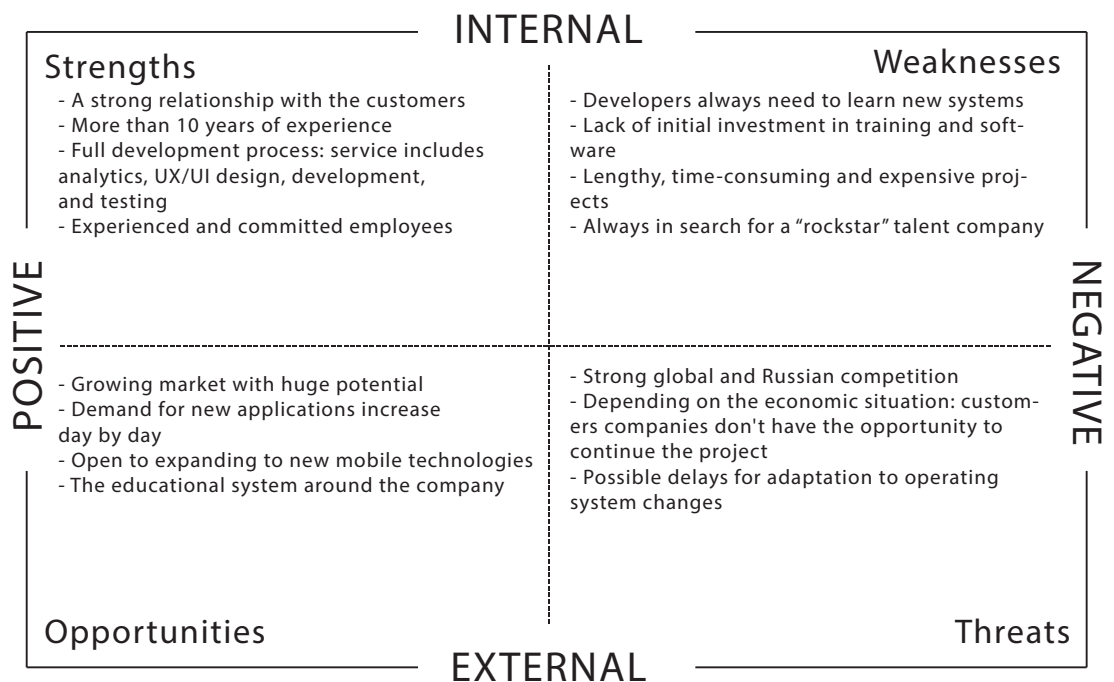


Figure 1: SWOT e-Legion Ltd.

### **2.3 e-Legion events and projects**

e-Legion organises annual international conferences for developers and top managers of IT companies to develop the mobile industry in Russia. The conferences are held in Moscow, Russia.

The International Mobile Conference for Businesses MBLT gathers together top speakers from the Silicon Valley, Europe, Asia, and Russia, who discuss trends and innovations within the mobile industry. Practical cases for different business spheres, new technologies, and tools for promotion and monetisation are discussed. MBLT is created for sharing knowledge, networking, education and new connections. There is already six of MBLT conferences with more than 160 speakers and 3000 participants in total.

Another conference is MBLT DEV. It is organised for mobile developers. It provides with professional development tools and practices. e-Legion has organised five MBLT DEV conferences with 120 speakers and 2000 participants in total. The 5th International Mobile Developers Conference was held on 28 September 2018. I was one of the organisers of this year and last year event. More than three months of preparations and participation in the event brought me to the discussion of the impacts of the MBLT DEV 2018 for the e-Legion.

Besides the organisation of the conferences, e-Legion launches online and offline schools for iOS and Android developers. Students study with the top Russian developers and practice their learning skills in real projects. Each student is provided with the latest materials for the independent work. All programs are developed for the junior level developers. The best students have been proposed with the position in e-Legion. The latest school for the developers started in March 2018. The project got name e-Legion Academy. It is an educational platform for advanced training in mobile development. Students have the opportunity to study the basics of iOS or Android platforms and develop their skills in mobile development.

### **3 Event Marketing**

Today a large amount of advertising is failing daily on the consumer. It appears on the laptops and smartphone screens, from the pages of newspapers, from the radio and TV, waits for them at every step on the city's streets (Bizzabo, 2017). However, consumers can protect themselves from all of this advertising by quickly switching the TV and radio channels on commercial breaks, download ad blockers to their browser, switch off plugins. Traditional marketing becomes less and less effective (Phillips & al., 2008). Companies are always in search of new creative ways to reach their customers with loyalty programs, gift cards, sales, social media marketing, interaction with bloggers, and other methods.

One way to reach the customers is to organise events that create personal connections between the consumer and the brand. Today events are vital to our society perhaps as never before. Growth in the attention of leisure time spending has led to an explosion of events. Governments now support and promote events as part of their strategies for economic development, while businesses put events as key elements in their marketing strategies and image promotion (Bowdin & al., 2006). First of all, it is essential to define the term event and event marketing and go through event types. After the history and the present of the events are described. Then the strategic use of events and marketing purpose of events is reviewed. The last part of the chapter is representing the measuring model for events and business value of events.

#### **3.1 Event and Event Marketing definition**

As described in Oxford Dictionary, an event is "a thing that happens or takes place, especially one of importance". There are different types of events with different goals and aims. But each of the events gathers together a group of people sharing the same ideas.

Term events can be viewed from the diversity of ways. The Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) Industry Glossary of terms (CIC, 2003) explains an event as "an organised occasion" such as a meeting, convention, exhibition, special event, gala dinner, and other. An event is often composed of several different yet related functions.

Getz (2005) résumés that a common description relating to all events is that they are temporary and that "every such event is unique stemming from the blend of management, program, setting and people".

According to Gerritsen and van Olderen (2011), event marketing is "the discipline that involves using events as a live means of communication". In event marketing, marketing is

done within the implementation of the event. Events can be a part of, for instance, a branding strategy or a communication campaign.

“Event marketing focuses on developing, intensifying and expanding a relationship (or brand relationship) with one or two target groups, in which the event or the series of the events is used as a marketing and communication tool and in which emotions and experience are brought together” (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). Event marketing can be defined as a strategic positioning and marketing tool that links a company or a brand with a specific event to the mutual benefit of the parties (organisers and participants) (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). Event marketing is an effective way to improve corporate image, differentiate products or services, and increase both sales and customer loyalty (Goldblatt, 2005). Event marketing links a company or brand with a particular social event. Event marketing is developing and implementing special event programs to promote a brand (Toner & Walker, 2017).

Events can be determined as a corporate or public. Corporate event goal is to achieve some results (behaviour changes) with a specific target audience (the launch of a new product, company anniversary, developers conference).

There are three categories of events involved in corporate events (Hard, 2018):

- Business-to-business events: participants are invited for a business motive and participant go to the event for business reasons too.
- Business-to-consumer events: participants are invited for a business motive but come for a leisure motive.
- Business-to-employee events: employees are the target audience of the event.

Depending on the objectives of the events, they can be differentiated into several types.

The most common types of corporate events are (Hard, 2018):

- seminars and conferences
- trade shows
- executive retreats and incentive programs
- appreciation events
- company or organization milestones
- team-building events
- product launch events
- board meetings and shareholder meetings

Public events are often centred around the content. That kind of events are organised to entertain participants, for example, a music festival, birthday, sports events and other. According to Kuiper (2015), there are four objectives of public events.

1. Aesthetic objective: the purpose of the event is to show people how attractive it is (arts or cultural events).

2. Idealistic objective (educational/social): this kind of events can be organised in religious, political or social purpose, for instance, demonstration.
3. Entertainment objective: these events are made to entertain people, they usually attract large crowds (funfairs, sports events).
4. Commercial objective: focuses on a commercial or economic purpose (trade shows).

However, objectives can overlap each other in a different event. One particular event can use the entertainment element to encourage visitors to buy something (commercial element) (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

The most common types of public events are:

- Festivals
- Markets and fairs
- Commemorations and ceremonies
- Parades

Today the boundaries between corporate and public events are fading. There are public events which are the platforms for business-to-business events. The example can be the ITB (International Travel Trade Show) where anybody can participate. However, there is a separate day a 'trade day' where tourism professionals meet each other and participate in workshops. Therefore, the central platform is the public event (ITB) but this 'trade day' is a business-to-business event inside it (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

On the other hand, public events take objectives of corporate events by building special areas for sponsors or VIP lounges. For instance, during the Olympic Games and World Football Championships. Organisers of public events are forced to seek for sponsors, and thus public events become a platform for endless commercial activities, for example Tour de France where many sponsors want to advertise their product or service. The public sport marathon is a platform for numerous marketing campaigns.

### **3.2 A brief history of events**

Events were always part of human culture. Celebrations of the birth, the changing of the seasons, moon paces, independence, victories in battles. Humans were marking important events since the dawn of time (Bowdin & al., 2006). From the Chinese New Year to Halloween, from May Day to Christmas, rituals and celebrations were created to mark the important happenings in peoples' lives.

Furthermore, the enthusiasm to spend the leisure time together with the people of the common ideas and views led to the organisation of events on almost every subject and

theme imaginable (Bowdin & al., 2006). Sport events gather together sports lovers, concerts, operas, and ballets gather together the lovers of music and art, scientists create professional events where, for example, the mysteries of our planet are discussed.

Wood (1982) identified the birth of what is now called an event industry with the commercialisation of popular celebrations. Celebrations started to require money for participation and thus meant to use selected elements of the traditional festivities and adapt them to the product of consumption. That is how the fairs started to appear during the holidays. People started to have an opportunity to rest from their working life during celebrations. In 1871 the government made bank holidays lawful and the anniversaries of major historical events played a crucial role in public celebrations (Bowdin & al., 2006). The 1950s and the 1960s shaped events as they look like today. According to McKay (2000) festival culture has its roots in the jazz festivals running by Edward Montagu at Beaulieu Jazz Festivals (1956-1961) and in Harold Pendleton's National Jazz Federation events at Richmond. Those and others jazz festivals in the 1950s and 1960s gave birth for the hippy festivals in the next future (McKay, 2000).

### **3.3 Trends in events**

Events have a long history behind and they evolve and emerge every year. The popularity of experience marketing (marketing through giving consumer an experience moment to make changes in their behaviour) is increasing, and thus new trends in event marketing develop. Through the last year, the technological aspect of the event industry took centre stage. Most of 2017 event trends were trying to merge the real and virtual tools, and these trends are presented in 2018 too. Novel ideas of previous years have become mainstream, for example, events shifted away from the stadiums and came into a pop-ups and other non-traditional locations (Curran, 2017). Following paragraphs highlight five main trends in the event industry in 2018 (Endless Events, 2018).

#### **1. New locations**

In 2018, owners of the venues and event-agencies are cooperating at a higher level than before. Locations of events can no longer just provide space for the event. Now events are an integral part of creating a personalised experience for the client (Curran, 2017). The chosen venue should reflect the company's face, its values, and critical strategies. For example, a company with the image of a fighter for the environment is unlikely to hold an event in the industrial zone.

Ideally, the venue of the event should give an impression immediately, even before the participant arrives there. These include such unique places as, for example, castles and museums. (Bizzabo, 2017)

## 2. The future of technology

It is challenging now to surprise the consumer. If a couple of years ago the advertising robot was the 'main attraction' of any event, now it no longer causes such enthusiasm. Latest technologies should be used to the event success. One of those is artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR). Artificial intelligence played an essential role in the events of the outgoing year, and it is even more popular in 2018 (CWT Meetings & Events, 2017). In addition to devices with artificial intelligence elements built into event venues, visitors have an opportunity to carry the vital information in their pocket, for example, event apps and chat bots for mobile phones (Endless Events, 2018). With VR technologies, virtual participants and virtual speakers can be included. With VR everyone will have an opportunity to participate.

## 3. Social media dictates trends

For any event the quality of the content is necessary, both business and entertainment, technological and situational. Social media continues to dictate trends in the content creation. It is essential to monitor social media trends and skilfully integrate them into the event promotion. (CWT Meetings & Events, 2017).

## 4. Creativity is still in trends

Despite the importance of technologies integration into the events, not all of the companies are ready to use them (Endless Events, 2018). Therefore, quality, creativity, and the 'big idea' of the event are very relevant. A bright idea, thoughtful concept and attention to the details are the keys to the success of any event.

## 5. Safety first

There is a growing demand for better transparency regarding security measures, as security becomes an increasingly important factor in choosing the venue for the event. Location should be safe and there must be qualified security personnel (Endless Events, 2018). This accuracy to the safety question is partly due to the recent terrorist attacks all over the world. Terrorist attacks led to some nervousness for those who organise or attend the event. (Endless Events, 2018)



### 3.4 The strategic use of corporate events

How to use events strategically in a marketing purpose? Is it always possible to use an event in a marketing campaign? What is the event marketing purpose for the companies? There are a couple of significant questions that need to be answered before holding an event for the business purpose (Close & al., 2006).

1. What is the organiser's strategic idea and does it meet the goal and objective of the event?
2. What is the main message to be delivered?
3. Who is the target group?
4. What tools to use to achieve the objective?

**Goal and objective.** Firstly, clear goal and objectives should be formulated to develop a corporate strategy. The objective must be easy to measure. The event should be used as it was meant to use, the idea can be to create a memorable experience, to educate or to build a relationship with the target audience (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

**Message.** The message must be formulated very clearly because a lot of organisational phases comes from it. The objective and a clear message are building a concept of an event. (Hard, 2018)

**Target market.** Another critical question is to understand the needs, interests and values of the target audience (CWT Meetings & Events, 2017). The event should reach the specific target audience. The successful event is measured with the interaction between a target market and the brand (Gupta, 2003).

**Tools to strengthen the message.** When the objective, message and the target audience are set and understood the marketing communication tools need to be integrated in order to add strength the main idea of the event. (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011)

To conclude, before organising any event, it is necessary to set the objectives related to the general marketing policy of the company. First, analysis of the marketing plan should be made. Next, goals and objectives for the event must be set, and the measurement tools discussed. It is necessary to understand whether it is necessary to hold an event, and why it is held. As already noted, the target audience is an essential element that must be considered at the planning stage, and the desired results are directly depended on it. After defining the audience, organiser formulates the key message that he wants to convey. Will this event be a form of gratitude to customers for their loyalty? Is the new product or service going to be introduced? Will it be engaging, educative or amusement event? (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011)

### 3.4.1 Goal setting for corporate events

Like any other marketing campaign, the organisation of a corporate event should begin with goals and objectives setting. The organiser should determine the format of the event and the concept of the program. Goldblatt (2005) suggests the 'five Ws' as essential questions to ask in developing the event concept. These are:

- **Why** is the event being held? The reasons to hold the event. Event importance and expectations.
- **Who** will be in the event? Answer to this question includes stakeholders, media, staff, special guests and the participants.
- **When** will the event be held? Is there enough time for the organisation? All weather and political conditions should be thought through.
- **Where** will the event be staged? The venue should be found in advance and it should meet the needs of the organisers, participants, sponsors and be easy accessible.
- **What** is the event content and idea? The main idea should match the needs, wants desires and expectations of the participants, and must synchronise with the why who, when and where questions of the event.

### 3.4.2 SMART model

A good objective should be formulated regarding the **SMART** (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) model (Doran, 1981). The SMART model allows to summarise all of the available information, establishes acceptable working deadlines, determines the sufficiency of resources, and provides all participants in the process with clear, precise, and specific tasks.

The SMART goal should be **specific**. That increases the possibility of achieving it. When setting a specific goal, the result that are wished to be achieved should be defined precisely (Fresch, 2016). The answer to the following questions can help to formulate a specific goal:

- What is the result do I want to achieve by accomplishing the goal and why?
- Who is involved in fulfilling the goal?
- Are there any restrictions or additional conditions that are necessary to achieve the goal?

The rule always implies one goal – one result. If, when setting a goal, it turned out that as a result several objectives are required to achieve, then the goal should be divided into several goals. (Bouchard, 2017)

The goal must be **measurable**. At the goal setting stage, it is necessary to establish specific criteria for measuring the process of achieving the goal. Answers to the questions above will help in setting a measurable goal (Fresch, 2016):

- When will it be considered that the goal is achieved?
- What indicator will say that the goal is achieved?

- What value should this indicator have in order for the goal to be considered achieved?

**Achievable** goals directly affect the motivation of its performer. The achievability of the goal is determined from personal experience taking into account all available resources and limitations. Restrictions can be temporary resources, investments, work resources, knowledge and experience, and the ability to make decisions of the performer (Fresch, 2016).

To determine the **relevance** of the goal it is essential to understand how the achievement of it will contribute to the company's global strategic objectives. If the company does not receive benefits from the goal, it is considered useless and means a waste of the company's resources. (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

The goal should be limited in **time bounds**. By that means, it should be linked to a particular moment in time or have a deadline (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). The time bounds should be defined with taking into account the possibility of not achieving the goal on time (Bouchard, 2017).

### **3.5 Marketing purpose of events**

Three types of marketing where event marketing can be applied can be highlighted (Gerritsen & Olderen):

- Marketing communication: marketing of product or service through the influence of the visitor's behaviour and knowledge.
- Customer relationship marketing: building relations with the customers and engaging with the community.
- Branding: creating, changing or influencing visitor's association with the brand.

These three types will be described more detailed in the following sub-chapters.

#### **3.5.1 Marketing communication**

Communication term can be used in different concepts. It can be described as a communication between two people, but also communication is the message company want to deliver to the target audience, for example, with the help of the marketing brochure

(Goldblatt, 2005). Events are additionally one of the channels to communicate; thus, events can be discussed through marketing communication model.

Communication goal is to deliver information (message) to the recipient. The simplest communication model is presented in figure 2, where S=sender, M=Message, R=Recipient.

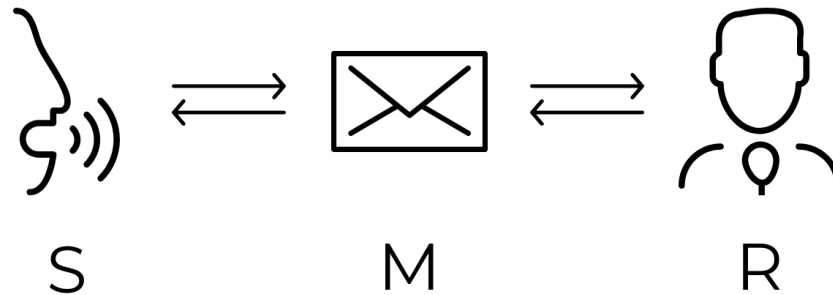


Figure 2. Simple Communication Model (adapted from Berlo D., 1960)

Communication is an interaction between sender and recipient. The model presented above in figure 2 is elementary and straightforward; however, it brings the main idea of communication. Communication connects people through delivering the message. There are different tools to deliver the message (speech, the Internet, the telephone, banner on the street, and other). Events can be considered as one of the tools of communication.

Additionally, it contributes to live communication form. Live communication is an advantageous form of communication, because of several aspects (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011):

- creating experience moments
- building outstanding PR
- promoting a product/service in a different way
- generating attention for the message set
- establishing loyalty with the product or service

When the message cannot be sent through traditional marketing communication channels companies can use events to deliver the message through direct communication and get instant feedback. In figure 3 above events are used as an environment for communication.

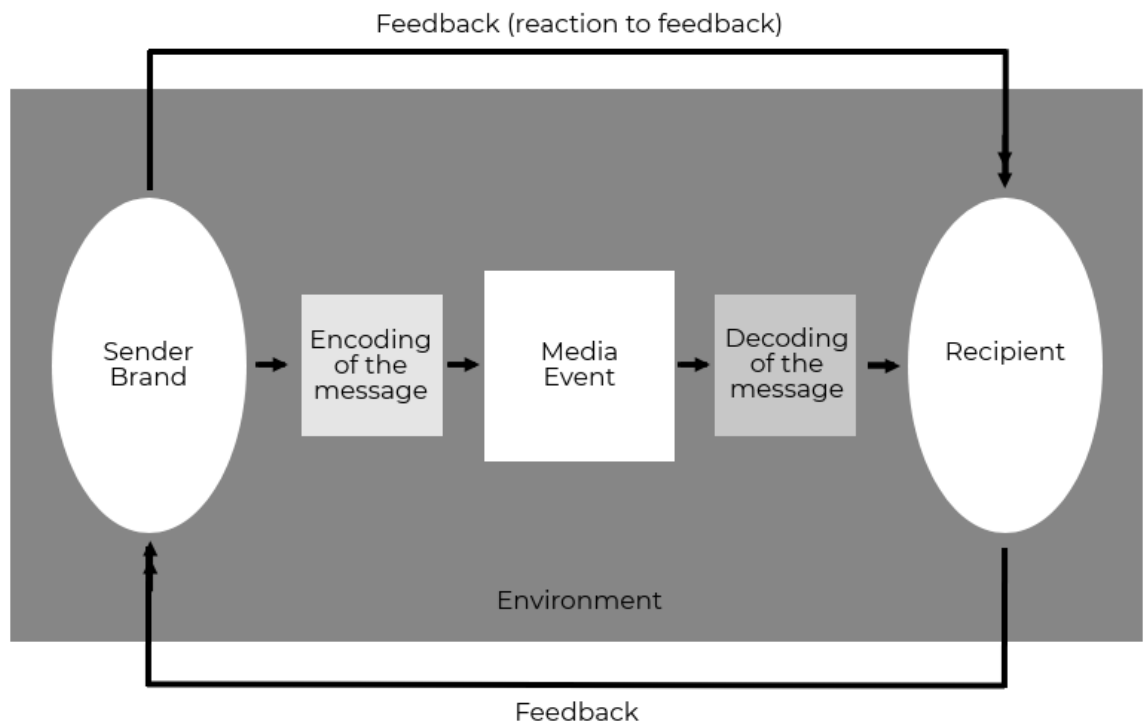


Figure 3. Expanded communication model (adapted from Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011)

The sender (company) wants to send their message to the target group and can choose a different environment (means) to reach them, one of which is the event. The advantage of events is direct communication with the target audience. Moreover, any information 'packaged' in an entertaining form is experienced more emotionally and sensually; therefore, it is better perceived and remembered. Live communication is two-way communication: the sender is encoding the message, and the recipient is decoding it and provides feedback straight away. (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

Five communication approaches can be highlighted with the specific goal for each of them (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011):

- *Information approach*: sharing knowledge with the recipient without purpose to influence.
- *Education approach*: transferring information to affect target group behaviour, decision making and knowledge.
- *Advertising approach*: affecting target group behaviour, decision making and knowledge.
- *Public relations approach*: building a strong understanding between the sender (company/brand) and the recipient (target audience) by strengthening the sender's image.
- *Propaganda approach*: the aim is to convince the audience with a particular idea (one-way communication).

It is clear that events are a perfect and essential platform to communicate with the target audience. There are different messages, approaches and goals that can be reached through event marketing. Events are a significant marketing communication tool. They are means to complete communication goals. Concepts and theme of the event is always a part of its content, for instance, WWDC, annual Apple Worldwide Developers Conference is all about new technologies of Apple; thus, the attendees know what the message is and what to expect from the event. Its content is part of the objective set by the company. Conferences are a significant tool to enter the dialogue between the particular topic. Conferences create communication between communities before, during and after the event. Therefore, the communication is done on the whole another level.

### **3.5.2 Customer relationship**

Companies nowadays are focusing more and more on building and maintaining a long-term relationship with the customers. Engaging with the customers is crucial to gain their respect and increase their loyalty. What can be a way to reach the customers and create a long-lasting relationship with them?

It cannot be denied that social communities are gaining in popularity every day online and offline. People fill a need to get along with the like-minded to share knowledge, experience and discuss the latest project. The perfect platform for this is events. Corporate events gather together people from the same professional sector to form a network, share experience and talk about the latest trends of that particular industry. On another hand, events are a perfect way to build a relationship with the customers. Thus, events are a perfect environment to build a network with customer or for them. (Bowdin & al., 2006)

Marketing moved today from transaction-oriented approach to the one that centres on building relationships. Therefore, the traditional 4Ps Marketing Mix model or 4Ps of Marketing (figure 4) created by McCarthy E. J. (1964) is no longer acceptable in term of the customer relationship. The model presents tangible or intangible 'product' specified for the

specific target audience with the carefully considered 'price' and through the 'promotion' and chosen 'place' delivered to the consumer.



Figure 4. 4Ps of Marketing (adapted from McCarthy, 1964)

4Ps model offers a tactical advantage and can be considered only as a base of nowadays marketing. Talking about relationship marketing the 3Rs model by Storm C. M. (1992) should be discussed (figure 5). It stands for reputation, reciprocity and relationships.

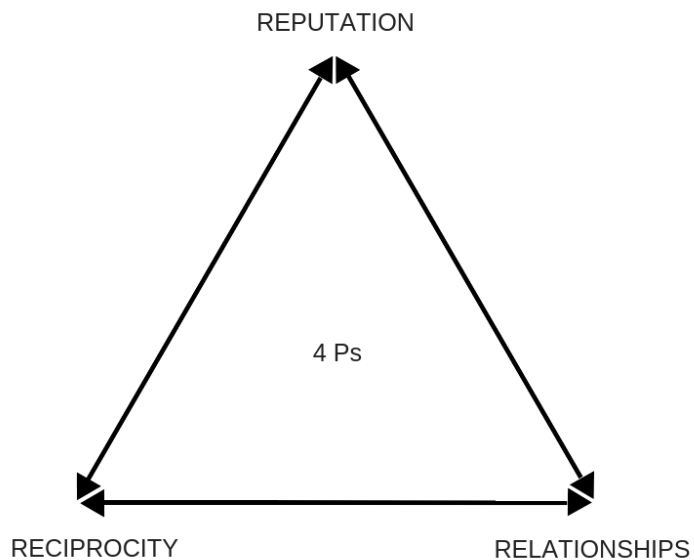


Figure 5. 3Rs (Reputation, reciprocity and relationships) (adapted from Storm, 1992)

The 3Rs stands for real customer relationship operations. The model in figure 5 represents the relationship model between the company and the customer. Reputation is

what people talk about the company both inside and outside. How the company looks like in the eyes of customers, and what image it has. Good reputation attracts more customers, clients and sponsors. Contrariwise, a good relationship does not always come from reputation. As can be seen in the 3Rs model all of the Rs are supplementing and following each other. For instance, the reputation can supervene from relationships. The customer is getting a perfect relationship with the supplier by ordering a product and receiving it on a set date with ideal conditions. The customer is happy and now the reputation has increased. Thus, the relationship is also one of the essential parts of marketing. The interaction created with the customer can be even more critical than the product or service itself. Reciprocity is also a vital part for customer relationships. Even if the reputation and the relationship are perfect, if the company does not give something back to their customers, the business can be endangered in the long term. The exchange must leave a positive impression through communication and therefore confirm the company's reputation. (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

Event is one of the ways to engage with customers and give them a positive impression. Gerritsen D. and Olderen V. R. (2011) define several aspects of using events in customer relationship marketing: showing appreciation to the customers, informing the customers, surprising and motivating customers. Many events are held to show appreciation of the customers. Good relationships always need a 'confirmation' of good relationships (Bowdin & al., 2006). For example, companies can create an entertaining event for their customers or provide them with some discount to partners' events. Those invitations are most of the times informal and bring a positive impression to the customers.

The company can hold an event to confirm reputation by informing the customers. This kind of event is usually formal and gives new information about the product or service to the customers or potential customers. As discussed earlier, one example is WWDC by Apple which gathers together top developers from their company who give talks about latest company's developments.

To show appreciation company can organise an event with the commitment to surprise the customer. The customer should have a feeling that he is exceptional for the company. On a small-scale, it can be a simple newsletter on a customer's birthday, on a large-scale big celebration of a partnership anniversary.

Customer relationship is not primarily focused on sales generation; it is more about motivating the customer for future cooperation. The event can build a strong reputation within the customers. Thus, event motivates customers and builds loyalty (Wood, 1982).



An event must be planned perfectly and must be consistent with the target group, and, on another hand, should represent the company's reputation. Relationship marketing in events can provide a long-lasting impression, set the reputation, create interest and engage with the target group. It is essential to provide people with something memorable, like an event, which will lead to an emotional connection between the company and the customer (Gupta, 2003).

### 3.5.3 Branding

Methods of the marketing communication mix are utilised to build brand equity. As described by the figure 6 below, marketing communication mix consists of six methods: advertising, sales promotion, events and experience, personal selling, direct marketing, public relations and publicity (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Though, a specific method may include a variety of marketing tools, the combination of those compose brand communication mix, because all of them are aimed to change consumer's knowledge of brand and attitude towards it.

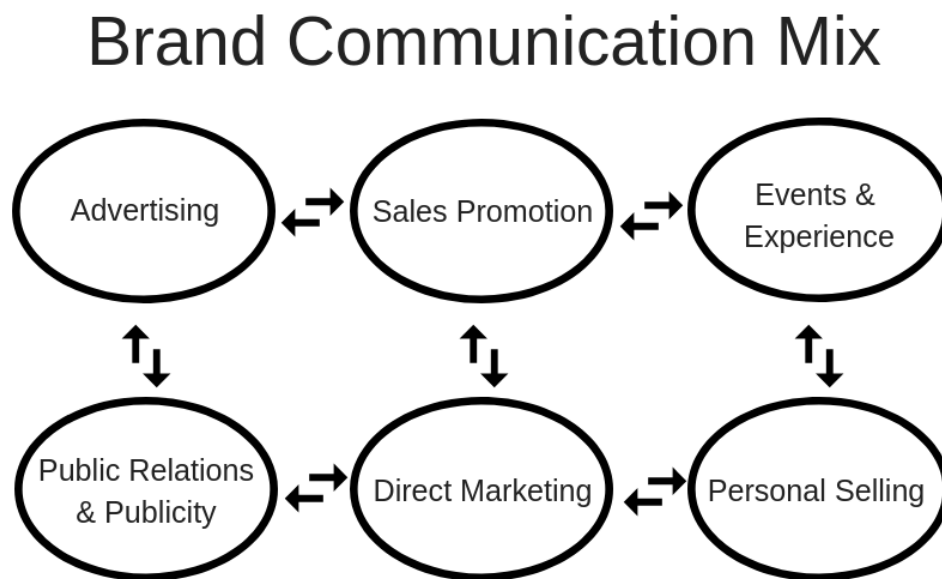


Figure 6. Brand Communication Mix (adapted from Kotler & Keller, 2006)

Events & experiences, in particular, are a vital part of contemporary brand communication mix (Close & al., 2006). They work effectively as a strategic tool to reach various short and long-term goals like sales, product launching, market expansion, and changing customer's awareness and perceived quality. Importantly, since perceived quality and awareness are the main components of brand equity (Aaker, 2013), they are the strategic goals that event marketing is targeting at. Therefore, event marketing builds up brand equity.

Additionally, event marketing is also considered to be a useful tool to strengthen customer's relationships and unite with the community. Event marketing allows customers to experience brands, and thus increases the openness of participants to receive, process and respond to the marketing message.

In the case of the event being organised externally, a way to develop and enhance the brand image is to become a sponsor for that event. It allows for the creation of image transfer, which is described as a way to convey consumers' emotions and associations about the event to the sponsoring brand (Meenaghan, 2001). Image transfer has an influential impact on brand personality. Brand personality is a set of human characteristics and traits that are attributed to a brand, which in turn are relatable to consumers' expectations about the user of the brand (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999).

One of the advantages of event marketing is that it gives the opportunity for customers to participate, interact, gain experience. By this means, that events are creating a brand image. Besides, the event itself creates a networking setting and raises participants' involvement level, making them involved with the brand.

### **3.6 Measurements and analysis**

Organising an event is often regarded as a cost, rather than an investment to achieve a specific goal. However, this view can be changed by correctly measuring the value of the event.

Events have different missions, commonly not including financial profit by themselves. The mission of the anti-cancer society is to reduce the suffering from this disease, and a trade union exists to improve the existing working conditions of its members, a political party exists to influence the ways of managing the life of our society, and so on. Clearly defined objectives and an assessment of the results will lead to higher efficiency and success of the event (Phillips & Phillips, 2007).

ROI is a ratio of the net income to the average capital employed. It is illustrating the level of profitability or loss of business, taking into account the amount of investment made in this business. ROI is usually expressed as a percentage. (Business Dictionary)

According to Bizzabo (2017) 63% of marketing managers plan on investing more in event marketing, 80% of companies that are overperforming in regards to their company goals will increase their event budgets next year. Furthermore, there's a good reason for the industry to be growing, given that business-to-business events account for \$512 billion in

annual spend (Bizzabo, 2017). While companies spend dozens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars on events, many organisations look at the profitability of it. They measure the success of meetings and events. Most of them use following key indicators (Phillips & al., 2008):

- results of direct marketing and promotion in social media networks
- revenue from registrations and/or sponsorships
- number of participants and their level of satisfaction
- number of new potential customers

Most event planners have a great idea of how their event was held. They have several indicators in mind to evaluate its effectiveness and success. However, very few of these indicators have any relation to the effect on the business. The ROI model of Jack J. Phillips (2008) suggests a systematic approach verifying the tangible and intangible values of events. The ROI Methodology stands for (Phillips & Wollenhaupt, 2007):

- Association events with business objectives and marketing strategies of the company
- Reducing costs and increasing the value created by the event
- Demonstration of the value, including direct ROI, to all interested parties
- ROI measurement
- Winning business or reliable financing

Jack Phillips developed ROI methodology at the ROI Institute in the late 1970s. His initial work was based on the Kirkpatrick evaluation model developed by Kirkpatrick D. in the late 1950s. The Kirkpatrick model initially has four levels (1955):

1. Reaction
2. Learning
3. Behaviour
4. Results

Phillips J. (2007) added ROI as the fifth level of the model and later the target audience as the first level of the model (figure 7). Phillips J. (2007) also developed several recommendations and generally made the model more practical and consistent in its application.



Figure 7. ROI pyramid ([www.roiinstitute.net](http://www.roiinstitute.net))

The ROI methodology sets objectives and measures results at six levels, from 0 to 5 (figure 7), where 'ROI' is 5, and 'target audience' is 0. Primarily, objectives are set for level 5, a specific desired ROI or profit from the event, its contribution to the benefits of stakeholders in the case of corporate and business events, or contribution to the mission of a non-profit organisation. (Phillips & al., 2008)

The order of measurement and evaluation of results is performed in reverse, starting from level 0 and proceeds step by step to the very top (Wollenhaupt, 2008). All levels are organised according to the domino principle. If one of them is not thoroughly developed, then it will not be able to contribute to solving the next level tasks. As it was mentioned a clear goal should be set to make valuable measurements. Phillips J. (2008) suggests overlooking each level of the 'pyramid' in two steps. Firstly, setting a goal for each level and then analyse results for all levels separately.

### 3.6.1 Step 1. Goal setting for measurements

In chapter 3 the SMART model was presented as a tool to formulate goal and objectives. Also, it was already discussed in the previous chapter that formulating clear goals and ob-

jectives for the event leads to simplified measurements. Goals setting directly affects effect measurements and evaluations. Figure 8 shows the relationship between goals and effect measurement with the SMART model in the process.

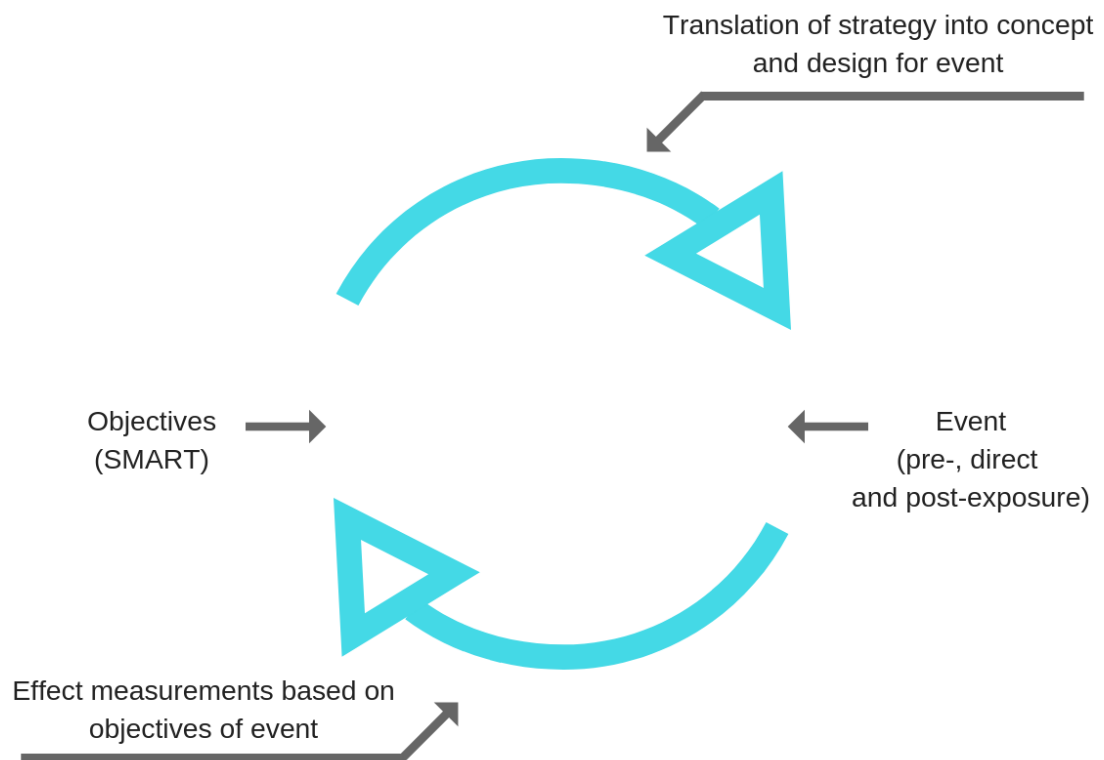


Figure 8. A relationship between objectives and effect measurement (adapted from Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011)

By formulating clear goals and objectives the whole process of the organisation of the event becomes more convenient and meaningful. Phillips J. (2008) method of setting a goal for each of the steps of ROI pyramid (figure 7) should be considered from the view of setting the SMART goals.

Setting goals and objectives start with defining the context of the event, and what role it will play in company's strategy (Phillips & al., 2007). During this stage a specific target audience (level 0) and expected results of the event are determined. The main question at this stage is *how should the target audience behaviour change after the event so that the event can be considered effective* (Phillips & al., 2008).

Level 3 defines expected behaviour. When expected behaviour is set, it is needed to understand to what changes (learning experience) it will lead. Then the learning objectives themselves (level 2) are discussed. Finally, different learning missions will influence the choice of the learning environment, the specific format and content of the event (level 1).

Objectives at each of the six levels can be measured with the establishment of clear success criteria KPI (key performance indicators) in the initial planning stages. KPIs at each level determine what data is needed in order to achieve the objectives.

### **Level 5 – ROI goals**

Event ROI is always a way of expressing the contribution of an event to a company's profits. The profit itself is the net benefit created by the event, minus the costs of the event. ROI is the profit expressed as a percentage (Phillips & al., 2008). Above there is a formula to count the ROI.

$$\text{ROI (\%)} = \frac{\text{Net event benefits}}{\text{Event costs}} \times 100$$

ROI or profit is usually the first planned goal (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). However, for some events, for instance, government events, profit is usually not the primary goal (Phillips & Wollenhaupt, 2007). The central purpose is the mission itself or the political reason for which the organisation exists, and this is the specific mission that replaces ROI (Phillips 2008).

### **Level 4 – goals to measure the impact**

The impact of the event is the primary value for stakeholders. This impact is used in calculating profit or ROI itself. For a business-to-customer event, this effect is usually an increase in sales. For a business-to-business event, this is mostly long-term objectives, for example, future partnership opportunities.

### **Level 3 – goals to measure attendee's behaviour**

What participants should do after the event and why have they not done it yet? Answers to this question are the goals of the event on level 3. However, some actions are easily tracked (for example, buying a particular product), while others are not easy to measure (for instance, branding impacts). (Phillips & al., 2007).

### **Level 2 – goals to measure the quality of education**

What rational changes are needed for participants to change their behaviour? Any change in behaviour (level 3) must be preceded by cognitive changes, new knowledge, and learning (Phillips, 2007). For example, the company wants to increase the number of meeting requests with sales managers after the exhibition. What should participants learn to make such requests? Where is the gap in knowledge? In this case, it makes sense to conduct a

preliminary survey for visitors, using samples of handouts to determine the needs and interests at different levels (Boles & al., 2000).

### **Level 1 – goals to measure the quality of the learning environment**

Can the learning environment be organised so that learning will be more productive? The learning process depends on the mood of a learner, as well as environmental factors (indoor temperature and air quality, teaching method, speaker quality, presentation tools) (Phillips & al., 2008).

### **Level 0 – goals to measure the quality of the target audience**

Finally, how the organisers can be sure that the event is attended by the people they need? Do they have opportunities to apply what they learn? Do they learn anything new that will change their behaviour? Target audience among potential participants are those with the most significant cognitive and behavioural gap. The main principle is not to tell people what they already know, and what they cannot use (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). This focus avoids attracting a wide range of target audience and, as a result, increases the level of event quality. Pre-event survey can help focus attention on individuals with the most significant behavioural and educational gaps (Close & al., 2006).

## **3.6.2 Step 2. Results measurements**

Results are evaluated strictly from level 0 to level 5 of the ROI pyramid using various data collection methods. However, it is important to remember that the tools selected can also potentially affect the quality of the results evaluation. (Phillips & al., 2008)

### **Level 0 – measuring the quality of target audience**

The target audience is an audience that is potentially able to learn something (Level 2) and change something in their behaviour after the event (Phillips & al., 2008). Data for assessing this level can be obtained primarily from the attendees themselves. Primary surveys are used to reach the attendees.

### **Level 1 – measuring quality of learning environment**

Learning environment is measured with the satisfaction of attendees. It is measured with the organiser's warmth, format and content. Did they learn anything new that they would use in their work, did they feel welcome, was the location comfortable, would they recommend this event to their colleagues and other industry companies. (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). These are crucial questions of the participant satisfaction score. However, the satisfaction of the participants is a single indicator, an indirect variable concerning the

objective of the quality of the learning environment, which matters (Phillips, 2007). If a participant is satisfied, this does not mean that he gained the necessary knowledge and skills, that will change his behaviour (Phillips & al., 2008). This indicator only means that the participants enjoyed the event – no more, no less. The best way to measure the quality of the content, a format of the event and learning environment is to have professional in this sphere with a special education (Phillips & Phillips, 2007).

### Level 2 – measuring the quality of learning

Everything that happens during a meeting or an event is a learning element. Elements can be divided into the following categories (Phillips & al., 2008):

- Information
- Skills
- Attitudes
- Relationships

Traditionally information and skills gained are usually measured using tests before and after the event. Nevertheless, tests cannot always be useful in traditional event types, for example, at conferences (Boles & al., 2000). Therefore, there is a faster and easier method of 'self-reporting'. For example, each participant can be asked to indicate his or her level of knowledge and skills before and after a particular session (Phillips & al., 2008).

Formation of attitudes, for example, a change in the perception of a brand, is traditionally measured through independent reporting using the so-called Likert scale (figure 9) when a respondent expresses his level of agreement or disagreement with the insight. (Phillips & al., 2008)

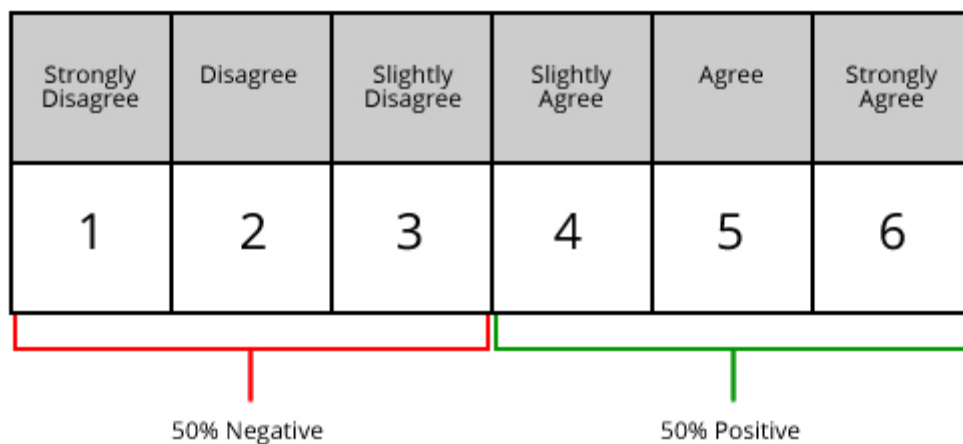


Figure 9. Likert scale (www.fieldboom.com)



Relationships learning refers to building communication between people, getting to know each other, building trust and sympathy (Phillips & al., 2008). If the relationships between attendees are comfortable, the learning process will only increase (Gupta, 2003). This is fundamental for further skill and knowledge development, and the formation of views. Likert scale format can be used or closed questions can be used to measure this (Phillips & Phillips, 2007).

### **Level 3 – measurement of changes in behaviour**

How should the behaviour of the participants change after the event? Behaviour in event marketing is the use of gained learning for the company benefits. Learning without applying results in practice has no value (Phillips & al., 2008). Organisers can give the participant experience with a product, but if he or she does not have the opportunity to apply the newly acquired knowledge or skill, the education was worthless.

Behavioural changes may include the interruption of action, the implementation something in another way, or the implementation of any new action (Gupta, 2003). An easy way to evaluate is the observation, for example, using the 'mysterious customer' method. However, it is expensive and time-consuming. Therefore, again self-reporting with the questionnaire can be used.

### **Level 4 – impact measurements**

The positive impact for the business is always the main reason why the event is held, and it is always measured by the results of changes in the participants' behaviour after it (Kuiper, 2015). As a data collection method company's reports (sales, income and expense reports) can be used. Less accurate data can be obtained based on surveys of participants (Phillips & al., 2008). The impact should not always be material. For example, a conference can be held to increase brand awareness or to generate leads. Marketing impacts were discussed in chapter 3. It is hard to measure those. One of the ways is to check social media engagement rate after the event.

### **Level 5 – ROI measurements**

When the impact of the event is expressed in money, and the total costs of the event are considered, the profit or loss from the event is seen (Phillips & al., 2008). The value of these indicators, expressed as a percentage of costs, is a percentage of ROI. The return is a certain amount of values from the impacts, and the investment is the full cost of the event. The formula for counting ROI was presented at the beginning of chapter 3.

The impact of holding events is measurable; however, it is still often ignored in management reporting (Bizzabo, 2017). Organisers should pay more attention and spend the time to make accurate measurements.

### **3.7 Business value of events**

Understanding the business value of an event is not just ensuring that attendees and event sponsors are satisfied with the results. It is also not true that defining the real purpose of an event is impossible, because purposes and goals are unclear. Also, for that reason, decision-makers cannot come to the consensus over measurable variables. It is correspondingly assumed that developing measurements, reporting and acting upon them regarding business value is time-consuming and costly. (MPI, 2011)

Indeed, the companies that successfully measure the business value of their events focus only on key elements that starts from the objectives they established for different variables (as discussed in the previous sub-chapters). Events may possess numerous purposes and causes; however, only some of them are important business-wise. More importantly, determining sponsors expectations is the principal step in building business value. Firstly, time costs can be reduced by the focus on clear and perceptible objectives. Secondly, tasks should be added gradually in the current workflow. According to MPI report (2011), gradual implementation of measurement strategy allows for sustainable budget planning and, therefore – cost reduction. Successful business value measurement requires (MPI, 2011-2012):

- commitment from the stakeholders (sponsors and organisers)
- appropriate objective setting
- selection of meaningful measurement tools
- insightful analysis and reporting

Following paragraphs will give an overview for each of the components of successful business value.

A failure to receive support from the stakeholders limits the scope of received feedback to attitudes and experiences gained by event participants. It is inadequate, as business value of events measurement requires objective setting aligned with the business expectations of stakeholders. Multiple difficulties corrupt the opportunity of stakeholders' participation, including diversity of agenda between stakeholders, inability to convey an explanation of the measurement value, and belief that stakeholders would reject additional responsibility.

The solution is to understand the best practices of business value measurement, required time and money, and desired outcomes. Though the practices may vary, they are characterised by proper definition of purposes, appropriate measures, and limited, but specific objectives (MPI, 2011). Concerning time, focusing on a smaller range of practices helps to reduce the time spent. Equally, the limiting of the scope of practices decreases associated costs. Since stakeholders would be uncertain to support initiatives with indefinite results, it is crucial to establish beneficial outcomes, which, among others, include lowered costs and losses (regarding unnecessary expenses), better operational decisions, and participant's experience (MPI, 2011).

How to set goals and objectives for the event and importance of it was discussed in chapter 3, and sub-chapter 3.6 presented the goal setting for measurements. From the view of business values lack of complete objectives also removes the basis for rational event performance evaluation. Since objectives may differentiate and compete, gaining stakeholder consensus is difficult and is not as relevant as receiving stakeholder commitment. Instead of defining general objectives, it is necessary to start with relevant measures to receive stakeholder support upfront and then mutually contribute to the objective establishment.

Next component of successful business value measurements are the tools to measure. A variety of measures and tools exists dedicated to helping in building the understanding of the event's performance. However, online survey services act as proven industry standards accepted widely by professionals (MPI, 2012). When determining the best measures, it is vital to research existing resources, internal, consisting of sales, expense, and customers' satisfaction reports. External are the following: comprised of third-party research, consultancy services, and online survey systems.

Two measurement types exist to supplement selected resources: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative measures provide an understanding of amounts, degrees and ranks by utilising satisfaction scales, agreement levels and selective choices (Creswell, 2013). However, quantitative measures provide a reasonable explanation of motives and expected outcomes (CWT, 2017). For that reasons, it is essential to obtain qualitative information that allows for subjective analysis of quantitative information received. Successful qualitative analysis helps for substantial time and experience commitment. In return, it rewards with the ability to understand causes and effects, and details that constitute success or a failure, thus providing guidance to increase business value.

The last element is an insightful analysis and reporting. This component needs to show beneficial opportunities that would motivate undertaking action to achieve a more significant business value of an event. Data analysis typically consists of three forms: visual, subjective and statistical (MPI, 2012). Quantitative data is summarised and presented in a visual way of graphs and charts (Creswell, 2013) and it may be misleading without subjective analysis. Subjective analysis requires the use of quantitative and qualitative data together. Therefore, in addition to visual analysis, it is crucial to evaluate emerging patterns that are not represented visually. Statistical analysis requires additional training and knowledge of mathematical models to estimate relationships between quantitative data outlets (MPI 2012).

Reporting must be provided in an accessible and usable way. Therefore, recipients of the report may need multiple access channels, like webinars, documents, and handouts. Whether it is a textual description, verbal explanation, or visual representation – various types of data, due to personal preferences, affect the attentiveness and comprehension of stakeholders in different ways. A successful report includes a clear, reasonable, and data-backed call to action. (MPI, 2011-2012)

## 4 Thesis research design and methods

This chapter presents the methodology of the research by explaining the quantitative approach used during the research process. Then the data collection method is described, and it is explained why I have chosen those methods. The last sub-chapter cover the validity and reliability of the research.

### 4.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is one of the methods to gather information for the research. Purpose of quantitative research is to examine the relationship between variables or characteristics (Creswell, 2013). There are three kinds of variables (Franses & Paap, 2001):

- Independent (characteristics which are manipulated by the researcher)
- Dependent (characteristics impacted by independent variable)
- Extraneous (extra characteristics: age, gender, race, demographic information)

In quantitative research, the researcher uses hypotheses and predictions about what will happen at the end of the study.

The data for quantitative research is in the form of numbers. The data comes from different instruments, such as surveys, observational checklists, questioners, and other. Qualitative research looks for 'words' when quantitative looks for 'numbers' (Franses & Paap, 2001). Quantitative research analysis involves the use of statistics to crunch the numbers and figure out what those numbers mean regarding answering research questions (Creswell, 2013). Quantitative research is usually deductive. Data is formed with use of theory or established views. The final report most of the times consist of statistical information (graphs and rates).

Quantitative research is familiar to be used to understand how large groups of visitors experienced the event and what was the effect (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). Surveys are mostly used after an event; however, theories also suggest to conduct research before an event. It will give an overview of expected and gained results. Moreover, surveys and tests before the event can help to measure the quality of the participant's learning.

Quantitative research is most commonly used for event marketing analysis, that is why I decided to use it too. Furthermore, with the significant number of people as in events, it is time-consuming and more effective to use quantitative research.

## 4.2 Data Collection

As a data collection method, I will use survey for the participants of the MBLT DEV 2018. Survey results can be applied to several types of impact measurements.

The survey is the most common tool for event's effect measurements (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011). Surveys have been used during the last year MBLT DEV conference, where I was one of the organisers. However, last year survey results did not sufficiently respond to the effect measurements. Therefore, this year I prepared a survey before the event, and together with the marketing team discussed the goals of the expected measurements results.

The survey is designed with several types of questions and scaling methods: Likert's scale in figure 9 and Guttman scale (figure 10) method (Stouffer & al., 1950). Also, open-ended and closed-ended questions were used.

Response pattern	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5
1	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	0	0	0	0
3	1	1	0	0	0
4	1	1	1	0	0
5	1	1	1	1	0
6	1	1	1	1	1

Figure 10. An example of a Guttman scale of five items ([www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net))

In an open-ended question, respondent needs to produce the answer himself, while in closed-ended he can choose from possible answers given (Franses & Paap, 2001). Likert's method is an ordinary ranking scale method, and Guttman scale provides a respondent with a statement of 'yes' and 'no' options (Gerritsen & van Olderen, 2011).

It is vital to group questions because they should be asked in a set logical order and do not irritate the respondent. The tunnelling technique may be useful: it starts with the most important for the research questions and ends with general questions. A survey should be short; otherwise, people will not want to spend their time on it, and there will be fewer responses.

The questions for the survey are created with the help of Jack Phillips (2008) model. The questions are grouped with the first four levels suggested by Phillips. Before the survey design, the goal for each of the stages was discussed.

The data was collected after the MBLT DEV 2018 Conference. The newsletter was sent to all participants after the event (28 September 2018). The newsletter included the survey link, created in surveymonkey.com online survey constructor. The survey was designed with the template of the last year surveys for the same event; however, I added some new question to make clear measurements. The survey was written in Russian, 11 translated questions are presented in appendix 1. The survey contains open-ended and close-ended questions, rating (or Likert Scale) questions, multiple choice, and choose all that apply questions.

### **4.3 Validity and reliability**

Validity and reliability are essential parts of research, and the terms are widely accepted in the social sciences. The terms can seem synonymous; however, there are very different meanings from the view of the evaluation of measures (Bryman & Bell 2011, p.156). Reliability and validity may be valued separately, but they closely relate to each other. Validity reasons reliability; thus, the unreliable measure cannot be valid (Sachdeva 2009, p. 70). In another word, validity and reliability are complementary parts of research.

Research validity is a principle that determines the accuracy of a measurement. Validity defines the stability of a measurement tool (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Validity specifies whether variable measures what is supposed to measure. For analysis of validity, several categories were developed. Following paragraphs will describe commonly used categories.

*Construct validity* establishes that the test is measuring the construct it claims on measuring. Term construct concerning testing and construct validity is something that happens in the brain, for example, level of emotion or skill (Stephanie, 2014). Sub-types: *convergent validity*, *discriminant validity*. In construct validity the research measurement tool is constructed with the theoretical framework. The research is testing hypotheses from the theory. The survey for this research was constructed with the base presented in the theoretical framework of the thesis. Therefore the research revers and check the hypotheses discussed in previous chapters.

Another category is *criterion-related validity*. It implies how well one measure predicts an outcome for another measure. There are three types of criterion-related validity (predictive validity, concurrent validity, postdictive validity) (Dimitrov & Rumrill, 2003). Criterion-re-

lated validity of this research refers to the fact that in the survey two questions corresponding to almost the same feature are asked in two different types of question, for example, open-ended question type and Likert scale question type.

*Content validity* indicates if the research is matching with the content. Designed data collection method should measure what is actually needs to measure. From the content validity, internal validity should be measured. *Internal validity* means compliance between the measurements and the research goal. For example, Internal validity is high when all of the questions in the survey are measuring what they are supposed to measure (the goal of the research). On another hand, when questions are measuring some insignificant for the research variables – internal validity is low. The survey for this research was designed after the goal and objectives of the research were set. Moreover, the goal of the research met the goal of the organisers of the MBLT DEV 2018, that is why all of the designed questions correlate to the content of the research.

*External validity* answers the question: can the research be applied to the real world? It also examines if the research can be done with another examinee, for example, different target group (Dimitrov & Rumrill, 2003). External validity of this research can be observed from the view that the survey is designed based on the theory for measuring the effects of the event; thus, this survey with small changes can be used for other events. *Sampling validity* is used to measure how well the research covers all of the areas it is supposed to cover. One of the methods to measure sampling validity is to group survey's question the same measuring rate. The survey questions of this research are grouped based on the Phillips J (2008) ROI pyramid presented in chapter 3.

Research reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the research results. Reliable research findings should be repeatable. Internal reliability is a measure of how well research is measuring what it supposed to measure (Stephanie, 2016). External reliability means that the research or measure can be used with other circumstances, for example, with the different target group. In order to produce correlating scores in this research multiple indicators were used. By that means, that the questionnaire was designed with a sampling method and almost the same question was asked twice using the different question type. For example the question number 6 of the survey (appendix 1) groups all of the crucial indicators of the quality of the learning environment at the conference. Besides, question number 5 asks about the overall satisfaction level of the event's organisation.



## **5 Research findings**

Research findings section contributes to the presentation of the MBLT DEV 2018 and analysis of the event effects. The summary of the event is done according to the theoretical framework. Marketing effects are observed from the marketing communication, marketing relationships and branding views. Additionally, the analysis of the participants' survey is done to complete the marketing effects and business value of the event.

The analysis of the survey presents the event from the view of participants and gives organisers a clear view of the event success. Analysis of the survey is separated according to the ROI pyramid by J. Phillips (2008) levels presented in chapter 3.

### **5.1 The MBLT DEV 2018 overview**

The first stage of the research is to analyse the MBLT DEV 2018 event type and classification, goals, objectives, marketing purposes and make a SWOT analysis. This part of the research is done with the help of the theoretical framework of this thesis, own knowledge gained through studies in Haaga-Helia UAS and communication with the marketing team of the e-Legion, the organisers of annual MBLT DEV. Moreover, some data collected from the attendees' survey is used in this chapter.

Briefly, the MBLT DEV 2018 is a corporate event, involving two categories of corporate event types; it can be considered as both business-to-business and business-to-customers kind of event. The MBLT DEV 2018 is a conference type of event. The MBLT DEV 2018 was a 5th mobile developers conference, organised by e-Legion. This conference is a pioneer in Russian conferences for developers, it has a long history, and most of the community is aware of its existence. Figure 11 below stands for MBLT DEV 2018 SWOT analysis.

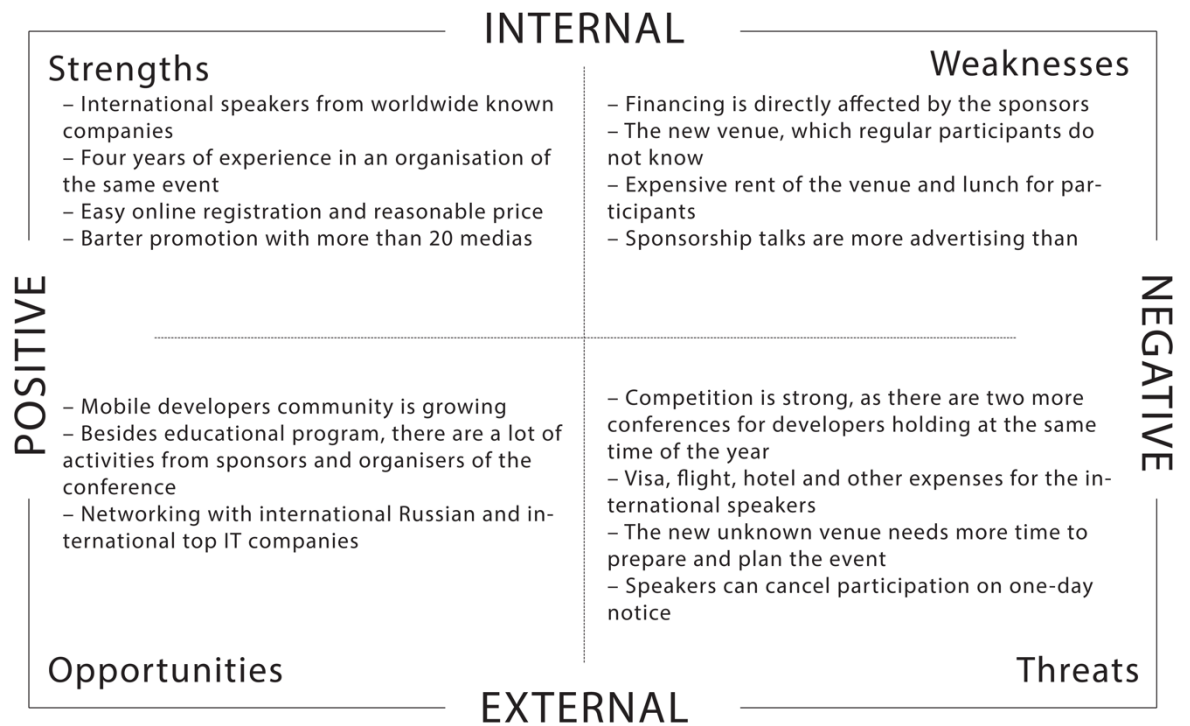


Figure 11. SWOT MBLT DEV 2018

To understand the strategic use of the MBLT DEV 2018, goal, message, and target group should be discussed. Strategic idea is to increase the level of engagement between the company e-Legion and the mobile development community by providing the target audience of the event with the up to date trends, tools and studies. Engagement level increases awareness and loyalty of the brand, builds good associations and opinions about the company. The goal of the Conference is *to educate and share the knowledge with the professional mobile developers' community*. So the objectives are:

- Create a perfect learning environment for participants.
- Provide participants with learning tools, which they can use after the event.
- Create informal working and networking environment to make a new connection within the community.

The message of the International Mobile Developers MBLT DEV 2018 Conference is to unite iOS & Android developers, QA engineers, tech and team leads, product owners and other professionals to learn together, share own knowledge and network.

The primary target audience of the MBLT DEV 2018 Conference includes Mobile Developers, QA (Quality Assurance) Engineers, CIO's (Chief Information Officer), CTO's (Chief Technology Officer), Heads of Mobile Departments, Top-Management of IT companies. It is mentioned in chapter 2 that e-Legion is a business-to-business company, and from the conference, the company is directly interested only in Top-Management and Heads of Mobile Departments attendees. Therefore, the target audience of e-Legion is

only half of the MBLT DEV's target audience, and it is only 31% of the participant (figure 12).

## Attendees of the MBLT DEV 2018

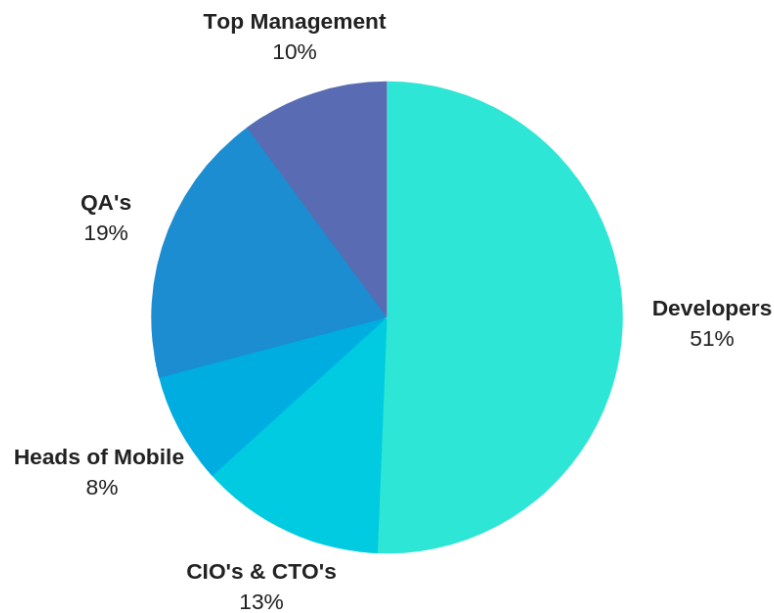


Figure 12. Attendees of the MBLT DEV 2018 (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

### 5.2 Marketing effects of the MBLT DEV 2018

Chapter 3.5 represents three types of marketing where an event can be applied: marketing communication, customer relationship marketing and branding. Following sub-chapters overview the MBLT DEV 2018 Conference from each of the effects.

#### 5.2.1 Marketing communication

As it was mentioned the message of the MBLT DEV 2018 is to connect people from mobile development with each other to learn and share knowledge. The event can be considered as a marketing communication tool that has an educational approach. The MBLT DEV 2018 is a perfect environment to deliver a message and to generate attention for the message. By creating an experienced moment, the MBLT DEV 2018 and the organiser company create a positive memory in the minds of the target audience. Thus, the message will stay and make changes in the audience minds.

e-Legion as an organiser can engage within the MBLT DEV 2018 with the whole IT community and can communicate with them and share the experience. Additionally, communication is done before, during and after the event. There were 26 media partners of the MBLT DEV 2018 who wrote press-releases, posted in social media, placed banners, and send newsletters. Other partners and sponsors of the conference also mentioned the event and the organisation company in social media posts. The graph in figure 13 shows an overview of a total reached people on the MBLT DEV Facebook page in the period before and after the event.

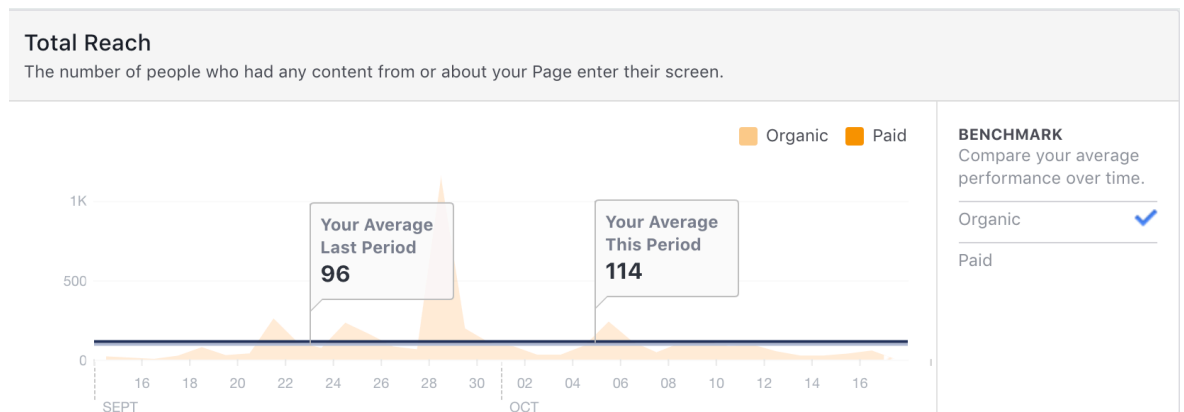


Figure 13. Total Reach of the MBLT DEV page (www.facebook.com)

The period on the graph shows two weeks before the conference and one and a half week after. Paid campaigns are excluded from the graph. The peak of the reached people is on the actual day of the event (28 September); however, the average amount of people reached after the event is more than before the event. From this, we can conclude that the event reached a satisfying amount of people. Post marketing will give an opportunity to communicate more with the community and will lead to more interest on the next year MBLT DEV. Moreover, the number of followers on the page has also increased after the event (figure 14).

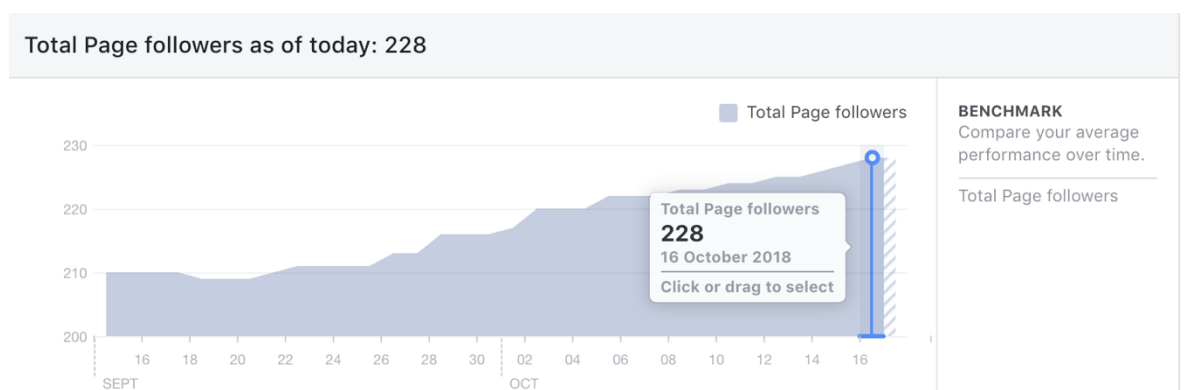


Figure 14. MBLT DEV's page followers (www.facebook.com)

The overview of e-Legion Facebook page is presented in figure 15. It can be seen that from the period before and after the actual event, e-Legion's Facebook page views increased by 650%.

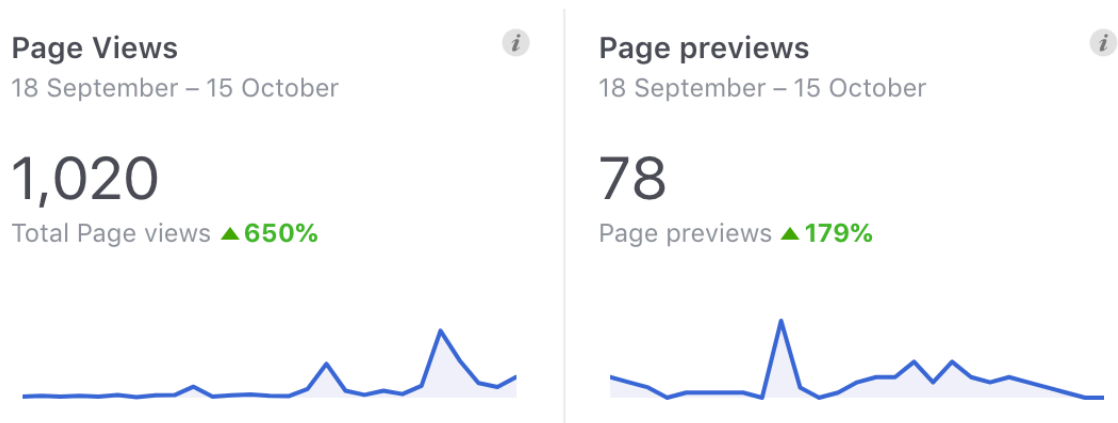


Figure 15. e-Legion page insights (www.facebook.com)

### 5.2.2 Customer relationship

It was mentioned that the target audience of the MBLT DEV 2018 doesn't entirely meet the target audience of e-Legion as a business. It can be considered that e-Legion is using MBLT DEV 2018 to inform and engage with their customers. Besides, the conference is used to confirm the reputation of the organisation by showing the level of involvement in the industry.

From the 3Rs model (Storm, 1992) presented in figure 5 in chapter 3 reputation, relationships, and reciprocity are the main pillars of creating a long-term and trustful relationship with the customers.

The MBLT DEV 2018 created an excellent reputation for e-Legion, as the potential customers see the participation of the company in the future of the industry. Potential customers do not need to participate in the event; they can see the news about the event in professional media or, for example, hear about it from the employees who attended. Roman Beloded, the CEO of e-Legion Ltd., said that MBLT DEV helps him to connect or "make a connection possible" with the top IT-companies in Russia (e-Legion Ltd., 2017). Roman always participates in the MBLT DEV Conferences, and he is the one who says the welcome speech. When it is possible, he organises the meeting with the potential client during the event by giving him free ticket. With this, he is showing how his company impacts the industry.

Therefore, reputation is building and relationships improving with a live communication during the event. Finally, the reciprocity is expressed by giving the community the opportunity to learn. Subsequently, that is how the total 3Rs 'triangle' of customer relationships closes within the MBLT DEV event.

To conclude the MBLT DEV 2018 has provided potential customers with a long-lasting impression, set the reputation of the company and the event itself. The MBLT DEV 2018 has set an emotional connection between the company and the customers. The IT community knows about the event. They know what was going on there and who were the presenters. The conference has built a platform for networking, sharing knowledge and learning the latest trends and tools within the mobile development.

### **5.2.3 Branding**

The MBLT DEV 2018 is an event organised by e-Legion mobile development company, and the organisers are trying their best so that each of the participant will know about the company.

First of all, the logo of e-Legion with an active link was on the MBLT DEV 2018 webpage. The organiser was mentioned on all newsletters and media partner's post releases and social media posts. Also, the logo was duplicated on all screens at the conference venue, on the participants badges and badges ribbons, and on the main stage screen.

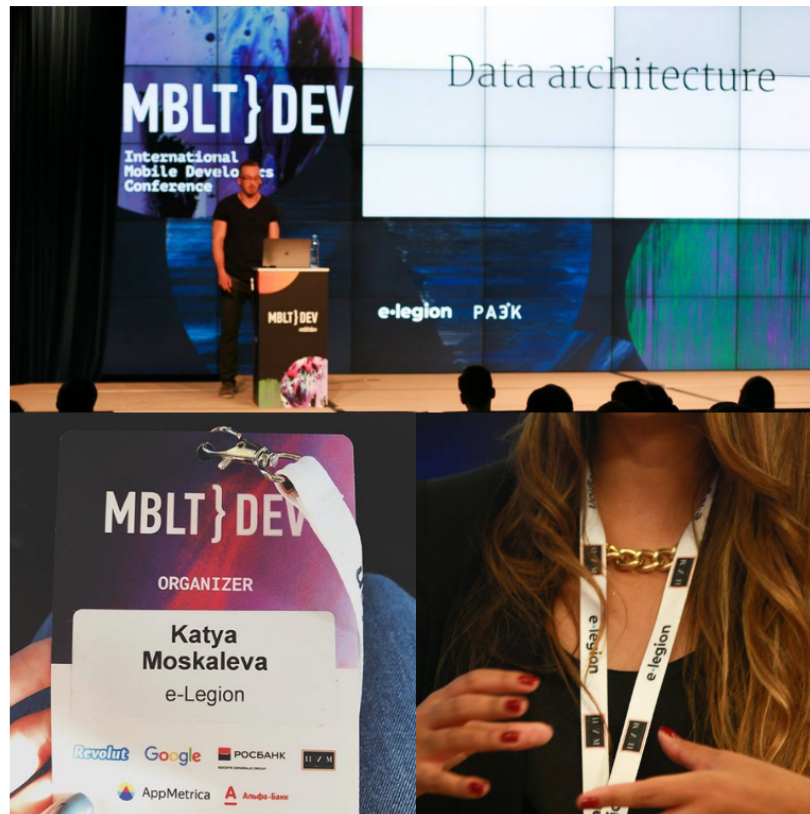


Figure 16. Photos from the MBLT DEV 2018 (www.facebook.com)

From the photos taken by the participants in figure 16, it can be seen that the logo of e-Legion was everywhere. Therefore, the awareness of the brand e-Legion was set. Moreover, CEO of the e-Legion gave a welcoming speech together with the marketing team. Employees of the company took a visible part on the organisation of the event by that growing company's brand awareness. This year there was one speaker from e-Legion presenting on the main stage. Also, two other e-Legion's developers were presenters in the facility halls. Additionally, e-Legion organised two quizzes for the developers during the event with gifts for the participants. All of the employees participating in the program have mentioned that they are from e-Legion.

To conclude, the MBLT DEV 2018 gave an ability for the professional community to participate, gain experience and create a brand image of the brand, who was preparing the event. The MBLT DEV 2018 is a big project of e-Legion, and the participants are involved in it. Thus, participants feel the connection with the brand. Furthermore, it can be considered that the community has met the brand of e-Legion within the MBLT DEV 2018 event. The conference is creating a 'bridge' between the community and e-Legion. Participants got to know e-Legion brand with the help of the event.

### **5.3 Analysis of the MBLT DEV 2018 effects with the Phillips J. approach**

Ph.D., Chairman in ROI Institute Jack Phillips (2008) suggested an approach to measure effects of events and meetings. The theory of this approach is presented in chapter 3.6. The ROI methodology of Phillips J. (2008) sets objectives and measures results at six levels, from 0 to 5 (figure 7): target audience, learning environment, learning, behaviour, impact, ROI. This chapter will analyse the MBLT DEV 2018 conference according to each level of the 'pyramid'.

Goals should be set for each of the levels for the measurement of the effects. Goals and expected results were discussed together with the marketing team of e-Legion. In the following subchapter, the analysis of the effects with set goals is discussed. Subchapters are divided to the levels suggested by Phillips J. (2008). Answers to the post-event survey are used to analyse the effects. Out of 600 participants 267 respondents answered the survey; thus, the average response rate for a post-event survey was 44,5%. This can be considered as a good percentage to measure the effect. However, in chapter 6 some suggestions will be covered to increase the level of response rate for the next conference.

#### **5.3.1 Level 0. Target audience**

Chapter 5 starts with an overview of the MBLT DEV 2018 event. It was discussed that organisers highlight Mobile Developers, QA (Quality Assurance) Engineers, CIO's, CTO's, Heads of Mobile Departments, and Top-Management of IT companies as a primary target audience. The goal of the event is to educate and share the knowledge with the professional mobile developers' community; thus, the potential participants are those with the most significant learning and behavioural gap.

Therefore, the goal of the event target audience was to get more mobile developers, preferably with, so-called, Middle and Senior level of experience. The topics covered on the conference, are not entirely meant for the developers just starting their career; thus, the primary target audience is more experienced developers. Goal of the MBLT DEV 2018 is to have 65% Mobile Developers (including QA Engineers) at the conference.

It should be mentioned that for the sponsors it is crucial to reach this target audience. Sponsors of the MBLT DEV events are usually well-known IT Companies (Google, Facebook, Revolut, Appmetrica) or companies that affect the mobile development industry (Russian banks, social media platforms, educational organisations). Sponsors packages include logo placing, venue stands, tickets and so on. Additionally, the sponsor's company can suggest their speaker. Therefore, those companies with the help of the MBLT DEV



2018 want to reach their customers in that particular (mobile development) community. That is why the business value of the event can be measured with the reach of proper target audience.

## Attendees of the MBLT DEV 2018

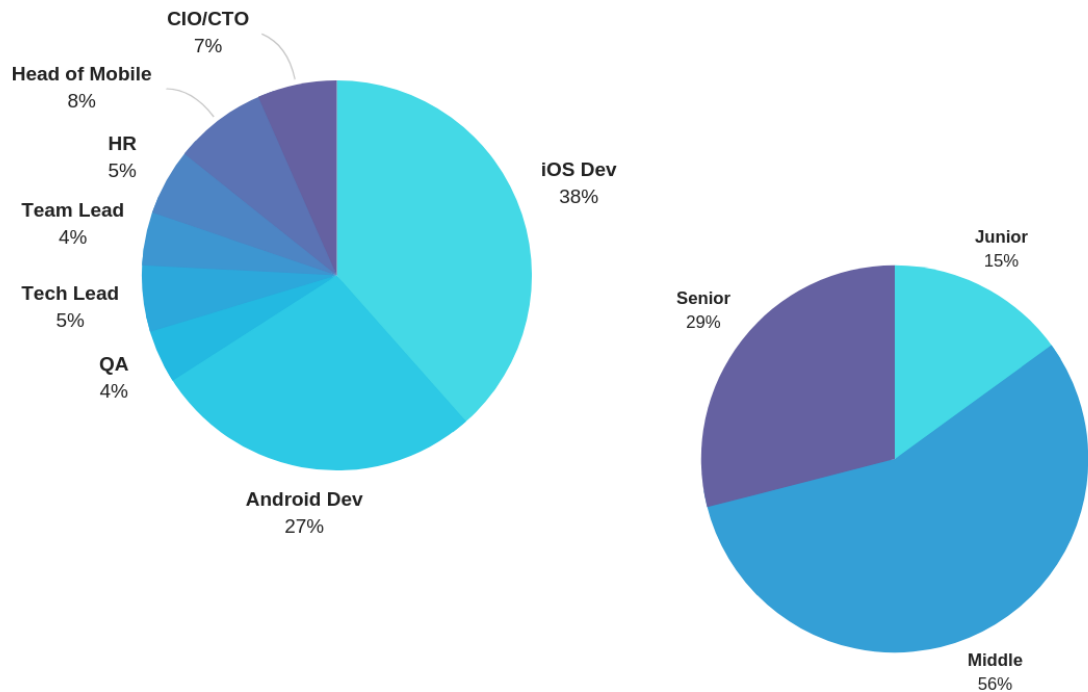


Figure 17. Attendees occupation (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

Figure 17 stands for the results of the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event survey for the question about occupation and an additional question only for developers about their experience level. It can be seen that the majority of the attendees were iOS and Android Developers, overall mobile developers. The percentage of mobile developers together with QA Engineers is 69% as seen in the left graph in figure 17. Hence, the goal of 65% of the targeted audience was achieved.

The graph on the left in figure 17 stands for the level of experience of the largest target group (developers). Only 15% of the developers responded to the survey are on the low level of experience. Contrary, 85% of the respondent consider themselves in the Middle or Senior level. That result can be considered sufficient for the organisers of the event. By that means the target audience was reached through the marketing pre-event campaigns. Additionally, figure 18 stands for how people got to know about the event.

## How did you first hear about the conference?

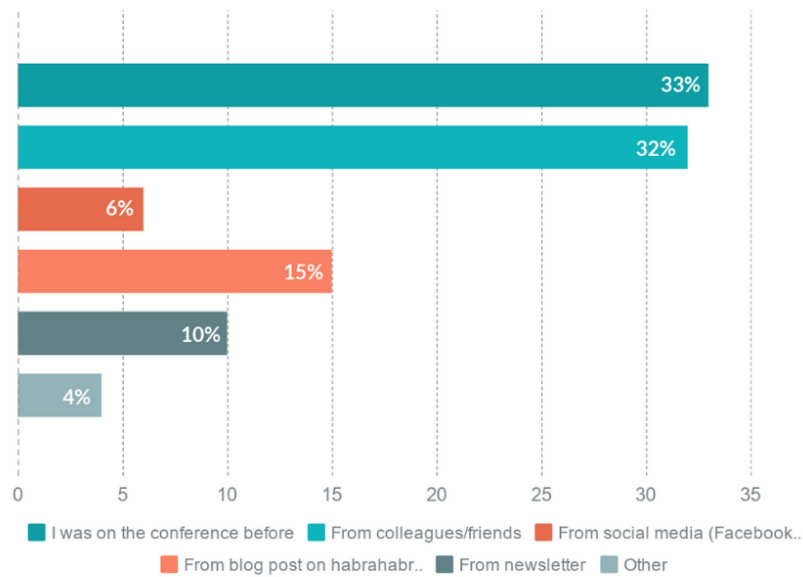


Figure 18. How attendees hear about the event (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

It can be settled that the target audience goal was achieved and the expected audience was reached. Moreover, it is fascinating to see that many attendees (33% of the responses) came to the conference again and 32% of the respondent heard about the event from the colleagues and friends. The marketing communication channels such as social media and blogging brought 25% of the participants to the conference.

Figure 18 can also be considered from the view of the marketing. It is good that people come back and talk about the event with colleagues and friends from the aspect of customer relationship and branding. Besides, it can be considered as a solid event reputation. The MBLT DEV is an annual event and this year result of the 33% of people, who came to the conference because they participated before is a successful consequence. Hence, the reliable reputation of the MBLT DEV led to a strong relationship with e-Legion. Moreover, brand awareness of the event directly affected the brand awareness of e-Legion. The photos in figure 16 shows that the vital branding element of the conference is including the company's logo throughout the venue.

### 5.3.2 Level 1. Learning environment

One of the objectives of the MBLT DEV 2018 is to educate. That is why the quality of the learning environment should be measured; thus, the satisfaction level of the participants

will be seen. This year the MBLT DEV was held in the new venue, unknown by the organisers and the regular participants. Therefore, the goal on this level of the ROI pyramid was to gain the score of at least rate 4 of overall satisfaction rate of the learning environment.

The survey includes two questions addressed to this level: one about the conference organisation overall (Likert scale from 1-5) and another question designed as a table with five possible answers of satisfaction level to each of the patterns (Guttman scale). Patterns are lunch, speaker panel, session content, seating, discussion zones, quiz. The question design can be seen in appendix 1. The results of those questions can be observed in figure 19 and 20.

Rating Score	Number of responses	Score total
1	8	8
2	17	34
3	35	105
4	92	368
5	145	725
Total:	297	1240
Average score:	4,18	

Figure 19. Attendees satisfaction rate (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

Figure 19 shows the average score for a question about the overall organisation of the MBLT DEV 2018. The average is 4,18 which is accomplishment result for the goal set. However, to that score it is needed to add the results of another question presented in figure 20.

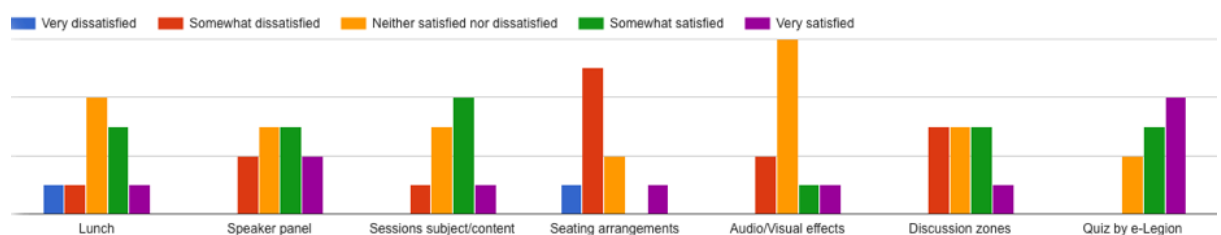


Figure 20. Attendees satisfaction level for different characteristics (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

As it was mentioned, the second question of learning environment group covered seven patterns, which were considered by organisers as central aspects of a learning environment. Discussion zones and quiz by e-Legion were innovations for this year conference; thus, it was significant to understand how the participants liked them or not. Generally, it

can be seen that on the highest level 'very dissatisfied' and 'somewhat dissatisfied' respondents were with the seating arrangements and discussion zones. Quiz, speaker panel, and sessions content can be considered overall 'somewhat satisfied'. Lunch and audio/visual effects were measured by the respondents neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Overall, the goals for learning environment were reached. Satisfaction level of participants is high. Innovations were rated well with the average points of 3,2 for quiz and 3,1 for discussion zone.

### **5.3.3 Level 2. Learning**

The quality of learning is hard to measure, especially for the conference (Phillips & al., 2008). However, to reach the primary goal to educate the participants of the conference the learning quality should be measured. So, the goal for level 2 (learning) is – 69% of participants will be able to use learned tools in their work.

As discussed in sub-chapter 3.6.2, to measure the quality of learning 'self-reporting', tests before and after the event, and questions about the learning rate in the surveys can be used.

This year one of the conference's partners conducted small test for 50 selected attendees. Questions covered six talks presented during the conference. Participants of the test were asked to answer the question about particular tool mentioned in the particular talk before and the same question after the talk. The partner's company agreed to give me results of some of the question, where we can see that the level of learning is increased and most of the correct answers were done after the talks (figure 21): only 13% in average gave correct answers before the talk, and 61% learned the actual right answer after.

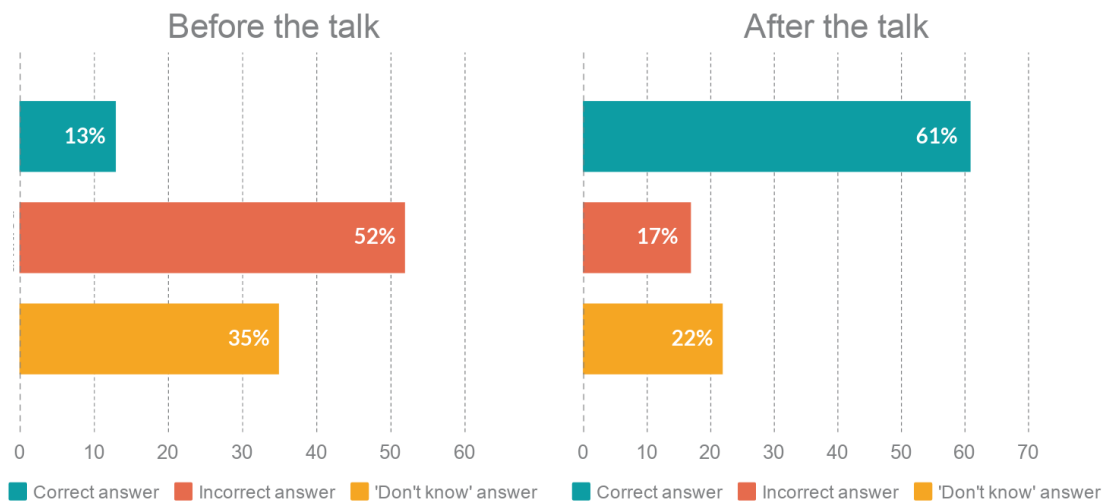


Figure 21. The average rate for participants learning quality (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 during event tests made by Revolut, 2018)

Unfortunately, this year there were not enough recourses to prepare tests before and after the event to understand the quality of learning. From the sponsor’s test, we can see that the talk was beneficial and participants gained some learnings. From one of the questions from the survey (figure 22), we can see that 43% of respondents are sure that they can use new tools in their work. 35% answered that ‘maybe’ they can use the new information in their work life.

### Did you learn actionable information that will help you in your work life?

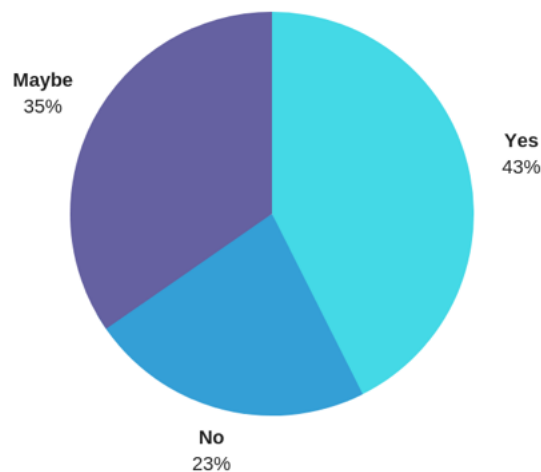


Figure 22. The quality of learned information (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

To conclude, the goal of 69% of participants who will be able to use gained studies is not reached according to the survey results. However, this data is not enough to estimate the

quality of learning. This result of 43% of respondents who said 'yes' can be estimated as a reasonable result, but not the goal result. As it was already mentioned before, the respondents of the survey are only half of the participants. This fact leads us to even less belief in the data gained. Organisers should use more tools to estimate the quality of the learning because the primary goal of the MBLT DEV is to educate.

### 5.3.4 Level 3. Behaviour

Gained learning should lead to changes in the behaviour. There were two goals set for level 3 of ROI pyramid (behaviour):

- 40% of participants will be willing to come for the MBLT DEV next year
- Willingness to invite friends or colleagues should be on a rate 3,5

Question number 9 of the survey is a closed-ended question designed to estimate the percentage of the participants' willingness to come for the MBLT DEV 2019. According to the result presented in figure 23 only 9% can be considered disappointed about the conference and for sure do not want to return next year. However, 36% are willing to come again, and more than half of the respondents (55%) answered 'maybe'.

How likely are you going to attend the MBLT DEV 2019?

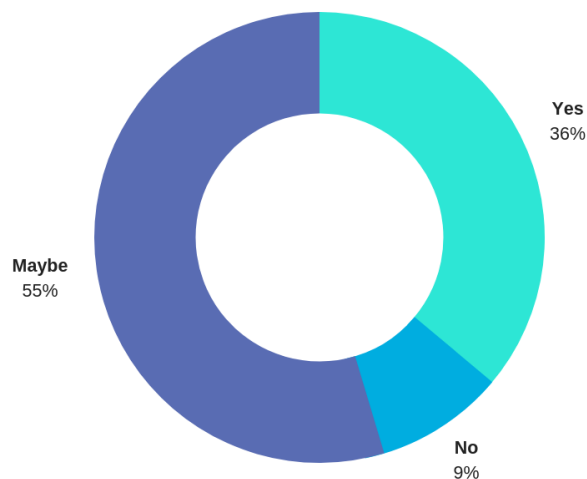


Figure 23. How likely participant will come next year (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

The level of brand awareness increases when people start to talk about the brand. The MBLT DEV is a well-known event in the mobile development community. The average rate (figure 24) of respondents enthusiasm to invite friends and colleagues is 3,8. Therefore, the goal was reached by 108%.

Rating Score	Number of responses	Score total
1	15	15
2	25	50
3	66	198
4	87	348
5	104	520
Total:	297	1131
Average score:	3,81	

Figure 24. Willingness rate to invite friends and colleagues (adapted from the MBLT DEV 2018 post-event results survey, 2018)

### 5.3.5 Level 4. Impact

e-Legion goals for impact measurements of the MBLT DEV 2018 are mostly marketing effects. Marketing effects were discussed in chapter 5.2. However, there are some more business goals set for the MBLT DEV 2018, such as:

- Lead generation for the sales department (5 new potential clients)
- The attraction of 20 new students for e-Legion Academy

The MBLT DEV 2018 is a conference for mobile developers; however, 15% (according to respondents survey) are potential clients of e-Legion, heads of mobile departments, CEO's, CTO's, CIO's and others. Furthermore, according to the registration lists, the number of participants which meets e-Legion potential clients is 24%. Because of this, almost all of e-Legion's sales team participates in the event. Sales managers do not usually listen to the talks, but they stay in the halls near sponsors' stands and network with people around. This year sales managers according to "e-Legion's Sales Department September Report" made more than 50 connections, gave more than 100 business cards, and attracted three new potential clients for further communication.

e-Legion online mobile developers school e-Legion Academy opened their doors for students only in March 2018 and there are already 150 students. School plays a significant role in e-Legion business strategies. The MBLT DEV 2018 is a perfect platform to attract new students. During the conference speakers from e-Legion mentioned the school and the benefits of learning there. The discount for the course was given to some authors of the best questions for speakers. Information about new admission to school was announced in the newsletter for the participants. After all of those steps, 31 new students applied to e-Legion Academy either to iOS or Android programs. This information is gathered from used promo codes or UTM Codes. The goal can be considered to be reached.

### 5.3.6 Level 5. ROI

Finally, yet importantly, financial return on investment (ROI) is also significant for e-Legion. Not-financial impact of ROI was discussed in the previous chapter of analysis.

Initially, the MBLT DEV Conference was invented to be something very new for the industry. It was not so popular in Russian IT community to organise events, which are focused not on the potential clients of the company, but on the community itself. After five years marketing effect still is vital for the MBLT DEV. However, the financial aspect was crucial as well. This year the final price of the tickets was increased by 35% in contrary to the last year. Moreover, the sponsorship packages prices increased by 15%. These changes in prices are done due to the new expensive venue and the overall inflation rate in the country.

I counted the ROI with the formula presented in chapter 3.6. I cannot present the actual numbers due to e-Legion's policy; however, the ROI is 181%, by that means, the company almost doubled the revenue, increasing it by 81%. However, in comparison to the last year, the ROI has decreased. The MBLT DEV 2017 ROI was 191%. Nevertheless, the company's revenue increased rapidly with the help of the event. Marketing team uses the money earned for the budgeting of the next year's events and activities.

That is a simple ROI calculation. However, the MBLT DEV 2018 ROI should be considered together with all of the impacts on all of the levels of the pyramid. Figure 25 provides an overview of the event effects and success level with the results presented on each level of the Jack Phillips ROI pyramid.



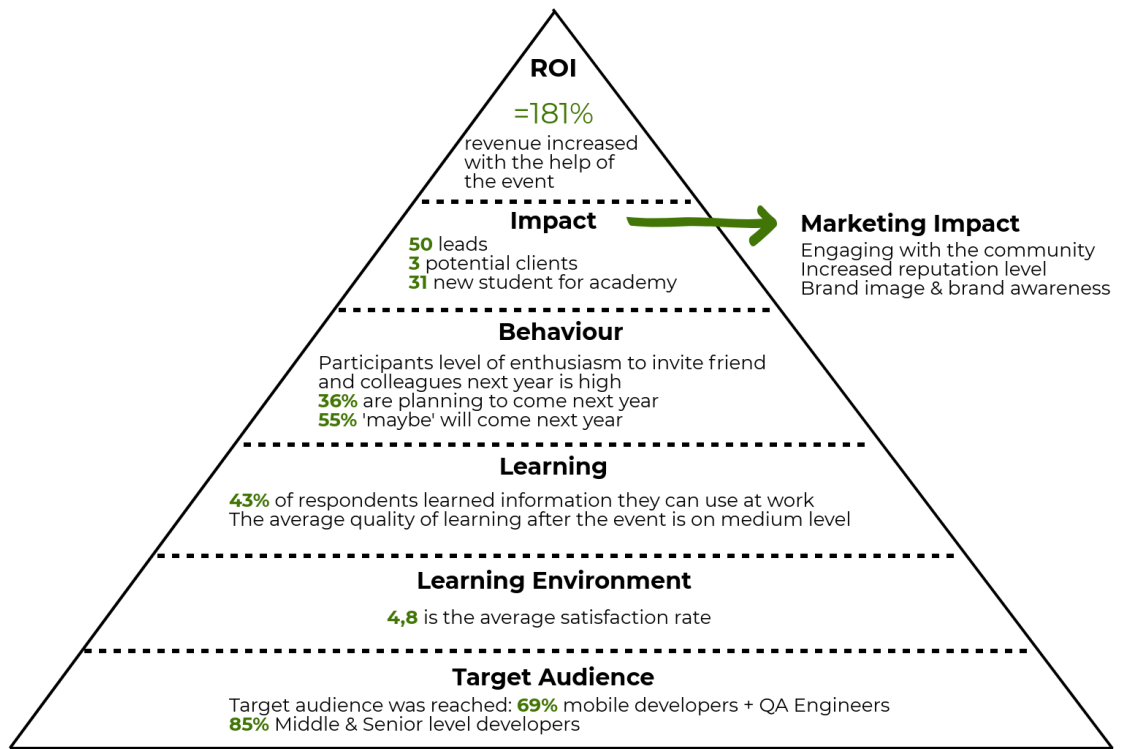


Figure 25. ROI of the MBLT DEV 2018

## 6 Conclusion and suggestions

The last chapter of this thesis presents the conclusion based on the research finding and suggestion list developed while the theoretical framework and event analysis were made. Moreover, personal learning outcomes will be discussed.

Shortly, the MBLT DEV 2018 has several business effects including marketing effects. To measure those effects the clear goals and objectives of the event should be set. The most common tool to analyse the events is post-event survey. For this research, the survey design and analysis were made according to the model of Ph.D. Jack Phillips (2008).

The impact of the MBLT DEV 2018 can be reviewed from the perspective of the business effects and the marketing effects. From the business value perspective, the event has brought a good ROI; therefore, it increased the revenue, generated new leads to the sales department, and attracted new students to the e-Legion Academy. Furthermore, the following marketing impacts are also considered to be a part of the business value.

Marketing impact is a part of the business value. However, it should be discussed separately. Likewise, the organisers of the MBLT DEV 2018 is mostly from the marketing team of e-Legion; thus, the marketing impacts are significantly crucial for this research. Marketing impacts were discussed from three marketing types: marketing communication, customer relationship marketing and branding. From the marketing communication view, the MBLT DEV 2018 engaged e-Legion with the mobile development community by giving participants the opportunity to learn, network and communicate with the company and each other. Attention was generated to the message by creating an experienced moment. The event increased views and likes in social media channels, and professional media mentioned the conference before, during, and after the event. The event can be considered as a marketing communication tool with an educational approach. From the survey analysis it can be considered that participants were overall satisfied with the educational environment; thus, the setting for delivering the message was built successfully.

From the customer relationship view, the MBLT DEV 2018 has built an excellent reputation for e-Legion. The MBLT DEV 2018 has provided potential customers with a long-lasting impression, besides the fact were they participating or not. Because, as it was discussed, potential customers do not need to participate in the event; they can see the news about the event in professional media or, for example, hear about it from the colleagues who attended. From the survey results, it can be seen that the target group of the MBLT DEV 2018 was successfully reached. Therefore, the analysis of the survey shows that

many participants came to the conference because they participated before. By that means, the reputation of the annual event is good. Also, it can be considered that attendees are willing to invite their friends and colleagues for the next year MBLT DEV.

The MBLT DEV 2018 branding included the logo of e-Legion throughout the venue. Furthermore, employees of the company took a visible part on the organisation of the event, and because of that, even more participants got to know about the brand. The MBLT DEV 2018 gave the professional community an opportunity to participate, gain experience and create a brand image of e-Legion's brand. Additionally, the event itself created a networking setting with professional speakers' talks, organiser's quizzes and discussion zones. Therefore, the event raised participants' involvement level and connected them with the brand.

Overall, the MBLT DEV 2018 can be considered as a successful event from the event marketing view. However, there are some suggestions developed while conducting this research. Firstly, e-Legion should analyse their events more often. This analysis was the first deep and time-consuming one. This research can be developed and used by the company as a draft to set goals and analyse future events. Also, there was not enough information to analyse some aspects of the event, for example, the learning level of the ROI pyramid. Therefore, e-Legion should consider creating tests and surveys before or during the event to make a proper analysis of the participants' quality of learning. Furthermore, the amount of the post-event survey respondents was low. The company should think how to increase this level, for example, by giving participants discount for next year event if they complete the survey.

From this study, I learned the event marketing theories, business and marketing values of events. I was one of the organisers of the MBLT DEV for two years; however, I understood the whole spectre of the conference effects only after this research. I learned how to design a survey for the event, how to set goals and analyse the event outcomes. This study is a significant contribution to my own experience and e-Legion's future event marketing.

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1. Survey for attendees

Survey for the MBLT DEV 2018 attendees

### Survey for the MBLT DEV 2018 attendees

Thank you for participating in the MBLT DEV 2018 conference! Answers to the questions below will help us to make MBLT DEV 2019 more productive, exciting and more comfortable for you.

This survey will take about 4 minutes.

#### 1. How did you first hear about the conference?

*Mark only one oval.*

- I was on the conference before
- From colleagues/friends
- From social media (Facebook, Twitter, Vkontakte)
- From blog post on [habrahabr.com](http://habrahabr.com)
- From newsletter
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. What is your occupation?

*Mark only one oval.*

- iOS Developer
- Android Developer
- QA
- Tech Lead
- Team Lead
- HR
- Head of Mobile Department
- CIO or CTO
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. If you are a developer what is your level of experience?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Junior
- Middle
- Senior
- I am not a developer

**4. What is your goal(s) of participation in the MBLT DEV 2018?**

*Tick all that apply.*

- Learn newest trends of mobile development
- Listen to a particular talk(s)
- Lead generation
- Network with colleagues
- New connections
- Looking for a job
- Employee poaching
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Learning environment**

**5. How satisfied you were with the organisation of the MBLT DEV 2018 on a scale from 1-5?**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very satisfied

**6. How satisfied you were with...**

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied
Lunch	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speaker panel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sessions subject/content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seating arrangements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio/Visual effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discussion zones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quiz by e-Legion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Quality of learning**

**7. Did you learn actionable information that will help you in your work life?**

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

**8. How beneficial was the information presented at this event on scale from 1-5?**

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	



## Behaviour

9. Are you to attend the MBLT DEV 2019?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes  
 No  
 Maybe

10. Would you recommend attending our event to your friends or colleagues on a scale from 1-5?

Mark only one oval.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Leave you feedback about the MBLT DEV 2018

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