

PLANNING AND ORGANIZING AN EVENT



Bachelor's thesis

Hämeen ammattikorkeakoulu, Valkeakoski Campus, International Business

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämä opinnäytetyö on kirjoitettu opiskelijalle, joka toimii itsenäisenä tapahtumajärjestäjänä. Toimeksiantaja toimii pienten tapahtumien järjestäjänä, joka on keskittynyt tapahtumien suunnitteluun sekä toteutukseen. Tässä opinnäytetyössä pohditaan, kuinka onnistunut tapahtuma suunnitellaan sekä järjestetään.

Tämän opinnäytetyön tavoitteena on luoda tapahtumasuunnitelma, jonka avulla tapahtuma voidaan toteuttaa. Opinnäytetyön teoreettinen osa keskittyy tapahtumanjärjestämisen teoriaan ja prosesseihin. Näytetyön data kerätään asiakaspalautteiden sekä kyselyiden kautta, ja analysoidaan kvantitatiivisella ja laadullisella menetelmällä. Empiirinen tutkimus keskittyy tapahtuman todelliseen suunnitteluun sekä järjestämiseen.

Loppuanalysissä todettiin, että tapahtuma oli onnistunut kävijöiden palautteen perusteella, mutta tapahtuman taloudellinen puoli ei tuonut voittoa järjestäjälle. Tulevaisuuden kehityskohteina ovat parempi tapahtumapaikka sekä järjestelmällisempi aikataulutus tapahtumassa, jotta tapahtumasta saataisiin tuottavampi.

Avainsanat tapahtumajärjestäminen, tapahtumasuunnittelu, markkinointi

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is written for an individual student, who is referred as Case Company X in this thesis. The Case Company X is a small event organization, that is focused on event planning and organizing for students. This thesis will discuss how to successfully plan, organize, and manage an event for 50 participants.

The objective of this thesis is to create an event plan, execute and manage it successfully. The knowledge base is based on event management theory and processes. The data is collected through feedback questionnaires and analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The empirical study is discussed by evaluating the actual planning and management steps in the Case Company X's event.

The analysis implemented that the event was successful from the participant point-of-view, but the economical side of the event turned out to be a loss for the organizers. Future development, such as more easily accessible venue and a more specific entertainment and catering schedule needs to be made, in order to make the event profitable for the Case Company X.

Keywords event management, event planning, marketing

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1 INTRODUCTION

The thesis is written for an individual, who is studying International Business in Häme University of Applied Sciences. The individual is seeking knowledge and experience in event management, more specifically how to plan, promote and successfully organize an event. This thesis is a study, how different elements of event management contribute to the outcome of the event. The event organizers practically examine and research the advantages and disadvantages of smaller scale event management.

Beer, Barbeque & Breakfast, also known as BB&B is a one-day event held in Hakapirtti, Valkeakoski on 2nd of May 2019. The main goal is to establish and execute an event which includes enough people to make it profitable and creating a comfortable and safe environment for the participants to enjoy and feel stress-free for one night. The purpose is to organize an unconventional and original event, so the biggest challenge is trying to create something new and exciting that the participants can remember and associate the actual event with something fun and exciting.

1.1 Purpose and the objectives of the thesis

The main objective for this thesis is to organize a successful event, using low budget and voluntary work. The event should not be straight out of a textbook and follow the normal etiquette of an event, but more as in organizing an unconventional and out-of-the ordinary event. The focus is to compare this event with currently existing events, and write an overall analysis based on that comparison.

The purpose of the unconventionality is to create something new and fresh for the target audience. Existing events and parties tend to follow the same structure, and are lacking small but important elements, such as live music, activities and food. The plan is to bring and modify these elements together so that the participants can experience something that they might have never experienced before.

It is important to plan and establish goals in order to execute these events successfully. There are four aspects that the event organizer will be focusing on: planning, coordinating, executing and evaluating the event. In the planning stage, the focus is on finding and setting up the most suitable venue for the event and creating a marketing/promotion strategy. In

coordination and execution stages, it is important to make sure that there is enough resources and workforce to execute the events. And in the evaluation stage there will be an evaluation of the process and the outcome of the event and comparing the result with already existing events.

1.2 Objectives and Goals

Objectives of organizing an event can be from music album release, to endorsing a new brand. Or it can be from family Christmas party to a student get together. Defining the objectives and goals from the start is crucial since they influence and determine other factors of that particular event. The purpose of the event is shaped from the main objectives, from educating people to entertaining the crowd. Evaluating objectives is a must in order to keep up with necessary changes.

1.3 Research Problem

In order to achieve a successful event, the organizer needs to have a clear understanding of the plan and execution. Without proper previous experience, the task is going to involve a lot of research about event management in general, including a solid marketing and promotion plan. The research question is in this case; how to plan and organize an event.

Apart from answering the main research question, organizers want to study the following sub-questions related to the event:

1. What is the definition of an successful event?
2. What should be taken into consideration before/during/after the event?
3. What are the potential risks and how to manage them?
4. What types of research methods should be used to evaluate the event?

1.4 Research Approach

As one of the objectives is going to be organizing the event, the approach needs to be practical with a solid theoretical knowledge. This knowledge is

gathered through different event management related sources. With this information the event coordinator is managing the overall process to the events by, creating a promotion plan, supervising the event production, scheduling, risk management and the evaluation.

The most challenging part is going to be the evaluation, how to gather data and feedback from the event, and compare that data with already existing events. Participant feedback can be used, but it is not the most trustworthy option to collect feedback since alcohol will be served in the event and it might affect participants own opinions.

To properly evaluate the success of the event, measurement of monetary outcome, participant amount and feedback from participants and their satisfaction are to be collected. This data from the event is going to be analysed and added to the end results of this thesis.

1.5 Framework of the thesis

After the introduction stage, theoretical part is going to be examined. Research is executed about event management and already existing events. Different methods and processes of event management are going to be analysed and the most suitable ones are going to be used.

After profound research, practical side of this thesis is coming into play. The actual planning and execution phase are going to be put in action. This is going to involve a proper event guideline and background information based on the theoretical part.

Objectives like successful promotion, resource allocation and much more are meant to be executed in order to create a meaningful and systematic outline for the empirical study. After the empirical study, analyses and conclusion based on those studies is going to be written down, and the research question is going to be answered.

1.6 Research Method, Approach and Data Collection

For the research approach, deductive approach is utilized when a researcher wants to narrow the general information down to specific. Deductive approach is also known as the “top-down” approach because the researcher formulates their specific conclusion from a very large and

broad spectrum of information (About Education, Deductive Reasoning Versus Inductive Reasoning, 2014)

This thesis is researched based on two different research methods, qualitative and quantitative. These two principal research methods are most valid for making a conclusion to this thesis, since the event outcome can be both measured quantitatively and qualitatively. The qualitative research is based on observation, behaviour and motivation, and the social interaction between people in a specific surrounding. Since the event organized is highly depended on the participants, their actions, behaviours, and interaction between each other, it is important to measure these outputs. Quantitative method is utilized to measure and analyse the revenue that the event generates, cost of the expenses and the participant count. Combination of both methods gives the researcher a complete and through-out overview of the event and its success. (American Intercontinental University, 2012)

2 THEORITICAL BACKGROUND

This is the theoretical part of the thesis, which includes definitions and provides explanation of terms and methods that are used in this thesis.

2.1 Definitions

An event is a planned and organized occasion happening at a determinable time and place. An event can include human participation or not. Social gatherings like conventions, meetings, sport events or parties can be prime examples of events. (Silvers 2012)

Every event has a purpose, most commonly to bring people together and share experiences. Private events are usually are held by average individuals and are usually small-scale events such as family gatherings and house parties. Corporate events are much bigger scale, and they can be everything from marketing event to an eating competition. (Silvers 2012)

When organizing an event, its automatically involves two important processes, event planning and event management. Event planning is a process that includes budgeting, scheduling, acquiring resources, venues, permits and so on. Event management is the coordination of all the variables and developing a sustainable environment to that particular

event. Managing risks and adjusting to uncertain changes is crucial, since anything can happen during the day of the event. (Shone & Parry 2013)

Silvers (2012), says that an event is “The gathering of people at a specified time and place for the purpose of celebration, commemoration, communication, education, reunion and/or leisure.” Every event has its purpose and own characteristics, which creates a unique experience for the attendants. An event is organized and coordinated by the event coordinator(s). Event coordinators main job is to promote the event for the participants, and although the responsibility is mostly in the event coordinators hands, a successful event involves many different stakeholders. Organizers, participants, entertainers and staff/volunteers have all an important role in the event, without one the event would not be successful or fun for anyone.

Events rarely occur spontaneously, usually organizers plan the event months before for it to function properly. For example, when organizing a sports event, football tournament in this case, is needed to be planned way ahead. The organizers need to set up a date which is approved by all the teams, a football field which is free in those exact dates and promote the tournament way ahead so that there will be paying customers attending that tournament. (Silvers 2012)

In smaller events, planning stage can be much shorter. Organizer can set up and organize a small house party in few days, depending on the size and purpose of the party. If it is just going to be held for few people, main concern is the time and place of the party, which can be accomplished in few days.

The event coordinator(s) is the one who holds the main responsibility of the event. Event coordinators main tasks are all the operational requirements, such as planning, marketing, promotion, entertainment, time management and beverage/food servings. All the logistical requirements are also involved in event coordinators tasks, such as finding a suitable venue and building a proper stage and sound system for the potential entertainment staff.

In the planning phase, event coordinator must create a purpose for the event. This can include a specific theme that the participants are following, for example a student party. Theme is students gathering and having a good time together. Event coordinator must design and create a marketing plan so that there will be enough students participating. In order to create a suitable environment for the students, the coordinator has to figure out what is it that the students want from that event, how and where is it going to be promoted, what is the entry fee and how is going to be entertaining for the students. (Mikolaitis & O’Toole 2002)

2.2 Event Brief

An event brief is a written document that is an overall plan of the event before any actual practical steps you are about to execute in order to organize the event. Event brief should include specific details, such as the time, date, venue, theme, risks and limitations that might occur while organizing the event. While it holds an overview of the event, organizer(s) can refer their progress to already existing event brief plan. Adjustment can be made during the process, if any major or minor changes or problems might occur. (Silvers 2012)

Most important key information the event brief document should have are name and the reason of the event, location and venue, date, theme, target audience, major requirements and the budget. (Lindsey 2011)

2.3 Setting up the objectives and goals

When setting up goals, it is important to be able to measure them. Number of people participating, monetary income and the contribution of others. Clear goals allow the organizer(s) to focus executing necessary achievements. This also creates more developed and helpful platform for possible future events. (Rowner 2015)

2.4 Types of Events

When managing an event, coordinator must understand the type of event is being organized. The size of the event is a big factor when it comes to determining the type of the event. The most used categories when it comes to deciding the event type are, local/community events, major events, mega-events and hallmark events. (Silvers 2012)

Local and community events are usually targeted to local audiences, and the objective is to bring social and entertainment value to the participants. Strengthening belongingness and collectiveness are the main priorities, are for these reasons local officials and governments support these types of events. Examples of local/community events are local sporting events and smaller scale festivals. (Silvers 2012)

Major events are events that attract significant number of visitors, bring media interests and have impacting economic benefits. Massive amount of promotion and marketing is done in order to successfully execute major events. Main objective is not only bringing people together, but to achieve

economic revenue for the organization. Formula One Grand Prix -races and bigger sized festivals can be classified as Major Events. (Berners 2017)

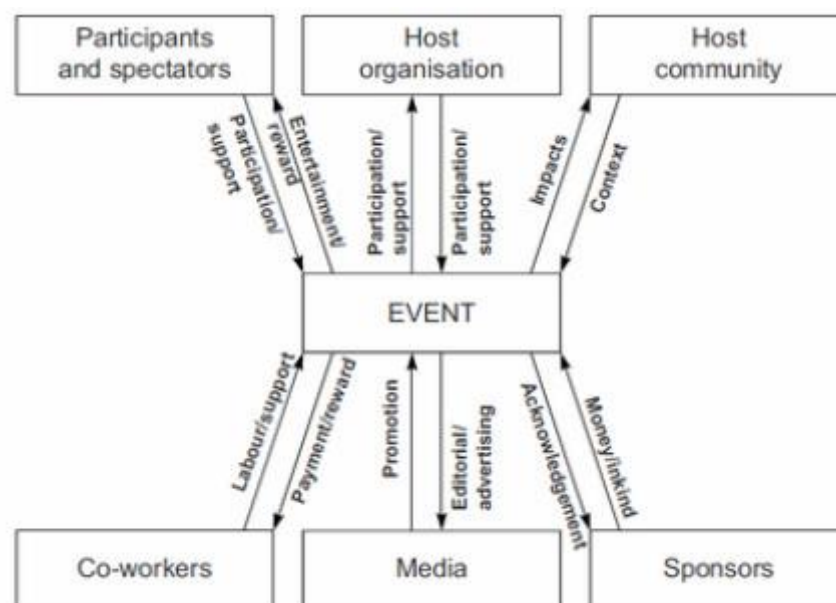
Hallmark events are events that are well-known, across the globe, and are synonymous with the region or a city the event is held in, so that it becomes a tourist destination. The Wimbledon in London is a classic example of a hallmark event. (Berners 2017)

Mega-events are so large, that whole economies are affected by them. Mega-events yield high levels of media coverage, tourism and financial impact for the community or an organization it is held at. The Olympic Games can be classified as mega-events. (Berners 2017)

2.5 Event Stakeholders

Organizing a smaller or bigger scale event, different stakeholders must be taken into a consideration. Embracing requirements such as government objectives and regulations, sponsors and community assumptions, and not only the needs of the participants. (Van der Wagen & White 2010)

Stakeholders are people and organizations that have real interests of the events outcome. Event coordinators must identify stakeholders, and coordinate and manage their own individual needs. In a festival, example stakeholders would be, event organizers, sponsors, media, staff, volunteers, local authorities and the local government. (Van der Wagen & White 2010)



2.6 Sponsors

Event coordinators must plan if they need any sponsors as partners, and what value can the sponsors bring to the event, and what value can the event deliver to the sponsors. Coordinators should treat sponsors as business partners, beyond formal sponsorship agreements. Identifying the type of support does the event need from the sponsors, and what kind of benefits do the sponsors get from your event is crucial, in order to attract sponsors that bring value to the event. (Silvers 2012)

2.7 Target Audience

In order to organize the event for the right audience, determining the target audience for the event is strongly advised. When planning a theme and venue for the event, a certain target audience influences these decisions. Event coordinators must make clear decision on what type of participants they want to attract. Identifying your ideal target audience, there must be some sort of parameters, including socio-demographic attributes and personal interests. In the end, the participants of the event are the ones that determine if the event was a successful or not. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

Event coordinators must prioritise the needs of the participants, such as their physical, safety and comfort needs. In order to make the event special, something out of the ordinary, there must be something meaningful and memorable. Hemmerling (1997) describes the main requirements that the target audience is paying attention to:

“Their main focus is on the content, location, substance and operation of the event itself. For them the ease with which they can see the event activities, the program content, their access to food and drinks, amenities, access and egress etc., are the keys to their enjoyment.”

With the help of technology, coordinators can now attract, manage and serve their audience much more efficiently. The Internet has made it much easier for the coordinators to identify and manage the participants that they want to be part of the event. They can now invite specific people from specific groups made in internet, give crucial information fast and inform sudden changes quickly. The participants can also find events and interest

them, and find key information before arrival, and also re-live the event after it is over. (Hemmerling 1997) (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

2.8 Planning for Events

When planning for new events, overall idea and main concepts need to be overviewed with the stakeholders, and a feasibility study is a must in order to see if the event meets criteria, such as profitability. After these necessary steps, coordinators can then move onto creation and delivery. Feasibility study is done to determine if the event being held is feasible. This study includes areas such as, budget requirements, venue capacities, host community and availability of volunteers and workers. The outcome of this study will determine if the coordinators will proceed or cease with the event. (Silvers 2012)

2.9 Structure of the Event Organizations

Simple structures are easily managed, low level of complexity events, where all the crucial decisions are made by the event manager or the coordinator, who has total control over staff and their activities. This structure is mostly used in small events, since it is flexible and adaptable to circumstances that might change. The manager is accountable for every decision, since there are very few stakeholders in part of the event. Downsides to this structure are the lack of high-level expertise in specific areas. When the event might grow into a bigger scale event, decision making can become very slow since there is only one manager making all the necessary management decision. (Capell 2013)

Simple Organizational Structure



Figure 1 Simple Organizational Structure (Capell 2013)

Functional structures consist of departments or groups related to tasks. This is usually done with middle sized events, where individuals and groups can be assigned tasks based on their specific area, and by doing this it eliminates the risk of overlapping responsibilities. This structural form can also be included to already existing structure, by just adding functional layers if the event requires it.

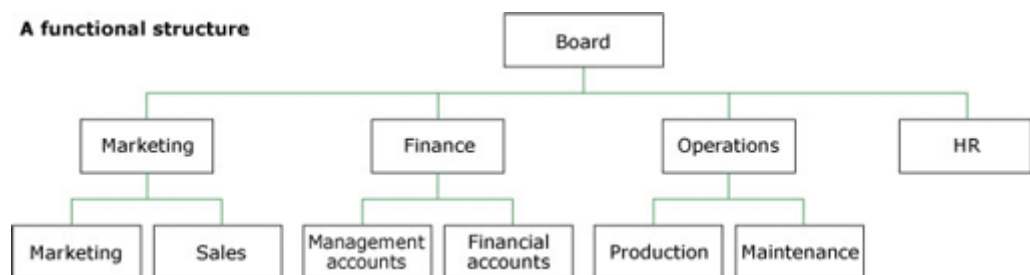


Figure 2 A Functional Structure (Capell 2013)

2.10 Multi-Organizational or Network Structures

Specialist event management organizations tend to be small, yet they are still able to construct massive events. This is done by using external forces, services of variety of other companies. In order to multiple

organizations work simultaneously and coordinate properly between each other, 'virtual organizations' are established. Host organization oversees the plan and execution, whereas the other organizations support that execution as providing expertise, resources and support.

This structure is mostly used when there is no down-time and the decisions must be made quickly. Budgeting can also be done more efficiently since all the outsourced workforce and resources are contracted and the costs already calculated. (Silvers 2012)

2.11 Event Marketing

Every event organized, there must be a way to market it in order to attract the right target group of participants. Marketing communications must include crucial information and visual side of the event. When making a marketing plan, it usually includes;

- Internal marketing: communication inside the organization
- Public Relations: press releases or events.
- Media marketing: newspaper, tv, radio or internet marketing
- Direct marketing: direct mail or email to target group
- Social media marketing: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

In order to organizers to know, what promotion actions to choose, they must have clear understanding of their target audience and the objectives of the event. For example, if the event is a concert targeted towards young audience, social media marketing could be the most efficient way to reach the young audience. If the event organized is business related, for example, a business conference for CEO's, the most efficient way could be an advertisement in a business magazine. The following plans and actions should be included in the marketing plan. (Jackson 2013) (Capell 2013)

2.12 Social Media in Marketing

Organizers should always use social media in their advantage. Organizers can utilize social media before, during and after the event. Applications like Yammer or Facebook can be used to plan the event and communicate between all the stakeholders. This enables more fluent way to

communicate, since the information such as messages, memos, offers and contact information can all be stored in one place. (Capell 2013)

Social Media is one of the fastest and cheapest information channels there is. For example, event can be founded in Facebook for free, and all the important information to the participants can be shared through Facebook. This enables organizers to communicate much more efficiently, since all the information is stored at one place and it can be shared very easily, not only in Facebook but also in other social media platforms such as Twitter. After the event, organizers and participants can share their thoughts, pictures and videos. Feedback can be easily provided, and the social media event can work as a lost and found channel for missing items. (Capell 2013)

Organizers must mind the fast-paced and changing environment of the internet, and the dangers come with it. Public Facebook event can spread to unwanted audiences, which might create problems. Also bearing in mind that the target audience might not be comfortable with technology and social media. (Capell 2013)

2.13 Venue

When choosing a venue to the event, it is important to note the theme and target audience of the event. Any space can work as a venue, and with a proper decoration it can be turned into something new and exotic. Location of the venue is one of the most important factors when choosing a venue. Great venue fifty kilometres from the city adds transportation costs and might affect the number of participants. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2008)

Organizers must analyse and approve the venue during the planning process. If the venue is outside, there must be an indoor facility for backup if rain or a thunderstorm arrives. If there are any disabled people participating, venue can't have any obstacles blocking them. Following key elements are worth noting before selecting the venue;

- Does the venue fit the theme of the event?
- Audio and speakers
- Internet
- Catering possibilities
- External disorders
- Toilets
- Smoking areas
- Cloakroom

In most cases, specific venue has a max capacity for participants. If not, then the organizers must evaluate the capacity by eye, so that the venue will not get too full. When booking the venue, it is important to make sure that there is enough time to build and dismantle the event. Before starting to assemble the venue, the venue itself usually includes tables, chairs and other important furniture and equipment that the organizers might need. This saves time and costs of the organizers. (Silvers 2012)

2.14 Budgeting the Event

Money is always essential when it comes to event organizing. There should always be an estimated budget plan before organizing the event. If the budget is low, voluntary work and staff is highly recommended, since the staff is usually the highest expense. If the budget is high, organizers might want to hire a professional event coordinator to plan and organize the event.

It is important to compare the budget with similar events and their already existing budgets. This gives the organizers a good view of what might the expenses be. If the event includes food and drink catering for the participants, the amount of food and drinks needs to be carefully calculated. Males tend to eat and drink more than females, so this should be taken into account. (Silvers 2012)

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Different research methods were used in this thesis in order to collect reliable data of the event. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. Numerical data was collected through quantitative method, meanwhile non-numerical in-depth data was collected through qualitative research method. Data was collected via feedback questionnaire after the event.

The questionnaire had open-ended questions, and also the participants were assigned to give a rating score related to different parts of the event. Purpose of the data collection was to see if the event was successful, and what could be developed for the future.

3.1 Methods

To evaluate the Case Company X's event, a feedback questionnaire was created. It included qualitative and quantitative questions for the participants to answer. The quantitative questions included rating system, where the participants answered the questions related to the event by giving a rating between 1 and 5, 5 being the highest score. Qualitative questions were open-ended questions which have more in-depth questions for the participants. Both of these methods were used in order to gain most precise and best information about the event. The aim was to see how successful the Case Company X's event was.

The questionnaire was sent to all the participants who participated in the event by email. 57 participants received the questionnaire, and 39 participants responded to it. All of the participants answered the same questions anonymously. This feedback method was selected since it collects in-depth and precise results by having very low-costs. The feedback questionnaire was made by using Google Forms. This allows participants to give suggestions and valuable feedback for Case Company X's future events.

The feedback questionnaire included set of questions, where the participants gave either an open-ended answer or a rating. The participants were asked to rate the venue, time, entertainment and service. In open-ended questions, participants were asked to write open feedback and tell how was the overall experience in the event. With the questionnaire results, organizers analyzed if the objectives of the event were successfully reached, and what elements could be improved. (Bryman & Hardy 2009)

3.2 Validity and Reliability of the Thesis

This thesis is reliable, since the event organizer who planned and created the event related to the thesis, is also the author. All of the data was collected from the event and its participants. Only the participants of the event answered the feedback questionnaire after the event. In order to ensure the reliability of the feedback results, the answers were examined and checked that there were no errors. After careful examination, the results were valid and reliable.

Some factors might affected the end results and the reliability of this thesis. Respondent's mood, false emotions and missing data. The mood

of the respondent might have influenced the answer he or she submitted. The wording of the questions, and the questions itself were planned to ensure most reliable questionnaire and study.

4 EMPIRICAL STUDY

This part of the thesis is a plan for Case Company X's event, which includes the analysis of information and data gathered before and after the event.

4.1 Background Information

Case Company X is a small local organization that focuses on event production in Pirkanmaa region. They organize small scale events for young people and students. Main focus in Case Company X's events are to host safe and affordable events to students, which include live entertainment and catering. This thesis aims to guideline an event that Case Company X organized.

Case Company X decided to host an event in Valkeakoski, city which is full of students. Organizers wanted to gather most of the students and organize an affordable event. With this event the organizers gain valuable experience and data in order to organize more similar kind of events in the future. Aim of this thesis is to find out how to manage, plan and coordinate an event for Case Company X.

Structure of the event is simple, barbaque, beverages, live music and DJ's, with some extra activities that the organizers have set up. Purpose is to have a safe space for all the participants to get to know each other and have fun.

Case Company X organizers don't really have any past experience in organizing events. Only few small parties have been organized, and this event is the biggest that they have organized yet. Past events have been free of charge, so this is the first event that the organizers are charging fees.

The event planning will start by deciding the date, venue, target group and the objective for the event. Event plan will include all of these steps in order the event to be successful. Event plan will also include a comparison between already existing events with a similar target group.

Main focus with this is to see what could be developed and added to the upcoming event.

The event is called Beer, BBQ and Breakfast, where the name implies that there will be food and drinks at the event. Theme is a student party, where live music and good entertainment will be provided for the participants. The venue has to be carefully selected, so that all of the planned objectives will be achieved. Venue has to have a solid grill for the barbaque, some sort of stage for the entertainers, and a safe and comfortable area for the participants to enjoy a successful night.

4.2 Objective of the Event

Case Company X main objectives for the event is to have a successful and safe event for all of the participants. Focus is to have enough participants to have a memorable event and meet new people. Goal is to have atleast 50 paying participants, so that the organizers will break-even with all of the costs. Plan is to have small activities for the participants to enjoy, and have enough food and beverages for everyone.

4.3 Target Audience

Students are the main target group for Case Company X event. Event is held in Valkeakoski, which is a small student city. Event is serving alcoholic beverages, so the age limit is 18. In order to keep the event safe for everyone, only HAMK students and their friends are invited. This ensures that the event wont get out of hand, and cuts the cost of security.

4.4 Theme

Main reason why this event is held, that it creates a different atmosphere than a normal event in a club or a bar. Name of the event, Beer, Barbaque & Breakfast implies that the theme is more house-party oriented, with food and drinks included. What makes this event even more special is that there is possibility to stay overnight and sleep at the venue. In the morning, breakfast will be offered to those who want it.

Houseparty theme is essential, since it created more relaxed and easy-going atmosphere compared to a normal club venue. No alcohol or food are sold, and the participants are encouraged to bring their own beverages if they want to. Entertainment consists of live music band and a live DJ. Participants can also perform their own acts if they want to.

4.5 Venue

In order to choose the right venue for the event, essential criteria has to be fulfilled, which includes the capacity, location and the price of the venue. In the planning phase it was decided that the event will be held in Valkeakoski, since it is close to the students. This makes the decision hard, since there is not that many venues in Valkeakoski.

Case Company X chose Hakapirtti cottage in Valkeakoski to be the venue for this event. Organizers have rented out this venue before, so they had a good understanding of the place and its surroundings. Venue is located next to the lake, and it offers soundsystem, catering equipment, accommodation, kitchen and a grill. The cost of the venue is 150 euros, which is a great price for the organizers, since they are students with a low budget.

Maximum capacity of Hakapirtti is about a hundred persons at once, which is more than enough space for the organizers to execute the event. Venue consists of two floors and an outside yard, where all of the guests have spread out. This makes sure that the space does not get too crowded and cramped.

The first floor in Hakapirtti is the main floor, where the live band and the DJ will perform. It has enough space for the catering, and for activities such as beerpong. Second floor is mostly used for accommodating the participants, but also it provides more relaxed living room where the participants can escape the hassle of the event. Outside yard is used for the barbaque, and it also contains a smoking area.

4.6 Program

The event will be held on 2nd of May 2019. Steps after choosing the date, the theme and the venue is to decide the entertainment program for the event. Since the theme is a houseparty, classic activities such as beerpong

is a must. After careful planning, organizers decided that live music programs are the best way to attract visitors to the event. The budget is low, so the cost of the entertainers has to be low.

Organizers managed to book a local band from Tampere, and they agreed to perform free of charge. Band is called Epilän Ruhtinaskunta, and they play mostly classic rock and other classics. One of the Case Company X organizers has previous experience from DJing, and he agreed to play in the event for free. This is great news for the Case Company, since they don't have any costs when it comes to music and live performances.

Besides scheduled music performances, organizers decided to have an open stage for anyone who wants to perform in the event. Few participants informed that they would like to perform live beatbox and freestyle rap. None of the performances has any specific set times, they are free to go on the stage whenever they are ready and the stage is available. This lowers the stress of scheduling and management of the performers.

Participants have a chance to play beerpong, table football and playstation during the event. Barbeque will be set up during the first few hours of the event, and breakfast will be offered in the morning, where the guests can feast independently if they want to.

4.7 Budget

First step for planning the financial side of the event is budgeting. It is important to estimate the projected revenue with expenditure. Careful plan of the budget ensures that the financial management of the organization is stable and that the finances do not surpass the limit of resources. (Der Wagen 2001, 81)

The budget for the event Beer, Barbeque & Brekafast is low, since the organizers are still students and the expenses are paid by themselves. There are no outside investors or sponsors funding the event. Already in the planning phase, the organizers decided that the budget will be low, around 300 euros. Necessary expenses such as rent of the venue, food and beverages must be kept as low as possible. The most notable expense was the rent of Hakapirtti. Cheapest possible alternative was to rent it during the weekdays, so the organizers decided on Thursday for the day of the event. This costs 150 € for the whole day. For the food and

beverages, the total costs for those was around 200 €, including sausages, vegetables, snacks, non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages.

The organizers realized that the 300 € budget that was originally planned, was not going to be enough. Food and beverages added up to total of 200 € which was way more than the originally estimated budget showed. Also the organizers didn't reach their target amount of tickets sold, which turned out to be almost a 100 € loss for the Case Company X.

Here is the final budget showing all of the income and expenses that the event included;

| | | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | Case Company X's budget for the Hakapirtti event | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | Tickets sold (10euros per ticket) | 41 tickets x 10 € | | | |
| | Total | 410 € | | | |
| | <u>Expenses</u> | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | Food (Vegetables and snacks) | 50 € | | | |
| | Beverages (non-alcoholic) | 60 € | | | |
| | Beverages (alcoholic) | 90 € | | | |
| | Logistics | 20 € (Gifted tickets) | | | |
| | Entertainment | 50 € (Gifted tickets) | | | |
| | Venue | 150 € | | | |
| | Total | 420 € | | | |
| | <u>Total Revenue</u> | 410 € - 420 € = -10 € | | | |

Figure 3 Budget

4.8 Sponsors

Before the event Case Company X contacted few local breweries and food producers in Pirkanmaa region. Plan was to give the companies some exposure in our Facebook event, and also in the event, in exchange of some free products that we can serve in the event. After contacting local companies, Tampereen Lihajaloste was the only company who wanted to work with us. Case Company X got around 10 kilograms of sausages, that they will be grilling and serving at the event.

4.9 Logistics

The events venue has a location that is relatively hard to reach by walking there. No public busses go there, so the arrival and departure has to be done by either walking, taxi or a private transportation. This is a problem for the organizers, since the walk is quite long from the center of Valkeakoski, and taxi is too expensive for many of our target participants, students.

The event organizers hired a private driver, in order to help with all of the food, drinks and equipment. After finishing up the venue for the event, the driver was assigned to transport the event participants to the event, from Valkeakoski center to Hakapirtti. This enabled the guests to arrive much faster, cheaper and safer to the event.

The ride to the event was free for the participants, with a voluntary tip if the participants wanted to. The driver was the organizers close personal friend, so the organizers and the driver came to an agreement that he would be given a free ticket to the event, including food for the day. This turned out to work great for both parties, and the organizers saved lot of money by not having to hire a van.

4.10 Catering

Since the event being held is small, the catering service offered at the event was very minimal. The organizers decided in the planning phase, that the food served is easy to make, such as sausages and vegetable skewers are grilled and served at the event. The organizers will setup a barbaque to the outside terrace, where the grilling and serving of the sausages and vegetables will happen. Snacks including chips, candy, crackers and dips are to be served during the whole time of the event.

Non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks are served indoors. The organizers will buy sodas, beers and make punch for the participants to enjoy. Organizers also encouraged the guests to bring their own beverages, so that there will be enough beverages from the house for everyone.

4.11 Marketing

The main objective for the Case Company X's marketing strategy is to create awareness and gain new participants to the event. The organizers message to the potential participants is "an out-of-the ordinary party experience", that is missing from the Valkeakoski student community. Organizers don't want to organize a typical student party, which is predictable and might be boring for the guests. By creating something new and refreshing, the organizers hope that it will gain some interest

By having a low budget, the cost of marketing has to be very minimal. By creating posters, establishing a facebook event and advertising the event face to face organizers can market the event free. The purpose of the event is to invite students, and their friends. Having this strategy, organizers avoid unwanted, random visitors that might cause a problem in the event. This also makes the marketing much more easier for the organizers, since they don't have to put any time or resources to attract people from outside the school.

When creating the posters, the organizers wanted to have it noticed properly by the students. They created A3 sized, colorful posters that had the date, venue, theme, price and the activities enlisted, and placed them in visible areas and information boards around the Valkeakoski campus.

Organizers invited all of the HAMK students via email to the event. Short email that told all the necessary information about the event was created and send to students. This was a fast and free way to promote the event.

The Facebook event was created 1 month prior to the event. This was the main way for the organizers to give information and updates on the event. Creating the Facebook event was free and easy, and it also shows who is and might be participating the event. The participants could also send questions and share their thoughts using the event page. Organizers shared the link to the event through the email that was send to all of the students in HAMK.

5 EVENT EVALUATION

Anonymous feedback questionnaire was used to evaluate the success of the Case Company X's event. The questionnaire was sent to all the guests via email. With the results of the questionnaire, the organizers can determine if the event was successful, and what could be developed for the future.

5.1 Feedback Questionnaire

The feedback questionnaire was sent to all the guests who participated the Case Company X's event in Hაკაპირტი. Organizers wanted to collect the data in order to determine how successful the event was, and how it could be developed for the future events. Focus was to identify the essential needs of the guests. The anonymous questionnaire consists of both quantitative and qualitative questions. Questionnaire started with questions, where the guests are asked to rate the different aspects of the event by giving a rate from 1 to 5, where 5 is the best option. After the close-ended questions, guests were asked to give open feedback of the event. Questions like what could be improved, what went wrong and how the atmosphere was were asked.

Google Forms was used to make the feedback questionnaire for the participants. This works out perfectly for the organizers, since its easy and free to use. The feedback questionnaire was sent to the participants two days after the event. The title for the questionnaire was "Feedback questionnaire for Beer, Barbeque & Breakfast". The questionnaire starts by thanking the guests for participating and stating that the questionnaire is anonymous and continues with the close and open-ended questions. From 41 paying customers, 25 guests answered the questionnaire.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis

The Case Company X's event has four objectives, to ensure safe environment for the guests, having a successful entertainment program, successful catering, and overall satisfaction from the event. To determine if these objectives were achieved, the guests were asked to rate these specific objectives from 1 to 5, 5 being the best.

25 participants answered the feedback questionnaire, and results showed that,

- Overall satisfaction score of the event was 4,1 out of 5.
- The safe environment of the event was scored 4,4 out of 5.
- Entertainment program was scored 3,9 out of 5.
- Catering was scored 3,1 out of 5.

The results are showing that the objectives did not reach their full potential, and the overall satisfaction score was higher than expected. The first question “How would you rate your overall satisfaction to the event?” was rated 4,1 out of 5. Organizers are really pleased with this result, and it could be evaluated that overall, the event was successful. Second question “How safe and comfortable was the environment of the event?” was rated 4,4 out of 5. This tells that the venue and its surroundings worked very well for hosting the event. Only problematic part of the venue was its location, which was quite remote from the centre of Valkeakoski.

Third question “How would you rate the entertainment of the event?” was rated 3,9 out of 5. Since there were not any specific schedule for the entertainment, and the stage was open for anyone to perform, the outcome of the entertainment program was very pleasing. For future events, there must be more specific timetable for the entertainment programs, so that the guests feel more up to date with the events program. The last question “How would you rate the catering services?” was rated 3,1 out of 5, significantly the lowest score of the quantitative analysis. The reason for the low score was the lack of staff and service. Organizers informed the guests, that the food and beverages are offered by the guests self-serving themselves. The offerings needed constant monitoring so that there would be enough food and beverages for everyone, but the organizers did not manage to do that all the time. This explains the low score, and for future events this must be improved.

5.3 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data is analysed from the data that was gathered from the questionnaires open-ended questions. Participants were asked to give honest feedback related to the Case Company X's event. Qualitative data gives more descriptive feedback from the event than quantitative data and allows the organizers to develop future concepts and events even more. The feedback questionnaire included open-ended questions for the participants to answer. Organizers wanted to get specific feedback by asking what went right, what went wrong and what could be improved or added for future events.

The first open-ended question was “What was positive about the event?”. Almost 60% of the participants who answered the questionnaire said that

the theme of the party, barbequing and the entertainment were the most positive aspects of the event. The possibility of staying overnight at the venue was also very positive element, and the driver who took the guests to the venue.

The second question was “What was negative about the event?”. Location of the venue and the catering services were pointed out, saying that the venue could have been more accessible and closer to the centre. The catering services got negative feedback related to the lack of staff and offerings during the event. Organizers feel that this part of the event was handled poorly. More staff must be hired for the future event to handle all the catering of the beverages and food.

The last question asked from the participants was “What could be improved or added for future events?” Most notable answers related to the venue and for the entertainment. Many respondents wished for the event held in either Tampere or Hämeenlinna. Participants also hoped for more activities, such as some minor sport or music competitions could be organized in the future events. Few respondents were hoping for an event that would start already during the day, rather than late at night, so there would be more time for activities and socializing.

5.4 Future Development

After reviewing and analysing the feedback questionnaire results, development is necessary in order to successfully organize events in the future. The main areas to development are the catering services, entertainment program and more easily accessible venue. In the future, organizers are also developing their marketing, especially in the social media. This could bring much more value to the event, by more participants attending the event.

The catering services is one of the main development areas that the organizers need to focus on. During the last event, organizers realized that they did not have enough staff to take care of catering, which lead to problems. Time to time the guests did not have enough food or drinks available, although it was promised. In the future, organizers must allocate a person to take care of the whole catering service, which they did not have in previous event.

The entertainment program received lot of positive feedback, but the participants wished for a more precise and scheduled timetable for the

program. During the event, the entertainment program was not scheduled at all. The entertainers would perform whenever the stage was free, without any schedule. This created a bit of confusion among the participants, since nobody knew who and what time is someone performing. For future events, the organizers will create a more precise and scheduled entertainment program and publish it to the public at least three days before the event to avoid confusion and uncertainty. The schedule is going to be published in the event's Facebook page, and printed out versions of the schedule are going to be placed around the venue.

Hakapirtti was chosen to be the venue of Beer, Barbeque & Breakfast. Organizers knew that the location is not that easily accessible for the guests, and for this reason they hired a driver to take the guests to the venue if they needed a transportation. The reason Hakapirtti was chosen to be the venue of the event was the cost of it. It was clearly the most convenient and cheapest alternative for a venue in Valkeakoski region. For future events, many participants wished for a venue either in Hämeenlinna or Tampere for more easily accessible location, since many of the HAMK students in Valkeakoski live in either of those cities. Potentially organizers could see a growth in guests attending the event.

The marketing of the event should be developed and improved more efficiently. Organizers hope this would create more awareness and hype around the event. Social media is a great platform for this, and the organizers should be utilizing it more since it is free and very convenient. Facebook was the only social media channel that was used during the last event. Channels like Twitter and Instagram could be utilized more in the future and encouraging the guests to follow these channels of social media. In the future, there is a possibility to create an own website for the event. Through the website, organizers could advertise the event, promote other social media channels, and post pictures and videos.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

Most of the objectives that the organizers set for the event Beer, Barbeque & Breakfast were achieved. In conclusion, Case Company X's event was successful in terms of safe environment, positive energy, and a great atmosphere overall. After analysing the feedback questionnaire and interviewing participants, organizers felt that these objectives were achieved, but there was still a lot of room for improvement. A lot of

experience and insight was gained from event planning and organizing. In terms of monetary income, organizers did not make any profit from selling the tickets to the event.

The aim for the event was to have at least 50 paying participants, but only 41 participants paid for the entrance fee. The sole purpose of the event was not to gain profit, but to create an event where everyone can feel comfortable and have a memorable night. This was one of the key objectives, and feedback questionnaire confirmed that this was achieved.

The main development areas for the future are the catering services, entertainment scheduling and program and the marketing. By having more resources, time and staff, the organizers believe that they can develop the upcoming events with the feedback that the participants gave to the organizers.

6.2 Recommendations

After analysing and evaluating Beer, Barbeque & Breakfast event, and adjusting for future development, general recommendations can be made for other event organizers who are new in the event management. Based on the previous event, organizers recommend starting the planning phase at least 1 month prior to the event. This enables enough time to create a concept, marketing plan and budget the event. More time reserved for the planning, the less uncertainty and risk is involved. During the planning phase, is it important to plan and schedule entertainment program and manage the staff for the most crucial tasks, such as catering and ticket sales. Questions such as, who is taking care of the catering, what time is the entertainment starting and ending, who is performing at what needs to be answered and decided early on, so that there is a concrete plan for the event day.

If possible, organizers should start selling tickets to the events in advance. This enables estimation for how many people are attending the event. Participants who are paying for the advance tickets are also committing to the event and are less likely to cancel at the last second. Organizers should price the advanced tickets or so called early bird -tickets appropriately, in order to sell the maximum amount possible.

7 REFERENCES AND APPENDICES

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Appendix 1

APPENDIX & FIGURES

Appendix

Link for the Feedback Questionnaire

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zhnXEcMEeh8dWWbY8zmNLrC-2AiK5-z5six-P_Tr2II/prefill

Figures

Figure 1 Simple Organizational Structure (Capell 2013)

Figure 2 A Functional Structure (Capell 2013)

Figure 3 Budget