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# EVENT MARKETING IN CAR INDUSTRY

Case: Carfest

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HÄME, ERKKI:

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ABSTRACT

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The objective of this thesis is to find out whether a small or medium-sized business can organize a marketing event without using the help of external marketing companies. This thesis can be then used as a guide for small and medium-sized businesses to organize marketing events. The thesis is compiled of theoretical part and planning phase. The actual implementation part was not included.

The thesis starts with the theoretical part and it is done by studying previous research in this field of marketing. The research was studied by literature review. There is a short introduction on what event marketing is and how different fields of event marketing are categorized. This thesis introduces the process of information-gathering and explains it step by step. This model goes from the planning process, through implementation all the way to post-event procedures.

The planning phase was done according to the theory described in the beginning of the thesis. In the planning phase an event called Carfest was planned. All steps were done thoroughly, including the marketing plan, financial plan and operational plan. The author also made a questionnaire for the post event research.

In the end of the thesis, the author will examine the results of this thesis. There also are suggestions for future research. Finally the author also made self-evaluation of the thesis.

The aim of the thesis was to create a guide for small and medium-sized businesses to start their planning process and create their own marketing events. The theoretical part gives the reader overall information about the theory behind the event marketing business. The empirical part shows how the theoretical part should be implemented and shows the variety of different tasks to be thought out before, whilst and after the event.

Organizing an event is very demanding and time consuming. Companies should start thinking more of event marketing as a way of marketing. It is a very effective way to increase sales and make your company more known for the customers. Even though it needs quite a lot of resources from the company, it offers the potential customers a tangible way of marketing. To have the event yearly is a good idea as one event needs months of marketing beforehand.

Key words: event marketing, marketing, event planning, carfest

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TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tämän opinnäytetyön päämäärä on tutkia pystyvätkö pienet- ja keskisuuret yritykset järjestämään markkinointitapahtuman ilman ulkoisten markkinointiyritysten apua. Tätä opinnäytetyötä voidaan sittemmin käyttää oppaana pienille- ja keskisuurille yrityksille tapahtumien järjestämisessä. Opinnäytetyö koostuu sekä teoria- että käytäntöosuuksista. Itse suunnitelman toteuttaminen ei ole mukana tässä opinnäytetyössä.

Opinnäytetyö alkaa teoriaosuudella. Se on tehty tutkimalla alan kirjallisuutta ja koostamalla niistä tapahtumajärjestämisen kokonaiskuva. Alussa on pieni johdanto tapahtumamarkkinointiin ja miten tapahtumamarkkinointi on jaoteltu eri kategorioihin. Teoriaosuudessa käydään läpi tiedonkeruuprosessi malli vaihe vaiheelta. Tämä malli sisältää kaikki vaiheet aina tapahtuman suunnittelusta, toteutuksen kautta tapahtuman jälkityövaiheisiin.

Käytännön osuus toteutettiin teoriaosuuden perusteella. Käytännön osuudessa tapahtuma nimeltä Carfest suunniteltiin. Kaikki teorian vaiheet käytiin läpi yksityiskohtaisesti. Tämä sisältää niin markkinointisuunnitelman, taloussuunnitelman kuin operatiivisen suunnitelman. Tekijä myös loi kyselylomakkeen tapahtuman jälkityövaiheita varten.

Opinnäytetyön lopussa tekijä arvioi opinnäytetyön tuloksia. Hän myös ehdottaa tutkimuksen aiheita tulevaisuuden varalle. Opinnäytetyön lopussa tekijä suorittaa itsearvioinnin työtänsä kohtaan.

Opinnäytetyön tavoite oli luoda opas pienille- ja keskisuurille yrityksille. Oppaan avulla yritykset voivat aloittaa suunnitella sekä toteuttaa markkinointitapahtumia. Teoriaosuudessa lukijalle annetaan yleistietoa tapahtumamarkkinoinnin teoriasta. Käytännön osuudessa näytetään miten teoria laitetaan käytäntöön ja erinäiset vaiheet toteutetaan tapahtumaa ennen, tapahtuman aikana ja tapahtuman jälkeen.

Tapahtuman järjestäminen on erittäin vaativaa ja se vaatii todella paljon aikaa. Yrityksien pitäisi ruveta käyttämään tapahtumamarkkinointia markkinoinnin keinona entistä enemmän. Se on erittäin tehokas tapa lisätä myyntiä sekä lisätä tunnettavuutta. Vaikka se viekin runsaasti resursseja yritykseltä, se luo mahdollisille asiakkaille konkreettisen tavan tavata yritys.

Asiasanat: tapahtumamarkkinointi, markkinointi, tapahtumasuunnittelu, Carfest

## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	History	1
1.2	Objectives	1
1.3	Limitations	2
1.4	Theoretical framework	2
1.5	Research methods and data collection	3
1.6	Thesis structure	4
2	EVENT MARKETING	5
2.1	Categories	5
2.2	Typologies	6
3	PLANNING AN EVENT	8
3.1	Objectives	9
3.2	Outline plan	10
3.2.1	Environmental search	10
3.2.2	Information gathering	11
3.3	Systematic detailed planning	12
3.3.1	Financial plan	12
3.3.2	Operational plan	13
3.3.3	Marketing plan	13
3.4	Preparation, implementation and legacy	14
4	CASE: CARFEST	19
4.1	Target company analysis	19
4.2	Selling the Idea	19
4.3	Planning stage	21
4.4	Financial plan	22
4.5	Operational plan	23
4.6	Marketing plan	33
4.7	Implementation	35
4.8	Legacy	36
5	CONCLUSION	38
5.1	Examination of results	38
5.2	Suggestions for future development	39

5.3	Self-evaluation	39
6	SUMMARY	41
	REFERENCES	42
	APPENDICES	44

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 History

Event marketing has been an increasingly important tool for businesses since the 1970s. The term “Event marketing” was introduced in the 1980s when the economic boom gave companies tools to entertain their customers. Still during the 1980s event marketing was only providing dinner with alcohol in a nice restaurant. The real development for marketing started happening in the 1990s. The high-rising IT-industry started experimenting with organizing all kinds of events for their customers, such as off-roading, rafting, themed parties etc. As the demand for special events rose, some entrepreneurs saw the possibility of starting their own event management companies. In the 2000’s, companies started to aim at the usage of event marketing more. Companies started to examine what they should organize, to whom they should organize and how it should be organized. Moving from big mass-events to target-specific events give the participants more intimate feeling and affects their behavior towards the organizing company much more. Also one reason for this change was the economic recession which took away the possibility to spend great amounts of money on big events. (Vallo & Häyrynen 2008, 23-24.)

## 1.2 Objectives

The objective of this thesis is to create a guide for small and medium-sized businesses, later SMB, to organize promotional events in the field of retail. To get to this objective this thesis will try to answer the following research questions:

- Is it possible for a SMB to create a full size promotional event with limited budget in Finland?
- What preparations are needed when organizing promotional events?
- How should the event be marketed?
- What size of budget will be sufficient?

With these questions answered thoroughly, there should be enough theory and practical information for companies to use this thesis as a basic guide in organizing promotional events.

### 1.3 Limitations

This thesis will only cover the planning of a promotional event for SMB in suitable fields of retail. This thesis limits itself off from other fields of business. It will also be limited from bigger and smaller companies.

The thesis is a basic guide for organizing stand-alone events and does not cover marketing done in events, such as festivals and fairs.

Also the thesis will only concentrate on organizational events, not on other events such as leisure, cultural or personal events.

In addition, this thesis's case company is based in Helsinki, and the event is held in Helsinki, and it is possible that different cities in Finland will perform differently.

### 1.4 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis includes the theory of event marketing, and using observation as a tool.

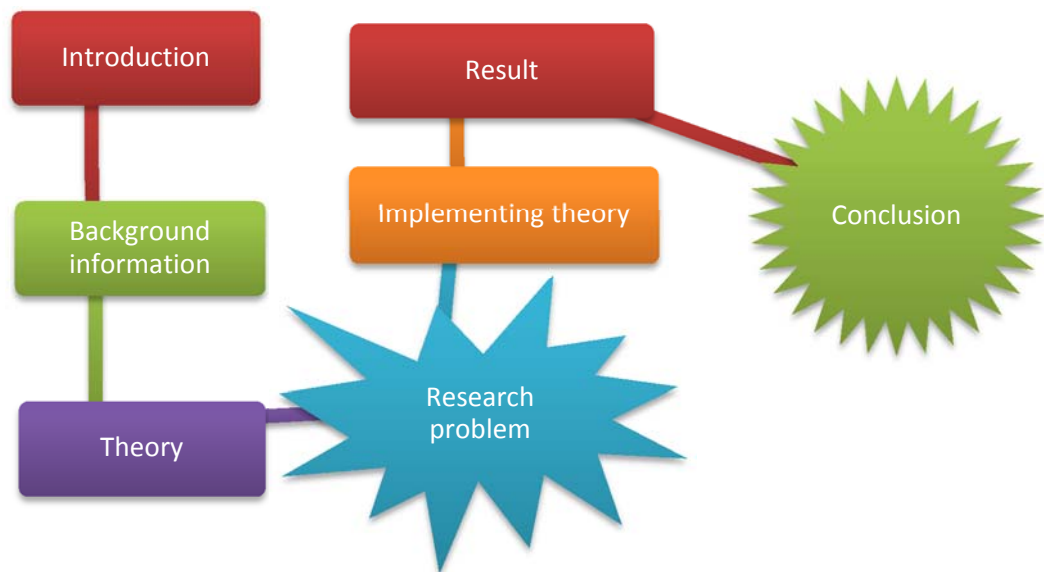


FIGURE 1. Theoretical framework

Firstly the guide will start with introduction and add some background information about event marketing. Theory plays a big part with gaining knowledge about the field from previous studies. Next we concentrate on research problem with implementing theory thus getting a result. Lastly we have the conclusion of the whole thesis.

### 1.5 Research methods and data collection

This thesis is written by using qualitative research method and deductive reasoning. Interviews were done during the planning stages of the event, and observance all though the project.

This thesis was originally commissioned by an automotive importer working in Helsinki, Finland. Unfortunately, due to changes in the company ownership, they had to withdraw from the whole event a month before the event was supposed to be held. Due these reasons, the whole event had to be cancelled.

This thesis is a functional thesis. Objectives for a functional thesis are to create guidelines for future use and to arrange or rationalize operation (Vilkkä-Airaksinen 2003, 5.). In this thesis, guidelines for SMB's for creating a new event



are created. Reporting in a functional thesis is described in narrational form and it is written in chronological order. The report includes all the steps required for the event and how problems were solved (Vilkkä-Airaksinen 2003, 82.).

## 1.6 Thesis structure

In this thesis the theory part studies all the things that should be taken into account when organizing events. This includes pre-event planning and promotion, the actual event and also post event tasks.

In the implementation phase these theories are put in to practice. An event called “Carfest” is planned according to the theory parts. Unfortunately arranging the event is not possible due to the reasons explained earlier.

As the event was not held, there will not be any actual post event tasks beyond the theory part.

The thesis will end to the conclusion and results.

## 2 EVENT MARKETING

The word “events” is defined by Shone & Parry by: “Those non-routine occasions set apart from the normal activity of a group of people” (Shone & Parry 2004, 4).

When dealing with the event marketing business, it is really hard to write theory that will work with all of the different variations. Different variations need different strategies on every area, from the planning stage through to the implementation. To be able to start building the right strategy for specific event, it is needed to identify the event. Events can be specified by category and typology.

### 2.1 Categories

To be able to understand event marketing better, it has to be divided in different categories. Event marketing is a big field of business and has many different subcategories.



FIGURE 2. Event categories (Shone & Parry 2004, 4)

In figure 2 we see the different categories of events distributed in four different categories. In these categories there still is frequent overlaps depending on the viewing angle of the event. For example christening is both personal and cultural event. The main category “Special events” include all personalized events possible.

## 2.2 Typologies

As events vary a lot, from a small birthday party to Olympic Games, the category of the event is not the only variable. Also complexity and uncertainty are some variables which should be taken into account before starting to draft out the event plan.

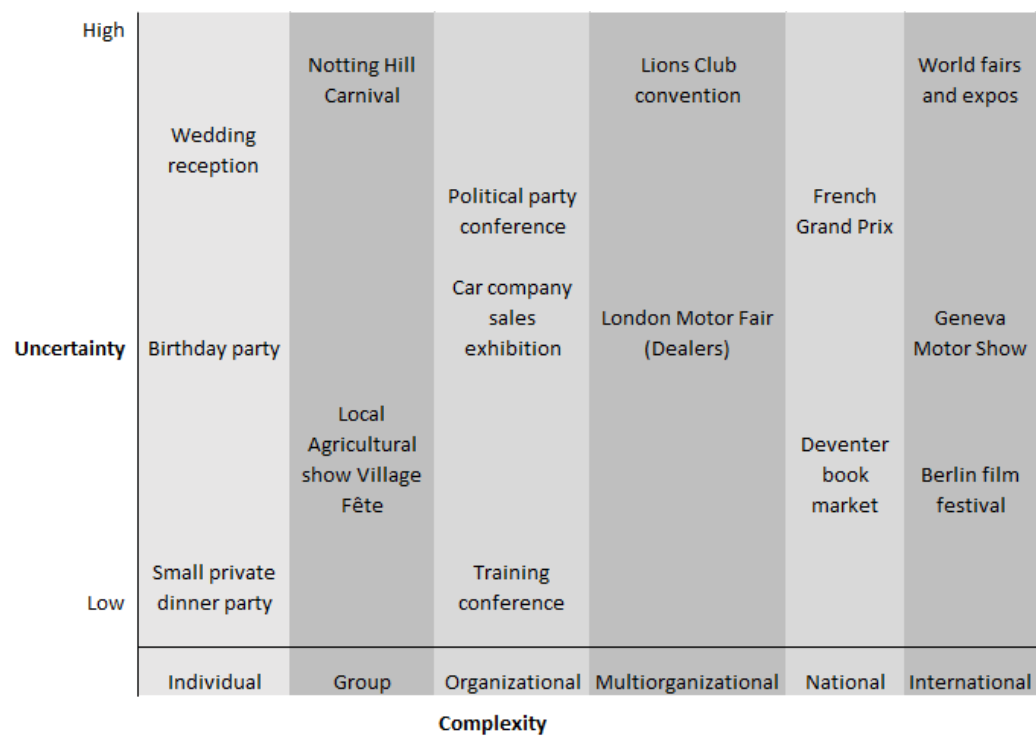


FIGURE 3. Event typologies (Shone & Parry 2004, 5)

In figure 3 the complexity has been divided in six different categories, from events concerning only individuals to internationally held events. Complexity is easy to understand from every event, but uncertainty can be problematic. With uncertainty initial doubt about cost, time schedule and technical requirements is meant. In plain terms, if cost, schedule and requirements of an event is easy to predict, it has low uncertainty index.

Some events might be more difficult to place on this table than others. A birthday party can be held for six persons or 160 persons. With six persons the uncertainty index is really low, but with 160 persons the index might even be higher than with a small wedding. There are a lot of variables and the typology table is just a rough guideline for couple of different kinds of events. When planning big international events, Berlin film festival is an example of an event with reasonably low uncertainty. The size of the event can be easily determined and the people participating usually are quite similar. The Olympic Games on the other hand have high uncertainty as the size can vary and the amount of things that can go wrong is vast. Also to The Olympic Games the customers come from all possible backgrounds and from all around the world.

### 3 PLANNING AN EVENT

The process of implementing event marketing as a part of company's promotion plan is a long process of various steps. Shone and Parry describes the process of event marketing as follows:

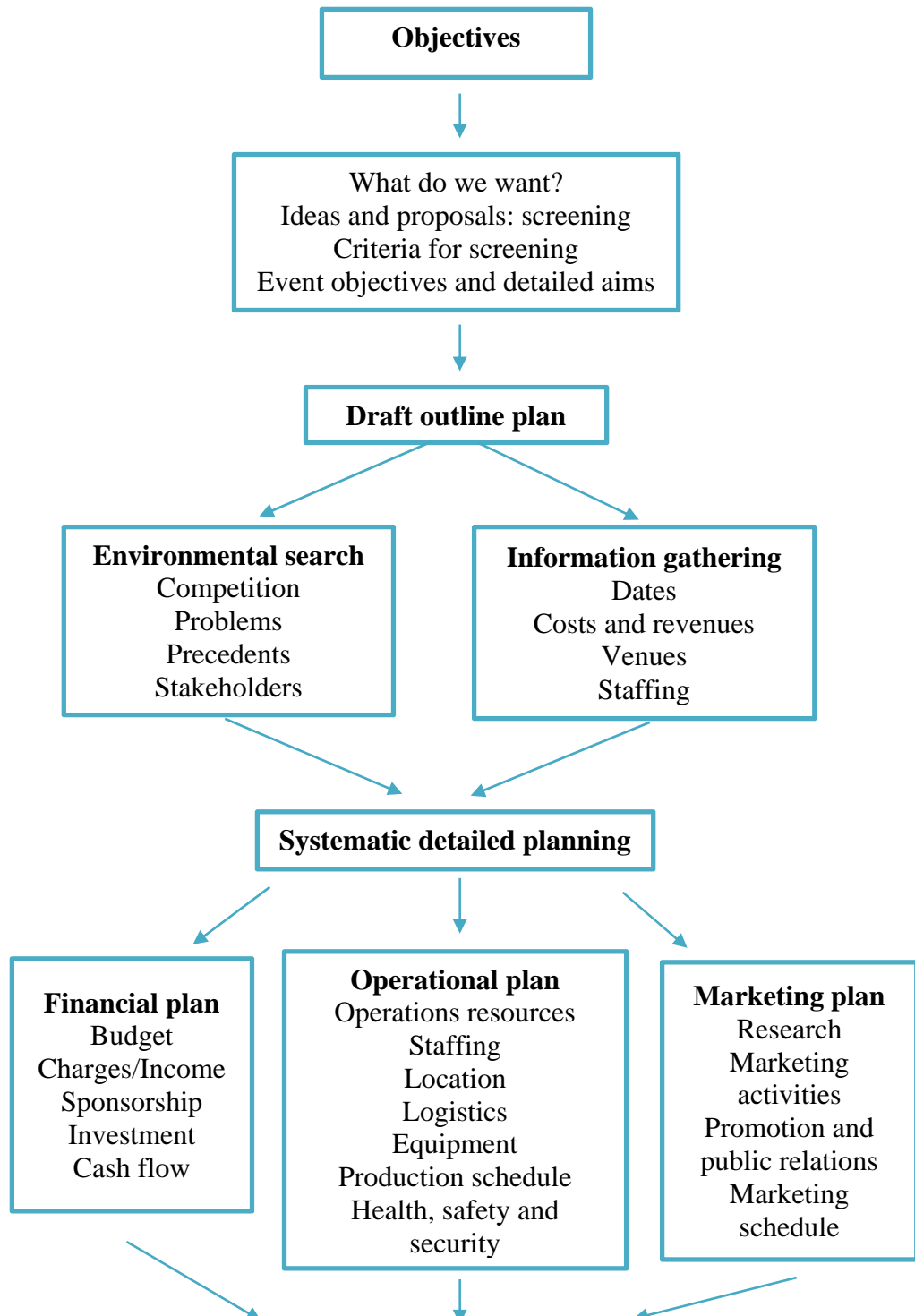




FIGURE 4. Information-gathering (Shone & Parry 2004, 83)

With figure 4 we see how the planning process of an event is structured. The process begins with a broad idea, which deepens into more and more details. The first step is to choose the objectives. After that, a draft outline plan is created to create a bigger picture. Finally, before the implementation, systematic detailed planning is needed in order to support the implementation as well as possible. After the event has been implemented, evaluation and feedback gathering is organized. In this thesis we will go through the structure and order of figure 3. One thing to take note is that is that not all of the following steps need to be taken into account in every event. They are very customizable according to different events.

### 3.1 Objectives

When starting to plan an event, Vallo & Häyrynen (2008, 149) suggests following steps to be taken:

1. Why is the event held?
2. For whom is it held?

3. What is it held?
4. How is it executed?
5. What is the content?
6. Who are the hosts/hostesses?
7. What kind of atmosphere is wanted?
8. What is the budget?

With these steps it is easy to get a broad outline of the happening. Answering these questions will give the planning committee easy start when planning the event. The answers will create the objectives at the same time, as the need and way to fulfill this need is thought out. Even though these ideas are rough and make the outline of the whole event, they still may and probably will change during the event if the event organizers are adjusting the event in changing situations. (Shone & Parry 2004, 84-87)

### 3.2 Outline plan

The outline plan takes the objectives and goes deeper into the matter. This includes searching for problems and thus opportunities. Studying the competition in detail will help you to find possible problems that they might have had with similar events in the past and help to avoid those. Also a research of possible competing events in the near areas during the same time is needed to ensure maximum attendance and interest from the target audience. To be able to do this the stakeholders need to be analyzed – who actually is the target audience.

Also deeper basic information gathering is needed in the outline plan. The outline plan is divided in two different categories, environmental search and information gathering (Shone & Parry 2004, 84-87).

#### 3.2.1 Environmental search

The environmental search includes four different parts. It concentrates on the things outside the actual event affecting the instance.

Competition – If there is any straight competition it should be taken into consideration. When dealing with SMB, it means to check if any other companies from your field are planning to organize similar events at the same time close by. It may affect your amount of participants. Also it is possible to learn tricks of the trade by visiting your competitions similarly held events beforehand.

Problems / Risk assessment – To avoid problems risk assessment should be done before the event. There are many ways to do risk assessment, and they might suite different events differently.

Precedents – This goes hand-in-hand with the competition phase. Searching for similar events held before and, if possible, even visiting them will be cheap and very useful information when planning your own event.

Stakeholders – A draft should be gathered about all the stakeholders taking part in the event. Different event have very varying stakeholder groups. They should be listed and the connection between actions and the stakeholders should be written down. Also importance of different stakeholders is a thing to consider (Shone & Parry 2004, 84-87).

### 3.2.2 Information gathering

Also the information gathering has four different sections. Information gathering focuses more on the internal issues of the event.

Dates - There are two different date-categories that needs planning. The pre-planning of the event with schedule of tasks to be done before the event, and the actual date of the event. They both need some special consideration according to the external factors.

Costs and revenues – A budget is the backbone of every event when working on a limited budget. Every action should be budgeted and some extra money budgeted for surprising costs. There always will be some.

Venues – Comparison, screening and choosing the venues is crucial. If the event is hard to reach for the potential customers, or you cannot fit everything you need



to the venue, the event will undoubtedly fail. Without a good venue it is really hard to make a good event.

Staffing – The staff should be divided to different work tasks, and trained accordingly. The staff is who your potential customers meet and they are the face of the company. If their knowledge of the product is poor, the image of the company the potential customer gets is also poor (Shone & Parry 2004, 84-87).

### 3.3 Systematic detailed planning

As the plan for the event deepens, more detail is needed. In this section the plan can be arranged in three sections: financial plan, operational plan and marketing plan. As the systematic detailed plan is the final stage before actually organizing the event, all the details need to be researched as thoroughly as possible. The more planning done prior the happening – the greater the success rate of the event is. Still it is important to be flexible when changes need to be made.

#### 3.3.1 Financial plan

In draft outline plan only costs and revenues were taken into account. In systematic detailed planning deeper view is needed. Detailed budget, charges and income, possible sponsorship, investment and cash flow are basic requirements for the event. As with all parts of event planning, the financial plan varies a lot depending on the nature of the event; promotional event will have much less income and sponsorship than a music festival. In this point the size of the event should be clear so more detailed financial plan is easier to create. The most important thing is to create the ticket price, if any, after costing – not only by estimate. (Shone & Parry 2004, 91). The main objective of all events should be to operate inside their own resources in order to keep the event sustainable. Basic financial management skills are required to be able to handle good financial plans. Things such budgeting, financial statements and income statements are necessary tools for all variations of events. Financial planning should be thought as an integral part of any event. (Bladen & Kennell & Abson & Wilde 2012, 161).

### 3.3.2 Operational plan

The operational plan is usually the most demanding one as it includes everything that has to be done in order to make the event happen. This part of the systematic detailed planning includes things like operations resources, staffing, detailed location (maps etc.), logistics, equipment, production schedule and health, safety and security. Issue of demand is very important in some events e.g. music festivals, and almost nonexistent in some, e.g. birthday parties. The more public the event, the more important it is to examine and survey the target audience. Who will be interested, how many people will be interested and when should the event be held are questions to think in public events. Market research or browsing possible previous events are good tools to start figuring out the target audience. (Shone & Parry 2004, 87)

One of the most important resource needed for event planning is time. Realistic timescale is hard to manage on new events but essential for creating a successful event. If there is too little time, there will be financial loss and even risk of backfire of the whole event.

Also the detailed risk assessment plan should be included under the operational plan.

### 3.3.3 Marketing plan

The marketing plan is quite straight forward. It includes marketing research, marketing activities, promotion and public relations and the marketing schedule. A marketing plan is needed with all kinds and sizes of events. Even on your own birthday parties you need to think how to make the invitation look interesting. In these kind of small events you only concentrate on the invitation and word-of-mouth, but as the events grow the marketing budget needs to grow too. Big festivals need a lot of marketing to be done to get as many paying customers as possible. (Shone & Parry 2004, 88)

In some cases sponsorship is needed to benefit both parties. Sponsors get visibility with the event, and the event will gain income from the sponsor. When

considering the value of sponsorship following things should be taken into consideration:

- How much coverage will the event receive in the media (press, radio, television, and web)?
- Who will be taking part in the event?
- Who will attend the event?
- What, in particular (value), might the sponsor gain by supporting this event?
- What help could be provided to make the partnership a success, such as the number of staff who might be allocated to look after the sponsor at the event?

(Bladen & Kennell & Abson & Wilde 2012, 178-179)

Answers to these questions are usually found using market research.

### 3.4 Preparation, implementation and legacy

Preparation is a big factor to a successful event. Deadlines need to be set to be ready on time for the event. This requires a lot of organizational skills and can be a hard task if the event is held for the first time.

The next step is to follow the systematic detailed planning and organize the event according to these plans. As mentioned before, a good organizer is able and willing to change the plans during the event.

Legacy means the closedown of the event. This includes evaluation, feedback, recording and usually handover to management of the project. Usually the visitors of the event are interviewed, either orally or with a questionnaire. Then the results are combined to a report which is included in the handover to the management.

Measuring the results of an event is crucial in order to justify the event for the financial decision-makers. Also it motivates the event organizers when they see the impact of the event. Getz (2005, 377) has seven different reasons why events should be evaluated.

1. Identify and solve problems
2. Find ways to improve management
3. Determine the worth of the event or its programmes
4. Measure success or failure
5. Identify and measure impacts
6. Satisfy sponsors and other stakeholders
7. Gain acceptance, credibility and support

The event can be evaluated using quantitative data or qualitative data. Bladen, Kennell, Abson & Wilde (2012, 373) have listed the methods in table 1.

TABLE 1. Evaluation data sources (Kennell, Abson & Wilde, 373)

Quantative data	Qualitative data
Attendee statistics, including market segmentation data	Attendee perceptions
Sales figures	Interviews with attendees and staff
Financial reports and accounts	Management notes and commentary
Economic impact analysis	Social impact analysis
Social impact analysis	Enviromental impact analysis

There are three evaluation perspectives; management, impacts and attendees. They all have their own way of seeing things even though they meet each other's in certain points. Some experiences are shared by all three groups. The relationship between different perspectives is visualized in figure 5.

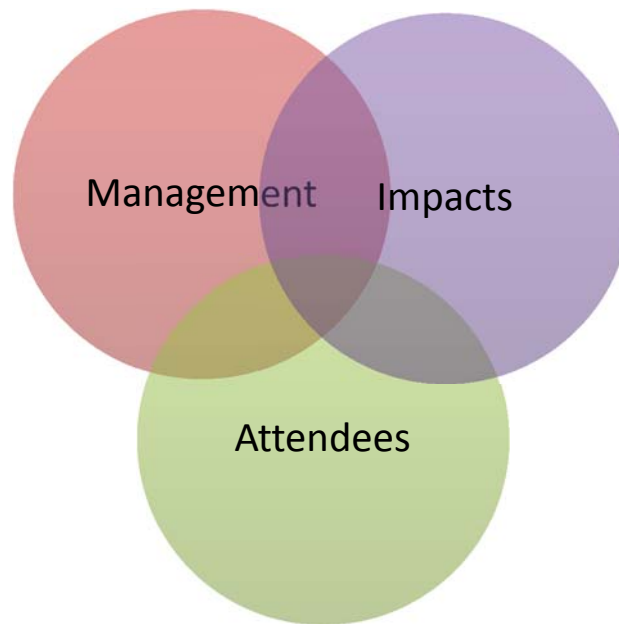


FIGURE 5. Perspectives in event evaluation (Bladen, Kennell, Abson & Wilde 2012, 373)

Bladen, Kennell, Abson & Wilde do go deeper into the subject. All of the different perspectives in event evaluation have their own data sets, and suitable methodologies how to evaluate that specific aspect. This can be seen in table 2. These methods, as almost every aspect of this thesis, need to be tailored to suite different kind of events. For example there cannot be any analysis of booking data if there is no bookings done in the event. Still the event organizer should be able to find some appropriate evaluation methods from the table in all kinds of events.

TABLE 2. Evaluation data sets (Bladen, Kennell, Abson &amp; Wilde 2012, 373-374)

Evaluation perspective	Data sets	Suitable methodologies
<b>Management</b>	Financial information	Audit of financial records and accounts
	Attendee statistics, including market segmentation data	Analysis of booking data Attendee survey
	Management notes and commentary	Analysis of meeting records and staff communications Interviews with management staff
	Staff perceptions of the event	Interviews with staff Staff surveys
<b>Attendees</b>	Attendee perceptions of the event	Interviews Surveys Analysis of social media related to the event
<b>Impacts</b>	Economic impacts	Quantative economic impact analysis
	Enviromental impacts	Quantative and qualitative enviromental impact analysis
	Social impacts	Quantative and qualitative social impact analysis

As usually events are meant not to be one-off, but to grow to be continuous, usually yearly, happenings, the usage of the evaluation data is crucial. It is not enough to just collect data, it is needed to be put in to use.

Tum, Norton & Wright (2006, 243) introduce the idea of control cycle. It has four chronological steps.

1. Setting standard specification
2. Feedback of actual performance
3. Measurement of performance against the specification
4. Correction of deviation from the specification

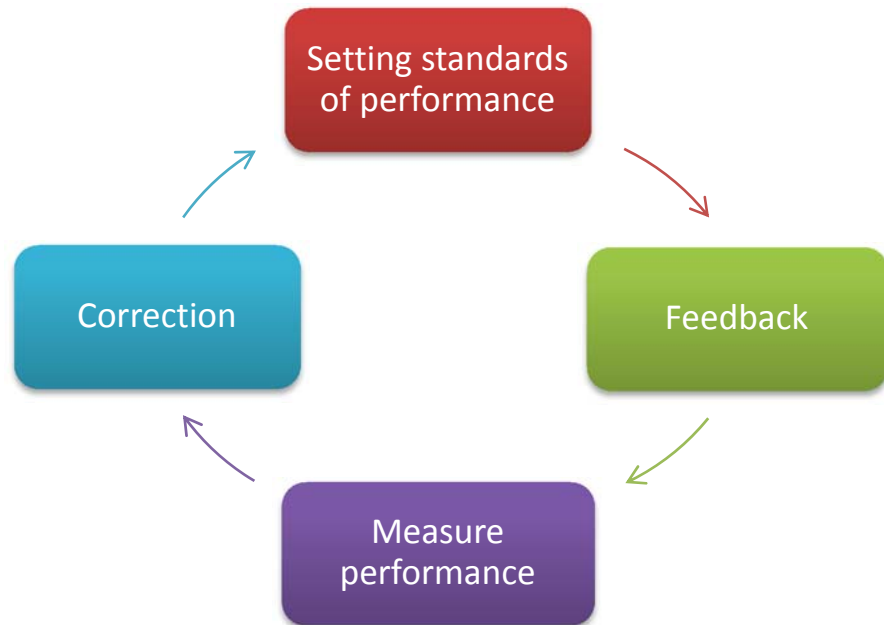


FIGURE 6. Control cycle elements (Tum, Norton & Wright 2006, 243)

Figure 6 visualizes the order and cycle of these control cycle elements. The evaluation and feedback should not be considered as the last task of an event project, but as the first one of the next one. As for the first event held the first step is to set the standards of performance; what is wanted to be the result of the event. Then feedback is gained from the appropriate facets and through the feedback the performance is measured. It will then be compared to the standards and corrected accordingly.

## 4 CASE: CARFEST

This chapter describes the selling and planning of the happening called Carfest. As the company this has been done to does not want to be mentioned in the thesis, it will be called “Car importer” and the happening “Carfest”.

One aspect of planning events is in some cases to sell the event to the company. This will be handled shortly in the next chapters. Also the planning stages and schedule of the event will be discussed. Also, as things do not always go as you wish they should go, the abortion of the project will be handled.

### 4.1 Target company analysis

The company is an automobile importer, which has its headquarters in Herttoniemi, Helsinki. It represents two different car brands in Finland. Both of these car brands are European. The company was founded in 2010. Previously it was known with a different name, but it changed during the merger with a bigger company. The importer company has 13 people working with them, and the turnover was 35 078 000 euros in 2012. Both of the car brands have 36 retailers spread across Finland. Three of the retailers are based in the capital city area, and the northernmost retailer in Rovaniemi. The car brands combined have 1.8% market share of the Finnish automotive market.

### 4.2 Selling the Idea

The idea for this thesis started when the author had an idea of a car promotion event for a specific car brand. Before the author was able to start planning it, the author had to contact the management of the importer of that car brand. After a week the author got the email address of the Marketing Manager of the car importer company. The author sent a brief idea of the event to her as an email. The email included only the basic concept of the author’s idea as follows:

1. Introduction of myself, my education and my interest to their company
2. Short summary of the idea: renting a place in downtown Helsinki and displaying the newest cars of the importer there. Also to attract more



crowd we would have some cars from the enthusiasts clubs of the same car brand.

3. Idea for the dates of the event
4. Idea of the budget and the expected salary
5. Suggestion for a meeting

With this structure the author sent an email and got a positive answer to the meeting, as they wanted to hear more of the idea. The key for the success to get the meeting and their interest was because the author knew that the company was making savings to their marketing budget and the author made the event with minimum budget without underestimating the total cost.

As they wanted to hear more from the author in a meeting, the author had to prepare some kind of presentation. As the author had no idea what kind of equipment the author would have for the presentation, the author prepared with a PowerPoint presentation which was with me on USB-stick and also printed out the slides for maximum of 5 people.

The presentation was built as follows:

1. Explanation of my motivation towards event planning and automotive industry.
2. The basic idea: 3-4 cars from three different sources (Car importer and two car clubs)
3. The date: July-August, Saturday and/or Sunday
4. The location: I chose three different locations in Helsinki and calculated their cost. I also studied their availability and assessed their demographic. Also floor plans of the locations were included.
5. Expenses:
  - a. The wages of salesmen from the resellers
  - b. The wages of promoters
  - c. Marketing material (flyers, balloons, etc.)
  - d. A marquee
  - e. Pre-event marketing
    - i. Two different newspaper-ad possibilities

ii. Two different radio-commercial possibilities

f. My costs and wage

6. Follow-through and tools for estimating the profit from the event

After my presentation the head of the importer company showed me the green light for continuing and actually starting to plan the event.

#### 4.3 Planning stage

As described in 3.1, there are eight steps to figure out when starting to plan an event.

1. Why is the event held?
2. For whom is it held?
3. Where is it held?
4. How is it executed?
5. What is the content?
6. Who are the hosts/hostesses?
7. What kind of atmosphere is wanted?
8. What is the budget?

In Carfest, the answers were thought over together with the Marketing Manager of the car importer company.

1. To strengthen the brand and thus increase revenue in long run.
2. The main target group is 25-40 year old men and women with children.
3. A promotional event displaying cars and offering music and amusement for children.
4. Half of Narinkkatori in Helsinki is rented for a day. Cars are driven there to be displayed and small stage for the band.
5. Showcasing cars, music from a local band, bouncy castle and face painting for kids.

6. Erkki will be in charge of putting the event together. A celebrity will be hired to be the host of the event by entertaining people and interviewing the salesmen about the different cars.
7. Relaxed, easy to approach.
8. 10000€

#### 4.4 Financial plan

As Carfest is a promotional event, it does not sell tickets or create revenue in any other way during the event. For this reason, the financial plan only needs a basic calculation of expenses. Later it is possible to calculate the approximate benefit of the event. This can be done in different ways depending on the market. For example deducting sales before the event from the sales after the event it is possible to see some financial benefits of the event. This needs the market situation to be roughly the same in both ends of the timeline.

TABLE 3. Carfest budget

<b>Carfest Budget</b>		All expenses exclude VAT 24% unless otherwise claimed			
Item	Quantity	Projected expense	Actual expense	Details	
Venue	1	1500	1500	Narinkkatori, sectors A and C	
Promoters	2	320	320	Two promoters for 8hrs	
Flyers	500	200			
Balloons	200	500			
Marquee	1	2200	2200	Rented from Rentatent	
Newspaper-ad	1	1769	1769	Metro-newspaper, 125x180mm	
Radio-ad	10	450	450	Radio City Helsinki, 30sec each	
Staff expenses	-	230		Erkki Häme's travel and accommodation expenses	
Presenter/Host	1	1000	1000		
Electricity	1	50			
Banners	2	300	300	Two banners with "Carfest" text	
Stage	1	Sponsored		Sponsored by a truck company	
PA Equipment	1	400	400	Rented from Soundmind	
Fingerfood	500	Sponsored		Sponsored by Wigren	
Red Carpet	1	350	350		
Miscellaneous	1	500			
<b>Total</b>		<b>9769</b>			

Table 3 shows the planned budget for Carfest, and some actualized expenses. Most of the expenses were definite, but some can change depending on quotations and the actual consumption.

Not all marketing materials are listed in the budget as the car importer owns a lot of marketing equipment from previous campaigns, such as beach flags, banners, bouncy castle and brochures. Also the band will be playing for free, as their singer is working for the retailer and they want to spread their name in the music scene of Helsinki.

#### 4.5 Operational plan

The operational plan is the most extensive and time consuming when organizing Carfest. There is a lot of actual work and planning, when the financials and marketing is quite straight forward.

##### Staffing

Four salespersons needed to introduce the cars to customers and to the host. They are crucial for the happening as customers will ask about the cars and they have to have all the knowledge possible. As the salespersonnel come from the retailers, they will have sufficient knowledge and business skills to handle the customers.

Also two promoters will be giving out balloons and flyers about the car brand and the collection. They will also work outside the event area marketing the event and trying to persuade more people in.

The host will be a Finnish car-related celebrity. He will talk through the loudspeakers about the time schedule, interview the salespersons about certain cars and interview the spokesmen of the enthusiasts' car clubs present. The host will keep the event alive and moving forward. As the customer change at least every half an hour, an hourly routine will be compiled with small changes. This way there will be no surprise questions to the salespersons which they would not be able to answer and thus look unprofessional.

I would be working as the organizer and sort out that everything will be there on time and everything is working as it should. I would stay at the event throughout to solve any upcoming problems.

#### Detailed location

The location was chosen by the Marketing Manager of the importer company from the three options I presented as options. The location is Narinkkatori, which is situated in Narinkka, 00100 Helsinki. The location is optimal as it is next to the Kamppi-mall, which is visited by 700 000 people every week. (Kamppi 2013)

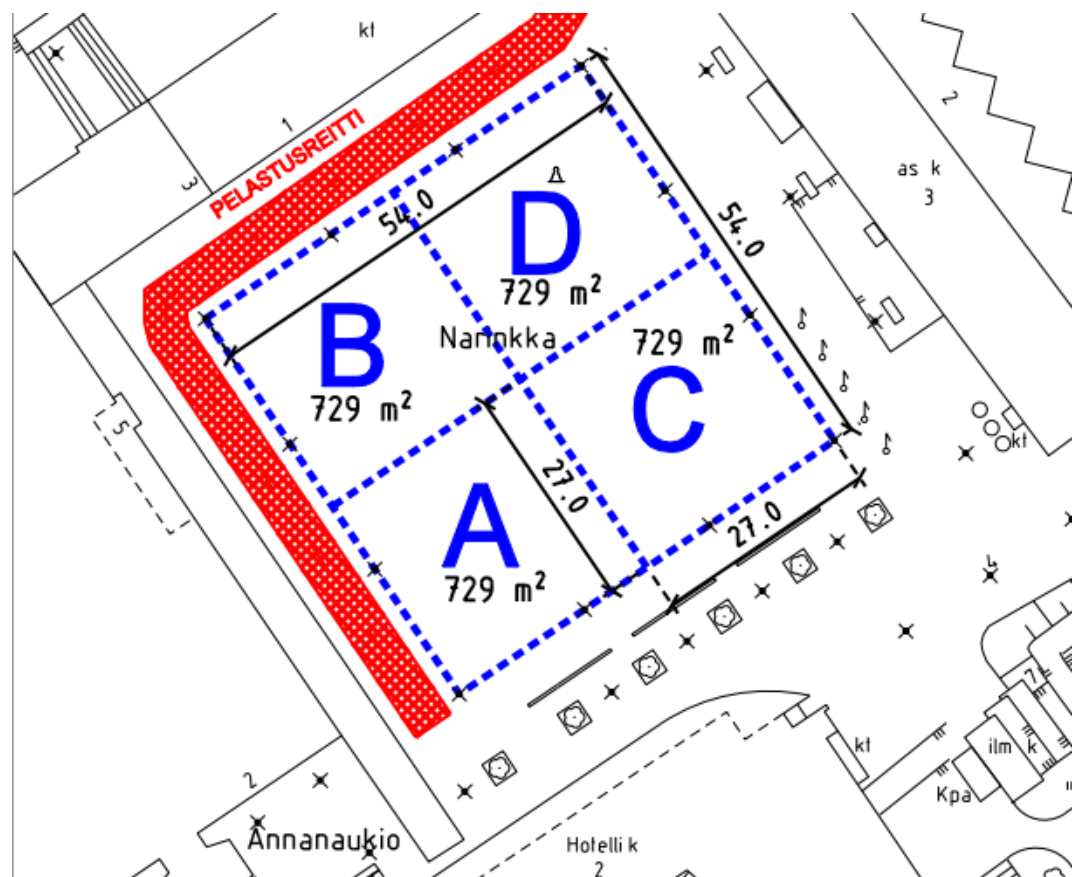


FIGURE 7. Narinkkatori sections (Helsingin kaupunki, Rakennusvirasto 2013)

Narinkkatori is spread in four different categories, with all of them costing the same. This is seen in Figure 7. They are all the same size. The only difference is

that in section D there is a statue which limits the space. For this reason Carfest was booked for the sections A and C. C gives the event some space, as A is close to Kamppi. This way the maximum amount of people will go through or close by the event area.

As seen from figure 7, the size of the location is 27m x 54m. To maximize the efficiency of the area some extra planning was needed. To help the planning of the area an empty sheet divided in 1m x 1m blocks was opened. This preliminary sketch is attached as figure 8. We were able to fit 31 cars in a way that they are fully operational – doors can be opened with no hassle. From this amount eleven are reserved for the two enthusiasts' clubs based in Finland. In the plan they are the purple and blue cars in the top left corner. The pink areas are meant for entertainment – far left one for the small stage, the one on the middle as the service desk and the far-right one for the bouncy castle. The orange spaces are reserved for the car model that is wanted to be highlighted on the event. There will be four cars in the lower left corner, one on a podium on the top right corner and one inside the tent. Also the red carpet-design can be seen in the picture. It invites people to walk through the area. The carpet runs from corner to corner to maximize the amount of vehicles the customers will see in order to attract interest to the most suitable car.

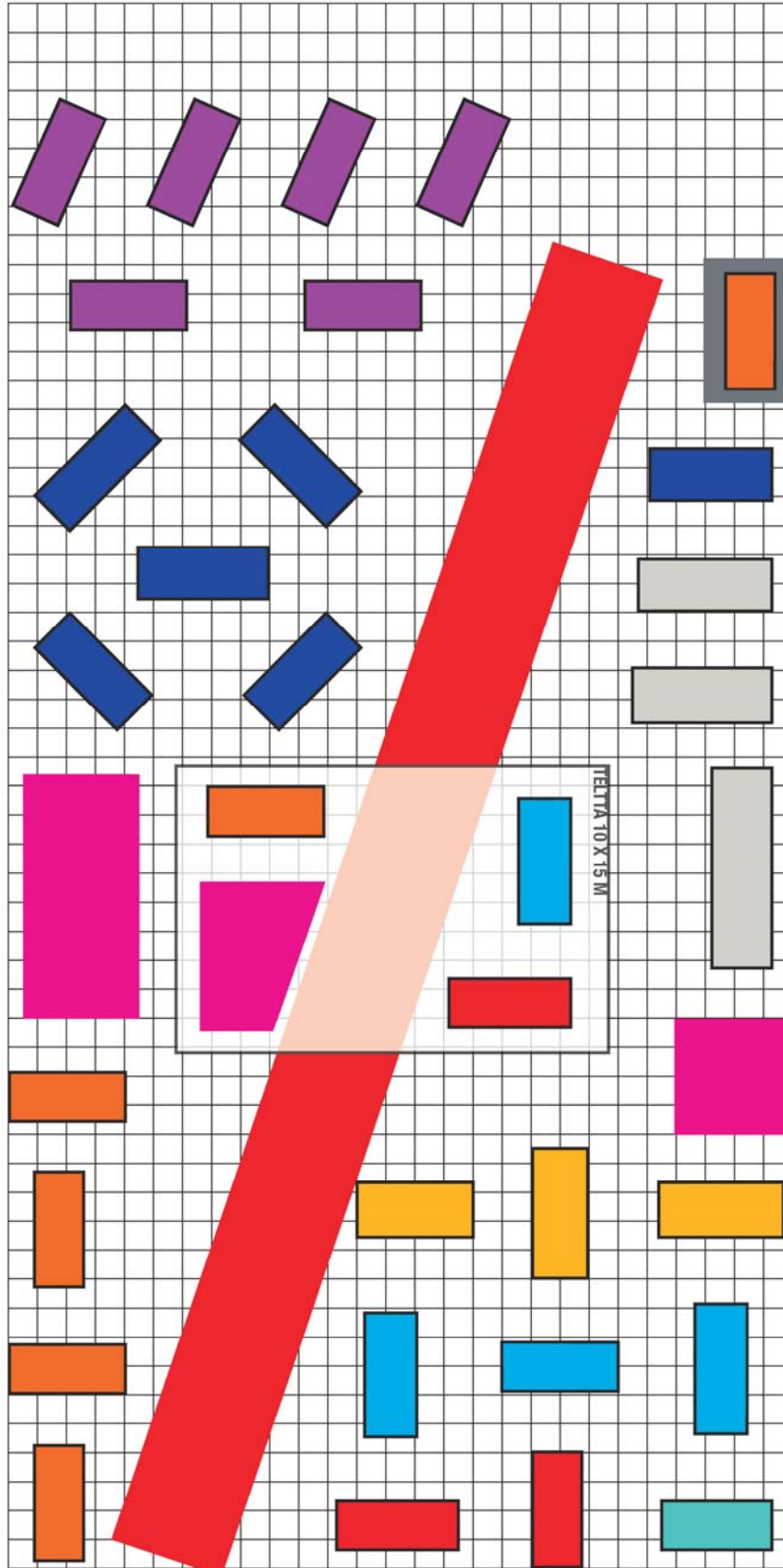


FIGURE 8. Carfest event area sketch

As mentioned before, there is also a tent in the middle of the area. This will help in the case of rain. The tent is sized 10m x 15m and has the information stand and three cars inside.

### Logistics

During Carfest there won't be any customer logistics as all customers are random bypassers. Even if there would be some invited people, there would not be any arrangements needed to be done for them, such as accommodation, transport etc.

As none of the equipment is located at the event area, a lot of logistics are needed. The schedule for everything needed in the location is described in table 4.

TABLE 4. Logistics timetable at Carfest

What	Where from	Who	Timetable
Display cars	Herttoniemi, Helsinki	Car retailer staff, Erkki, importer staff	Cars at location 06.00
Car clubs' cars	All around Finland	Car owners	06.00
PA Equipment	Soundmind HQ	Soundmind	06.30
Stage	Truck Company HQ	Truck Company	06.30
Marquee	Rentatent HQ	Rentatent	06.30
Fingerfood	Wigren HQ	Wigren	10.00
Red carpet, flyers, banners, beachflags, balloons	Herttoniemi, Helsinki	Car retailer staff, Erkki, importer staff	06.00

Most of the equipment needed is located at Herttoniemi, Helsinki in the headquarters of the importer company. As there are 20 cars that need to be transported from Herttoniemi to Kamppi and there are only ten people moving the cars, two trips are needed. All the extra equipment located in Herttoniemi will be transported inside the display cars. The cars will be loaded with the necessary materials the day before. The first batch of cars need to leave at 05.00 to be able to get all the cars to Kamppi by 06.00.



All the outsourced resources needed at Kamppi will be transported to the location by the company providing them. Schedule will be sent to the companies.

Production schedule

The production schedule includes the plan from the start of the event planning process until the end with the post-event activities. It includes all the things such as booking the venue and advertising. This schedule can be seen in table 5.

TABLE 5. Production schedule

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Contacting the business with proposal	■								
Getting the deal		■							
Making arrangements with suppliers			■	■					
Contacting car clubs			■	■					
Booking the venue				■					
Making the floor plan					■				
Booking the promoters					■				
Advertising					■	■			
Printing marketing materials						■	■		
Event held							■		
Post-event activities								■	■

I have included the whole process including the initial contact to the business with the idea of the event. These are usually not included in the production schedule but are now included as they give an idea of the big picture of the whole process. It is optimal to get the deal done with the business as soon as possible. With this project it happened six months before the event. As the event is not too big, this time is enough. If the happening would be spread across multiple days and would include many artists, then closer to year would be optimal time to have in order to get everything done in time.

After the deal was done, the arrangements with the suppliers started. Two months' time for this was more than enough as not that much supplies were needed. Also contacting the car clubs was done during this period. The venue was booked four

months before the event. This depends on the venue – some are more popular than others so earlier booking date may be required in other projects.

After the venue is booked, it is time to start planning the floor plan. At the same time the promoters should be booked – even though this can be done later if the floor plan is taking more time than expected. In this project they were done 2.5 months before the event. Also advertisement-plan was created. The radio commercials were recorded and newspaper-ad graphed. They were published two weeks before the event. Marketing materials were created by the importer company a month before the event. After this everything was ready for the event.

#### Event schedule

As Carfest is a one day event, the schedule should be quite strict and more importantly, realistic. As everything is needed to be done in one day, we splitted the schedule in three parts; pre-event schedule, event schedule and post event schedule. As the event is short and hectic, the schedule is for internal use only. This allows us to change the schedule if there becomes any need for that.

The pre-event schedule was agreed as follows.

**5.00** Starting to transport the display vehicles to the event area

**6.00** Starting to put lie down the cars (both display cars and car club cars) to the specific areas

**6.30** Starting to build the stage with the PA equipment

**7.30** Starting to build the marquee, lying down the red carpet, putting up banners, filling balloons and preparing the service desk

**9.00** Having the host, promoters and the band at the location.

**9.30** Sound check for the band

**9.30** Briefing the promoters

**9.30** Going through the host's sales pitches and introducing him to the corresponding salesperson.

The morning starts early as there are so many cars to be transported from the importers HQ to the event area. This cannot be done during the day before as we can start using the premises at 5.00 earliest and there is not any smart parking premises nearby. Also the cars are cleaned and polished the day before so they need to be kept inside in order to have them at the event as clean as possible.

The host and the promoters are briefed by email or phone couple of days before the event in order to minimize the need of briefing at the location. Still there is 30 minutes time to go through the tasks and introduce everybody to everybody. After the pre-event duties are done, we go to the event schedule.

**10.00** Doors open

**10.15 - 10.30** Band plays

**10.30 – 11.00** Host interviews salespersons

**11.00 – 11.15** Speech of the importer company's representative

**11.15 - 11.45** Host interviews salespersons

**11.45 – 12.00** Time for affiliates

**12.00 – 12.30** Band plays

**12.30 – 13.30** Host interviews salespersons

**13.30 – 14.00** Band plays

**14.00 – 14.45** Host interviews salespersons

**14.45 – 15.00** Time for affiliates

**15.00 – 15.45** Host interviews salespersons

**16.00** Event ends

As said before, this event schedule is only internal. We kept each part of the schedule quite short to gather interest from many different potential customers. The host interviews are almost all the same, as no customer will spend more than one hour at our event area. The band plays three times, total of 75 minutes. The total amount of host interviews are 2 hours 45 minutes. When the host is not on air, he will be talking to customers about the cars. Any of the parts can be cut away or changed to another time.

Post-event schedule:

**16.00** Car club cars, Band and host leave

**16.15** Start dismantling the marquee, banners etc. with all the workforce

**16.45** Promoters leave

**17.00** Start driving cars back to the importers HQ

**18.00** Expected time to end all activities

As the promoters are hired for eight hours, they will help with packing everything back to the cars. Everything that was outsourced will be dismantled and taken back by the corresponding company. Transporting the cars back to the importers HQ will take about an hour. Everything should be finished by 18.00.

Risk assessment

As with any events, there are some risks which can affect the outcome of the event. The nature of this event is good towards risks because of the size of the event and thus things can be adjusted accordingly. If not all of the cars do not show up, that is not a bad thing as cars can be moved to fill any gaps in the area. Also if the host is sick, there is a lot of salespersons in the area who can host the event. Overcrowding might be a potential risk, but as the subject is so narrow (specific brand cars) and the band is not well known, the likelihood of that happening is really small. When working in a center of a big city there are always

a big possibility of unwanted crowd, but as we work at Kamppi, they have security staff working who can be called to take care of them. The effect to the event is then only slight. Two things we came across which could affect the event a lot. Firstly if the electricity goes away, we can't host the event and the band can't play. The likelihood of that is rare, as there are many connection points to electricity and it is ran by a company which has good reputation and has 24/7 assistant on problem cases. The second major risk is rain. As august is the month that rains most in Finland (Napsu.fi, 2013), this is also quite likely. Rain means that people won't be outside, and as our tent is quite small we can only fit our staff inside it.

The risk assessment can be seen in table 6. There the amount of effect on each risk is assessed with rating of 1-3, and also the likelihood of that risk to happen is assessed with the same rating. The final risk rating is gained by multiplying the effect with the likelihood.

TABLE 6. Risk assessment at Carfest

Risk Ratings							
Hazard	A: Worst case scenario			B: Likelihood			Rating
	Slight 1	Serious 2	Major 3	Rare 1	Possible 2	Likely 3	A x B
All cars not showing up	x				x		3
No electricity			x	x			3
Host sick	x			x			1
Rain			x		x		6
Overcrowding		x		x			2
Unwanted crowd	x				x		2

### Risk control plan

The risk control plan in small events like this can be quite concise.

The major risk was rain. As there is nothing that can be done to the rain itself, the importer ordered umbrellas with their advertisement in order to give to potential customers. This is a small cost as they will spread the brand image for months, even years in the future. And in the case that there will be no rain, these umbrellas can be used in other events in the future.

As for other risks, there is not really other things to do than having phone numbers available. For the electricity risk, having the electric company's phone number ready is needed. For the unwanted crowd the number for the security company was given to the staff.

### 4.6 Marketing plan

As the event is really small in size, the marketing used to promote the event was also limited. Four different ways to market was used. Limiting the marketing to these means also meant savings on the marketing budget.

#### Community marketing

As the car importer company does a lot of co-operation with the car enthusiasts' clubs, it is a good and free way to promote the event. As the importer company gives the two clubs free publicity on the event, they will promote the event to their members in order to get them to participate. These people are actually very good potential customers for the importer, as they already have positive feelings about the car brand. Also having the clubs present at the event will interest many different kind of people to come to the actual event area. The other club is concentrated on old cars, and the other one to racing and styling of the car brand in case. This means that young people who love taking special care their cars are also interested about the event, and older people who used to own, or their parents used to own, these kind of cars are easily drawn to the event.

The car clubs will promote the event mainly at their internet pages. They both have active forums where the members discuss about cars and everything around the subject. They both have their own sections for different kind of events, and there an ad for the event will be put. The importer company gives the virtual version of the flyer and that will be there with the written information.

The work together with the clubs is crucial as it is a very efficient way to contact a very potential customer group without spending any actual funds. In this way of marketing everybody benefits – both the importer company and the car clubs. It will also strengthen the relationship between the car clubs and the importer company, and also the car clubs to each other.

#### Radio advertisement

A simple 30 second radio advertisement will be made. It will be played in Radio City Helsinki. Radio City Helsinki was chosen because it has adequate listener number compared to the price of the ad. They have 90.000 listeners every week, with target group of 25-45 year olds. The listener profile is:

9-24 year olds	9.1%
25-44 year olds	56%
45+ year olds	44.9%

(Radiomedia, 2013)

This suites the events target group very well.

The advertisements will be played spread during the last days before the event and also two at the day of the event. As morning listeners are the biggest radio listener group, the ads during that day will be played during the morning peak period, from 7.00 to 8.00. The ads during earlier days will be also played during peak periods, in the morning and in the afternoon. The ad is recorded in the marketing department of the importer company.

### Newspaper advertisement

Metro newspaper was chosen to have the events' advertisement. Metro is a free magazine which is spread in public transportation and also in hotspots in the city center. These include places like shopping malls, offices, schools, restaurants, coffee shops and bus and train stations. It has 251 000 readers daily and 66% of the readers are 15-49 year olds (Metro, 2013). Usually when young adults travel from suburbs to the city, they tend to use public transport and thus this is a great way to spread the information about the event.

The ad will be 125x180mm in size, and will be embedded in the text. It will be printed in the paper day before the event. The layout of the ad will be designed in the marketing department of the importer company.

The ad will only be printed once as this mean is quite expensive for the limited budget. The option was to have many smaller ads, or one big one. The latter option was thought to be better for our company as we reckon that the bigger ad will gain more attention. If a small ad is published weeks before the event, only a fraction of people will remember it later on.

### Flyer advertisement

Flyer advertisement will only be used on the day of the event. The promoters will walk around the event area, and depending on the popularity of the event area, even further. The promoters will spread the flyers to potential customers and tell them a short summary of the event idea. When the potential customers have children with them, balloons will be mentioned to gain their interest.

500 flyers will be printed, and they are designed and printed in the marketing department of the importer company.

## 4.7 Implementation

As discussed in the introduction, unfortunately the company I was planning the event with, went through a merger with another company and the new board of directors said that they can't proceed with the event now as they need to aim their



resources to changes in the structure of the company. It is still possible that the event will be held at a later date but unfortunately this thesis will only have the theoretical parts and the planning stages.

#### 4.8 Legacy

In order to find out the success of the event, and make suggestions how to make the event better in the future, two things were planned. This step is crucial in order to make the management understand the importance of the event and to get the opinion of the customers about the event.

Firstly the sales data were to be checked. As the event aimed to increase the brand image of the car brand, the amounts of test drives were to be checked from month before the event, and month after the event. They were supposed to be also compared to last year's data of the same times to see if there is an annual change during these times. Also with the same technique the sales amounts were supposed to be compared to see how much the event increased sales.

The important thing to remember when doing a straight comparison with sales growth and event costs is that the sales growth is not the only benefit of a sales event. The image of the company rises, and the potential customer will know the products better. If they had no opinion about the brand before, the event can make that image positive. They can even encourage their friends to look up this brand when having a debate between different car brands. So some results are immediate, and some come over time. Still some straight sales growth should be gained, but as for this project no strict goal was set as the event was a first.

Secondly interviews to the customers were planned. As the customers changed their contact details with the sales personnel in the event, a query would have been sent to the customers two weeks after the event.

As for people working in the event, it is hard to see how the customer sees the event. This is the reason some questionnaires were planned to be sent.

Anonymous feedback is the most honest. The only problem with questionnaires is how to lure people to fill them out. For this reason, a lottery amongst the

participants was planned. The prize would have been a car to use for a month for free.

In the questionnaire, which can be found as Appendix 1, a lot of different questions were formed. The questions were divided in three parts. Firstly questions about the overall picture of the event were asked. How did the quest enjoy the event area, did they enjoy the program and was the cars collection present suitable.

Secondly the customer service levels were assessed. There were five questions about the quality of customer service. The first one was the overall question with asking that was the customer happy with the customer service provided. Then we added questions about the amounts of politeness, knowledge and professionalism. Also we asked that did the salesperson survey about the appropriate car option thoroughly enough. The final question about customer service levels was that was there given an offer about a car in the event.

Lastly one of the most important questions, how did the image of the brand change during the event? This is crucial as the aim of the event was to improve sales and make the brand more known and have positive images in consumer's minds.

The last field was open to give feedback. The questionnaire was intentionally left short to attract as many answers as possible. Even though there was a possibility to win a prize by completing the survey, still a long list of questions would turn off many customers.

## 5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we conclude this project by examining the results. After that I have some suggestions for future development on this field of marketing. Then I have some self-evaluation about the event and the results.

### 5.1 Examination of results

With this thesis, the final result is incomplete. As, because of the reasons mentioned before, the event was not organized the results of the actual event are not available.

Still there are results of implementing the theory. There is very comprehensive amount of detailed planning done, which could be implemented as an event in the near future.

Only with the planning carried out it is possible to see that SMB can organize full size marketing events with reasonably small budgets. This event was on the prime spot of the whole country and still the costs did not rise very high. The costs can be lowered by doing sponsorships and co-operation with other companies. That might be suitable for the smallest companies.

As for the research questions, all of them were answered in this thesis – some more comprehensively and some less. It is possible for SMB to create full size promotional events with limited budgets in Finland. Also the preparations needed when organizing promotional events were dealt very comprehensively in this thesis. The marketing ways were covered also. Answering the last question, what size of budget will be sufficient, is a bit harder. It all depends on the resources available and the amount of marketing needed. As the marketing costs can easily be the biggest liability, having the database for potential customers would cut the cost down hugely. Lack of this kind of database will then rise the costs as you still need potential customers in the event.

## 5.2 Suggestions for future development

The main thing to develop this thesis is to implement the plan done. As the planning was so detailed and tailored to this certain company, it really can't be done to other companies.

As it was seen from the detailed planning that this kind of events are possible to organize for SMB, I suggest that the case company will implement this event eventually, and continue making it an annual event and to grow it to something the car owners want to participate to. It could start a new trend in the car industry. The artists could be upgraded to more known ones to attract more audience, and more area could be hired for the event. These steps should be done year by year and the results should be followed carefully.

The event should be improved with emphasis on the visitor experiences and wishes. The questionnaire, or possible interviews, are the most important tool in order to make the event more desirable for current customers and potential customers.

## 5.3 Self-evaluation

I have planned quite a few events in the past. All of them have been personal events with attendees varying from five to 50 persons. This was a whole different level of event organizing, with a real budget. I did learn a lot of new things about event management and it really did help me to grow towards having more professional grip on this field of business. As this is something I want to do in the future, it was a great lesson.

The thing I learned the most is that you can never know what will happen next. Here, the big thing was the cancellation of the whole project. During the planning process, from the initial meeting to the withdrawal meeting, I got really good feedback from the company. They even mentioned that if, and when, they will organize an event like this, they will hire me as their event manager. Thus, I reckon I did a good job with the planning stage. Unfortunately as the event never got held, I still miss the actual experience of with running the project from the

floor of the event. This is something I need to be able to do soon in order to understand the business more clearly.

One thing I learned was to outsource the tasks you are not good at to other people. With this project we had the joy of having the marketing department of the company available, so I did not have to find out where to design the ads, the banners or the radio ads. If there would not have been this department, then outsourcing these actions to an advertising company would have been required. This is something I will add as a cost when doing expense calculations in my future company.

I also learned that the schedule planning might just be the most important thing of the event planning process. This is something I have learned even before with the smaller scale projects. When you have a carefully thought out schedule with a lot of details and it is followed by you and your group, things tend to happen very smoothly.

## 6 SUMMARY

Car importer companies compete on the pages of newspapers and magazines with who has the nicest and most clever advertisement on their new car models. The industry uses quite basic means of marketing – including TV and Radio.

Event marketing means to have an event and market your product through that. It needs involvement from the potential customer – not only browsing the magazine or listening to the radio.

The main objective in this thesis was to find out whether a SMB can organize a big marketing event. The goal was to produce a big, at least on Finnish scale, marketing event for a Finnish car importer company with a limited budget. The event was planned in Narinkkatori, Helsinki.

The theoretical part included all aspects that should be taken into account when organizing events. First we described the different means of event marketing. Then we went through the whole process of event marketing planning, starting from the screening of objectives all the way to the legacy. The marketing plan, financial plan and operational plan were all discussed at all the levels involved when planning such events.

The case gave us the idea of the Carfest in Helsinki. We started implementing the theory by going through it step by step, doing the budget, time schedules, logistics, marketing, risk analysis, etc. Unfortunately the actual implementation of the plans were not executed as the company had organizational changes and could not go through with the plans as of now.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire created to be given in the event

## Carfest 2013

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Carfest pyytää apuanne. Ohessa on asiakastyytyväisyyskysely. Vastaamalla kyselyyn voitte vaikuttaa tuleviin tapahtumiin sekä osallistutte palkinnon arvontaan. Kyselyn voi palauttaa nimettömänä, mutta mikäli tahdotte osallistua arvontaan, ovat yhteystiedot pakolliset. Mikäli tahdotte että teihin otetaan yhteyttä, voitte jättää yhteydenottopyynnön tällä lomakkeella.

Nimi:

Osoite:

Puhelinnumero:

1. Olitko tyytyväinen tapahtumaan ylipäättänsä?

---

En lainkaan     Vähän     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

1a. Oliko tapahtumassa mielestäsi kiinnostava autovalikoima?

---

Ei lainkaan     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

1b. Oliko tapahtuman ohjelma kiinnostavaa?

---

Ei lainkaan     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

1c. Oliko tapahtuma-alue selkeä ja sopiva?

---

Ei lainkaan     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

2. Olitko tyytyväinen asiakaspalvelukokemukseesi?

---

En ollut     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Olin

2a. Olivatko sinua palvelleet työntekijät kohteliaita?

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Eivät olleet     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

2b. Oliko työntekijöiden asiantuntemus ja tietämys vaaditulla tasolla?

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Ei ollut     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

2c. Kartoittivatko myyjä teille sopivan autovaihtoehdon/vaihtoehdot kattavasti?

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Ei     Vain osittain     Enimmäkseen     Kyllä

2d. Tehtiinkö teille tarjous autosta tapahtumassa?

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Ei     Kyllä

3. Miten mielipiteenne muuttui (kyseistä automerkkiä) kohtaan tapahtuman ansiosta?

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Reilusti huonommaksi     Vähän huonommaksi     Vähän paremmaksi     Reilusti paremmaksi

Kommentteja tapahtumasta / parannusehdotuksia:

Kyllä, tahdon osallistua arvontaan.

Kyllä, tahdon että minuun otetaan yhteyttä.

Paljon kiitoksia kyselyn täyttämisestä.