

# Event management dissertation

Business, Management



## **An Application of the Events Management Concept in the Marketing Success of Clubs and Bars**

This proposal presents a research initiative that aims to explore the events management concept and how this applies to the marketing success of clubs and bars. This paper focuses on the bar and club "scene" in London. This paper also enumerates the factors leading to the identified issue thereby leading to a statement as supported by aims and objectives of the project; these are as follows:

- To develop a framework of evaluation on the applicability of events management concepts as integral elements to the marketing success of bars and clubs.
- To create a workable research framework as based on the assessment of actual movements and developments in the dynamics of bar and club business in the city, especially as to how the application of events management concepts make a difference to the business of the bars and clubs. This includes both primary and secondary research.
- To identify the factors leading to entertainment establishment success in the context of the marketing mix, with an emphasis on the promotional dimension.
- To create a foundation to this research a preliminary review of related literature is conducted.

The identified literature examined topics on events management, promotional marketing, and background research on nightlife in the context of bars and clubs. This proposal therefore approaches the research from a

practical perspective due to the amount of theory and concept applicability that will be tested to a specific nightclub. This initiative will partner with a specific bar/s or club/s that are willing to have their business examined when applying a specific set of events management concepts.

Because of this, the main concern of this study is the amount of cooperation these bar/s or club/s will give, in addition to the stated limitations of this project which will be discussed in the next sections of this paper. This proposal therefore outlines the methodology that will be undertaken. The approach to the methodology mixes qualitative factors through interviews and the comparison of gathered data from the participating establishments, and quantitative approaches as based on surveying bar and club customers in which they determine which applied event management concept works for them best.

The recommended research framework of the institution is also outlined through the resources and programme. Last but not the least, this proposal also presents a contingency plan should the research encounters critical obstacles that may jeopardize its process and development. Introduction This proposal presents an outline on the intended methodology that will be utilised for the proposed research initiative evaluating the application of events management in the bar and club scene. The targeted area of evaluation are the selected bars and clubs in the London area.

This proposal contains a preliminary review of literature which further gives light to the background of this research topic. The relevant issues to be addressed are identified thereby contributing greatly to the framework of this proposal. Problem Background and Definition In order to establish the

important fundamentals of the problem of this research, it is important to look at the background of events management, especially as to the concepts that surround this practice and strategy. In definition, Silvers discussed project management as,

"[... ] the process by which an event is planned, prepared, and produced. As with any other form of management, it encompasses the assessment, definition, acquisition, allocation, direction, control, and analysis of time, finances, people, products, services, and other resources to achieve objectives. An event manager's job is to oversee and arrange every aspect of an event, including researching, planning, organizing, implementing, controlling, and evaluating an event's design, activities, and production."

Based on these genres and the definition of events management, it can be gathered that although the concept is to manage a happening, function or an affair, there is still the strong aspect of marketing involved. This is because it can be observed that these events aim to gather people with special purposes, and with this, these events already identify a particular market segment. The identification and the formation of a market segment is critical in any marketing activity.

These market segments thereby make marketing initiatives more focused and targeted on a specific group. As Michman explains, these segments create a lifestyle group which also gives way to their demographics, communication and values; these information are therefore important when it comes to formulating marketing strategies for the intended market (3). Concepts on event management thereby utilises a combination of many

factors. Although events are strongly related to marketing, there are also of course the other elements that need to be implemented.

Silvers presented these through the identification of the different knowledge domains in which the author divided as follows: administration, operations, marketing and risk management. These domains include a list of many activities, the following of which are just a partial list of the tasks involved in managing events:

- Site surveying.
- Client services.
- Budgeting.
- Management of cashflow.
- Logistics.
- Scheduling.
- Security.
- Site and theme designed.
- Location/site management.

Goldblatt also mentioned the following important aspects of event management:

1. Administration - the administration aspect deals with the management and leadership that runs the event. This may include the involvement of an events company that takes over through the many stages of events planning and management. The administration deals with many factors including the design of the event, the financial planning, control and strategy, and the quality aspects of the event as seen in the

deliverables and the performances of the staff and human resources employed specifically for that event.

2. Coordination - coordination is another important aspect in event management, this is the aspect in which s The coordination activities include the formulation of the production schedule, the selection and the strategy for catering, choosing the best suppliers and vendors for services in audio, video lighting, sound and effects, and the providers of music and entertainment such as performers and artists.
3. Marketing - a successfully marketed event can give way to a successful affair.

The events management concept strongly utilises marketing as a weapon that makes the event possible and at the same time, to profit from the events. Many events market their affairs to corporate sponsors who provide the funding and the resources to make the event possible; in return, the event markets these sponsors through the promotional platform. The event profits from the event itself in addition to those which can be also used to pay off some balances in the fees.

Hence, there is the significant exchange of marketing aspects in event management because it makes use of the promotional platform as a means to bring forth entertainment, information, and the other objectives of the event.

Legal, Ethical and Risk Management - events are still subject to many requirements and considerations especially in the legal, ethical and risk management aspects. Event managers need to secure the necessary

permits and licenses needed for the affair. Contracts are also drawn especially if it involves lucrative partnerships with service providers.

Ethical implications of the transactions and the potential effects of the event also need to be considered. Last but not the least, risk management is an important practice that organisations are also implementing. Risk management serves as an important element in order to prevent the possibilities of risks, and should any risk takes place, the management is ready with a contingency plan (Culp). One important note about events management is that it is also reflective of the project management practices; in fact, events are projects in itself because of its very nature.

In the context of project management, projects are defined through the following characteristics (Webster & Knutson, 2-3):

- Projects are unique undertakings.
- Projects are composed of independent activities.
- Projects create a quality deliverable.
- Projects involve multiple resources .
- Projects are not synonymous with the products of the project.
- Projects are driven by the Triple Constraint: time, resources, technical performance (quality).

Based on these characteristics of project management, it can be gathered that an event is also a project.

What distinguishes an event from other projects is that it has a very strong marketing element because it involves many actors, from the provider of the product or service and the prospective clients. Events assembles people

therefore there is a collective sense of objective. Because of this attendance, events therefore have a strong promotional element (Soares). When it comes to bars and clubs, it is important that these establishments market themselves effectively in order to maintain their businesses.

These establishments rely on customer count as a source of profits especially as they sell products like food and drinks, and services such as dancing and other entertainment-based gatherings. It is therefore important that these bars and clubs ensure they have a strong patronage and customer flow in order to assure that their businesses remain competitive. In observing the bar and club "scene", there is much competition especially in a city like London. In looking at resources for these events such as TimeOut, there is always a list of bars and clubs with their respective "events".

These events may include a theme night, a special guest DJ or performer, a concert, and other gimmicks. It can be also observed that these events are strongly driven by sponsorships such as partnerships with relevant products and services like alcoholic drinks, fashion labels, and other lifestyle related products and brands. In this regard, when it comes to the application of events management concept in bars and clubs, it is evident that these have had some successes. This therefore elicits close inspection as to how these concepts are applied and which concepts are successful.

It should be noted that due to the strong marketing element in these initiatives, these bars and clubs are also subject to what is known as a product life cycle --- a cycle in which a product or service may start to plateau and decline. Hence, this reflects as to why bars and clubs may have their "time"; some bars and clubs that were famous a few years ago may have already

shut down or are losing customers because new concepts get introduced in the market. It can be also observed that certain event themes also went through their peak and lost their lusters; examples are the raves, the cream parties, and the bubble parties, among others.

Hence, this shows that although generally, events management concepts work in the context of bars and clubs, they don't work all the time and are not necessarily sustainable. This thereby shows the strong association between a project and an event --- something that is unique that has beginning and an end. This research therefore aims to explore the events management concept at greater depths by means of looking at the actual applications and the industry practices.

As certain events tend to become "old", the turnover of new events concepts need to be examined, especially in a market with changing preferences and values. In addition to the aspect of events concepts, the management aspect is also examined by this paper. This is especially important as the market is volatile, and the entertainment and leisure sectors tend to get easily affected by economic and market challenges. This paper examines how events actually take place and how certain strategies may need to be formulated in order to respond to challenges in resources.

This therefore bring up the issues on cost management and how bars and clubs intend to profit from their events. This may then bring up certain events management concepts and applications from other event genres as applied in affairs that take place in bars and clubs. The events management industry in the UK is a million-pound industry considering the number of events held in the country, from conferences to major concerts. The industry

also involves many sectors including those from the hospitality, entertainment and leisure services.

This research therefore localises an exploration of events management in a specific context, and identifies the important factors that can affect the relevant businesses and establishments in this sector. Aims and Objectives In order to have a substantial insight on events management concepts in the context of bars and clubs establishments, this research therefore aims to achieve and implement the following:

1. To develop a framework of evaluation on the applicability of events management concepts as integral elements to the marketing success of bars and clubs.
2. To establish how events management applications are integral to the success of the bars and clubs sectors.
3. To create a workable research framework as based on the assessment of actual movements and developments in the dynamics of bar and club business in the city, especially as to how the application of events management concepts make a difference to the business of the bars and clubs. This includes both primary and secondary research.
4. To identify the factors leading to entertainment establishment success in the context of the marketing mix, with an emphasis on the promotional dimension.

Based on the sourced literature, it appears that there are a few studies with regards to events management, especially as to how these affects bars and clubs. Because of the close nature of events with projects, and due to the function of events as marketing tools especially in this specific context of the

study, much of the reviewed literature touches on the marketing aspect, the project and event management resources, and some literature touching on bars, clubs, nightlife and other entertainment establishments.

### **Review of Literature Definitions of Events Management**

Events management can be said to have emerged from the increasing commercialisation of popular celebrations, from big affairs such as concerts to small and private gatherings. Bowdin, et al. explained that in certain historical aspects, the increasing importance of events were noted because of the benefits they bring as enumerated through its purpose and objectives. An example noted by the authors were the emergence of the industry as encouraged by political and religious reasons; this happened in the United Kingdom where exhibitions became a popular event that it needed to be sustained.

The approach to the sustainability of events, especially as this would lead to the formation of an industry, would then become integral to the management requirements of this practice. Across the world, the management of events would become a more formal approach in organizing festivals and other festivities. Bowdin, et al. therefore presented the following definition of events as follows (14): “[...] anything which happens; result; any incidence or occurrence esp (sic) a memorable one; contingency or possibility of occurrence; an item in a programme (of sports, etc.

); a type of horseriding competition, often held over three days (three-day event) consisting of three sections ie dressage, cross country riding and show jumping; fortune or fate (obs); an organized activity at a particular venue, eg. for sales promotion or fundraising. ” Based on these definitions,

the events that fall under event management are applicable in all aspects. Basically, the last definition, “ an organized activity at a particular venue, eg. for sales promotion or fundraising” (14) can be said to already encompass what an event is.

However, it should be also noted that the fundamentals of events management also refers to the uniqueness of the event, hence, it is memorable. At the same time, an event may have many sub-events such as “ items”. Last but not the least, as based on the cited definition, an event also includes contingency or possibility of occurrence. This therefore brings up the aspect of events management in which case it is not just about ensuring that the event takes place, but also the management formalises the event in a sense that it is defined by a specific strategy.

As previously mentioned, an event in the events management context becomes a project; in this case, the aspects of project management is applied. It is initially important to define what a project is, and according to Bowdin, et al, (267), an event as a project “ produces an asset [...] the asset is the ultimate deliverable of the project. The management is the planning, the organizing, leading, and controlling of the project”. Hence, based on these, Bowdin, et al. presented the definition of event management in the following (267):

“ The project management of events concentrates on the management process to create the event, not just what happens at the event [...] (it) is called the 'overlay' as it integrates all the tasks of management. Event management is made up of a number of management areas including planning, leading, marketing, design, control and budgeting, risk

management, logistics, staging and evaluation. Each of these areas continuously affect each other over the event life cycle”.

Shone and Parry, furthermore, mentioned that in order for an event to be managed in a similar context, the event has to be “ special”; based on this, the authors presented the following pointing out the definitions of events that are managed:

- Leisure events (leisure, sport recreation).
- Personal events (weddings, birthdays, anniversaries).
- Organisational events (commercial, political, charitable, sales).
- Cultural (ceremonial, sacred, heritage, art, folklore).

The Events Management Concept and Practice Event management is therefore a discipline and a practice.

There are many concepts and aspects of event management that needs to be considered especially among those who specialise in certain components of the practice. One of the common perceptions of event management is its dimension as a coordinating activities. Silvers (28) mentioned that in event coordination, the coordinators visualise, organise and synchronise the different elements of an event. In addition, in event coordination, the coordinator also identifies the purpose, scope and the program of the event by means of identifying its intent, extent, and content.

Another important point raised by Silvers (28) is that, in agreement with the past discussions on the nature of event management as similar or related to project management, the author also further mentioned the processes

involved both in the coordination and the management of events. These aspects, for instance, is through the discussion on the Project Scope (28-29):

- Identifying the needs and requirements of the event including the definition of its purpose and the expected outcomes.
- The description of the product as spelled out by the type of event.
- Product analysis or the identification of the components of the product.
- The feasibility of the product as based on the analysis of the resources.

From these, the event becomes more definite through the design of a Work Breakdown Structure and Activity Schedule (29). Another important approach in event management can be considered in the perceptions of the customers, competition and the sponsors. Silvers discussed the aspect of the consumers and the competition. According to the author, the customers make up the “ marketing realm” of the event (30).

Hence, it is important to identify a target segment because this helps in the design of the event, from its scope to its marketing to its implementation. Silvers also discussed the competition; for cases such as bars and clubs, any weekend night poses a great amount of competition for any establishment holding an event that night.

As the author stressed, it is significant that the bar or club is aware what kind of other events that will take place in another establishment. It is therefore in the strategy of the club or bar owner, along with its hired events specialist, to determine how to best approach competition.