

The exist for events  
to plan and



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The current sales team at A2Z has a wealth of experience in selling commercial time for television programming for QTV. Events are considered a second option to selling commercial time and hence there is ad hoc reactive selling of even well planned shows.

A dedicated marketing and sales team currently does not exist for events to plan and carry out research in order to keep tab on the market. To make matters worse, the A2Z team had stopped actively pursuing clients after the joint venture. All the sales activities were to be handled by QTV personnel. This shows that relative to competition, A2Z was discounting the sales experience of its personnel. Given that most production activities like sound, lights, stage, and decor are common across events, an event can be technically similar in execution to any other. Therefore, reuse of all or most of the equipment is possible across most event categories giving scope for competitive advantage. Designing the degree of compatibility in relation to other event categories that an event company offers is hence an important variant between event firms.

The degree of attention and care taken in servicing the client varies dramatically as the event company grows. From a proprietorship concern used to service details, transformation into a corporate may affect response times and induce communication gaps that in turn may lead to a loss of service efficiency. This is in fact most often why newer, leaner and meaner competitors have scope to enter the industry. The bigger the company grows the greater the scope for losing touch with clients. Though the better event firms plan for it because their strategy doesn't let it out of sight To assess

the competitive environment it is also critical to understand the growth of competition.

Studying the trends here would help in pinpointing exactly why and what the competition is doing. When technological advances take place and the access to the same is limited to an adventurous few, the scenario changes dramatically. Freelancers without high overheads can lead the industry into a cutthroat price war for lesser scale events leading to a situation where the bigger agencies also have to join the issue. This in turn would mean that in spite of a growth in the number of events, there may be a slump in the profitability of the events, which could lead to a recessionary correction. This is not a common phenomenon as of now but is a high probability in the future.

Event marketing and management are specialist areas of communication. Event marketing essentially involves the study of brand character and the creation of an event strategy that gels with it for a client. In India, however, this has been the function of the client / company. It is only recently that this function has begun to be part of the event manager's job with the concept of annual event contracts beginning to attract clients. Internationally, though, it is the agency that specializes in this service.

These agencies are increasingly playing an important part in the train of thought for positioning the clients' brand. Some of the high profile agencies in fact, have positioned themselves as brand builders who can understand marketing strategies of their clients and come up with value added creative concepts tailor made to enhance a specific brand strategy. Some others call

themselves relationship management firms. In competitive analyses, assessing the bargaining power of clients is necessary. It is a must to find out whether the clients are more concentrated than the events industry i. e. , are they organized and do they communicate and share information. Do they have alternate event managers easily available? (Which shows that the event agencies are not cooperating for the benefit of the collective whole of the industry?) What would be the proportion of the clients' event budgets to their total media budget? How important are events to the clients in terms of their media plans? Are the clients earning good profits in their line of businesses? What is the probability of clients integrating event management into their own marketing set up? All of the above are very legitimate questions that should be answered for an authentic competitive assessment. In the same vein, comprehending the supplier power as to what extent can suppliers exert pressure over necessary resources and possibly enter the events market as event agencies in an attempt at forward integration is a crucial question that can affect the decisions of an event agency drastically. As resources are easily available, suppliers may or may not be interested in entering this highly creative and competitive field. It is for the event agency to judge whom it is dealing with and understand the implications thereof.

Next it is necessary to comprehend the real threat of substitution i. e., existence of substitutes to events subject to trends improving their price / performance trade off with the events industry. The above statement just goes to say that for the same combination of Reach + Interaction that events offer, are there any chances that something else will be conceived that would lead to direct substitution, or using events less intensively in the

marketing programmers. With an interactive media like the Internet as well as merging of the Cable TV, telephone and the Internet already on, anything is possible. In fact, the future of computing and television are moving at breakneck speed towards interactivity, which means that there can be a most terrific competition for events from an incomprehensible area offering more reach AND interactivity than any media vehicle till date. These are called Net Events.

So, event companies need to be on their toes and adapt to any paradigm shifts in the basic nature of the industry from the physical to the cyber world to avoid getting obsolete or substituted. Though history stands testimony to the divergent nature of technological developments such as the invention of TV, it could not kill radio as a medium. The coming of the information age via the Internet would hopefully only lead to enhanced value for everybody from events. The net economy is a dynamic and changing world and thus has to be carefully watched for developments so as to be able to take best advantage. At the same time, watch for any threats emerging in this area by newcomers and whiz kids utilizing the power of the Internet just by being able to explore and analyze the impossibilities of the physical world of events and making them happen. We capture the essence of competitive assessment by using a questionnaire given in Appendix A. This is a sample exercise that has been carried out for A2Z events.