

BOOK REVIEW

Special Events – Twenty-first Century Global Event Management

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Received: January 2011 | Accepted: February 2011

Book “Special Events – twenty-first century global event management” is third, modernized, historical edition of the book in the field of organization of special events. Authors of this remarkable work are distinguished experts in fields of tourism, management, economics and management of special events. Led by Dr John Goldblat, certified professional for special events management, and his associates Kathleen S. Nelson, William O’Toole, Phillis Mikolaitis and Dr Peter E. Tarlow.

This work presents development and rapid growth of the profession and its path to standardization through professional certificates on special events management. Example of this tremendous growth and interest of young people in this branch of management are 4 000 students of George Washington University in 2002. Just three years ago, in 1999 this programme attended only 200 students. Increasing necessity for this kind of personnel is caused by labour market demands that indicate bright future of the profession.

Special events management profession is multidisciplinary because it involves multitude of skills and disciplines such as: managerial skills, finance, human resources, public relations, marketing and economic skills.

The book follows three world trends that are the necessary to overcome in order to become expert manager of special events:

1. growth and development of the economy,
2. hyper-rapid development of technology,
3. increasing competition in the market and competitive spirit.

The book is divided into 6 parts that are constituted out of 16 chapters. Introduction presents key issues that are detailed and described through book with many examples. Next question is posed to reader: “What is a special event?” Robert Jani gives a clear and very simple definition: “The special event is one that is different from ordinary days.” This part of the book refers to the theory of events management, identification and understanding of demographic changes that affect increase of special management organization use of psychographic changes (changes in travel habits), length, purpose and outcome of the event and how to improve it. Special events are various kinds of ceremonies and rituals. The task of

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event manager is to explore the market, plan and design the event, coordinates the activities and after the event is over to mark the total and value the success of the event. Event management is public profession that refers to organizing celebrations, educations, conferences and all kinds of assembling. The task is to meet the necessity and purpose of the event and return on investments of stakeholders. Reasons of investments in certain event are different and some of those may be: emotional, political, and economical or some other personal interests. Stakeholders are individual or legal entities with direct or indirect interest to help the realization of event.

A very important factor in organization of special events is education. Education is necessary for individual career advancement and development. 4 major factors affect an individual career: time, finances, technology and people. Special events management and organization are still dominated by male population though women are taking active role.

In order to improve organization of certain event it is necessary to learn about comprehensive event management. It considers identification and process in five stages of event organization:

1. Market Research Methods (Technique of Research)
2. Design (mind mapping, brainstorming - techniques to present ideas and learning about the philosophy of the event),
3. Event Planning (important factors are time, space and speed, as well as the existence of Plan B),
4. Coordination (event management and decision making based on the facts)
5. Evaluation (evaluation of the event along with a variety of techniques - monitoring or surveys).

Event organization with minimal mistakes is goal to achieve but that is almost impossible. For the same reasons different techniques to identify and anticipate are applied. Weaknesses and strengths, opportunities and threats are the ones to observe. This technique is also known as SWOT Analysis (S-strengths, W-weaknesses, O-opportunities, T-threats). In addition it is necessary to create an accurate scheme, to estimate management of known necessities and effective communication with all stakeholders of the event.

Administrative efforts of event management organization consider work on development and implementation of event plan, human resources and time management, financial documents, administration and management of the event. Creation and implementation of event plan include execution of comprehensive research, identification of key information for planning, designing creative programme and related topic. The focus is on establishment and management of efficient strategic plan, deadlines of programme realization. Successfully planned event is based on high quality research and creative and innovative design.

Purpose of creativity and design of the event is to satisfy human senses (touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing) which mean that the sound system should be adapted to the purpose of the event- the choice of music, visual solution- selection and creation of logo to represent trademark of the event.

It is also very important to pay attention of “pleasantness” that are novelty, for example various surprises, gifts or special attentions (care of children, birthday to one of participants). Nowadays living is fast, changes are every day and consequently needs of event organization are different and unusual. That implies completely unexpected space locations (rooms, halls, mortuaries, fields, orchards, etc.).

It is necessary to point out significant role of modern computer technology, it gives new glance to old spaces like a new suit instead a worn out one. That considers creating a virtual world, life out of a fairy tale, book or a film. Complete decor and design of the event should primarily be in harmony with message that event aspires to transmit to visitors.

Management of personnel and timing is based on respect of gender equality, minority rights and respect of free time of employees. At the very beginning it is necessary to make a selection of appropriate staff and volunteers, then to provide high quality education and develop related policy, procedure and practise. In order to maximize productivity of work it is necessary to motivate personnel, manage time and reward every additional work effort. Volunteers are important parts of puzzle and they should be selected carefully, trained properly, coordinated on-site and rewarded at the end.

Purpose of event management is profit. In order to maximize it, it is necessary to understand the basics of financial and accounting terminology, to keep financial reports of the event, to understand and interpret balance sheets and income statements and finally to calculate breaking point. Also by using previously collected data it necessary to predict, as accurately as possible, expenditures and revenues for the event, precise the budget to achieve the goals of the event. Special care should be taken when conducting these tasks.

There are 3 types of the event when finances are taken as standpoint. They are: profit-oriented events, turning-point events (positive O events), lost leader events or host events. When budgeting event, expenditures need to be compared with revenues. One should always be prudent in spending and try to charge spent funds as soon as possible and payment of the expenditure as late as possible. It is also very important to control purchase which means to prioritize and avoid buying unnecessary things.

Successful event management is based on method and approach of managers who have the choice to decide to democratic, autocratic or manner of free will. Event manager and every other manager needs to have developed communication skills, confidence, and courage, should be determinant, enthusiastic, should possess integrity, perseverance, persistence, planning skills, problem solving skills and vision.

Coordination of the event is a step in organization of special events that is based on development and implementation of design, development of appropriate resources, following trends in the hospitality, coordination of technical elements including lighting, sound and special effects. Other elements to pay attention are the analysis of the location examination for the event, creation of the correct sequence, the protocol implementation activities of the event and prediction of adverse and unforeseen operational conflicts. It is possible to avoid unforeseen events by plan development, observation of every detail, engagement of professionals in as many fields as possible, identification and taking advantages. In order to better the plan of the activities an accurate protocol is necessary, which will all the actors follow within seconds. If the previous elements are properly in hierarchy following things to take into account are certainly the ones that make the event special and complete: audio-visual and special effects.

Experienced managers can predict in advance special needs of people and meet them the right way. Taking care of that kind of people's needs consider organization of extra events beside the main event to entertain the people. Kind of the event that meets special needs of people can represent excursion to nearby tourist attraction led by tourist guide with appropriate price depending on financial potential of visitors based on previous research of the target group of the event.

Marketing of the event is a matter that includes advertising, public relations, event promotion and fundraising for the event itself, which is represented by sponsorship. Sponsorship is different term than donations because it implies certain funds through which sponsor's need will be met usually by advertising, commercials and promotions. Successful advertising is consisted out of creation of comprehensive plan i.e. integrated marketing program. That considers usage of internal and external marketing, build, and design printed, electronic and every other possible forms to advertise, for example advertising through fairs and festivals, cross-promotions, street promotions and similar.

Internet advertising is leading today, but more important matter nowadays is public relations. In every marketing activity very important is segment of time, when to start with advertising or public appearance. After the event is realized it is necessary to evaluate marketing through surveys on the spot of the event, by telephone after few days or through internet. After the analysis of collected data we can talk about the success of marketing activities.

It is mentioned that internet marketing is the twenty-first century common phenomenon. The book provides guidelines for on-line marketing, which should begin by analyzing the market and discussing the role and scope of the Internet market. If the previous step is properly done, next step would be building an adequate website for the appropriate event. There are several classification of websites types and simplest classification would be: sites akin a brochure in electronic form, "show-biz" sites that have the photographs, news stories, alerts and „unilitarian“ site which is an interactive service that creates a distinctive brand out of event recognizable and loyal to customers.

The practicality of the book is not only reflected through numerous examples in the event organization but also through the practical matters such as collection of necessary documentation through the event organization. In order to make the event, manifestation or similar happenings without any problems cooperation with local governments, police, municipal inspections, must be promptly recognized and in accordance with the law regulations and procedures applied to event organization. Actors in the event are obligated to read, understand and apply legal documents of the event. It is important to collect on time all the necessary licences and approvals for the event management and to develop, manage risks that might occur.

Legal documentation includes contracts with all participants in the realization of the event. In order to foresee the unwanted consequences it is necessary to manage risk, and that means to evaluate and predict the possible undesired events in order to minimize their impact. Event Management includes event insurance, as well as control of each participant in the event execution.

Event management considers that the organization of events is carried under moral norms, legal rules and ethical principles, because some violations of human and social norms lead to poor implementation and non-professional jobs. Internet, network of all networks and other advanced technology in XXI century require better understanding of their role and scope in the organization of the event. Technological progress facilitates and speeds up the organization of events, demonstrated through systems for data processing, software for problems solutions, gathering information.

Technology erases space and time limitations. Event organization managers are educated at universities, they attend certification courses in field of organization of event management and use advanced technological solutions, thus raise their level of knowledge and skills to enhance their careers. At the moment the highest level in field of event management is certificate CSEP (Certified Special Events Professional). After passing this exam that is con-

sisted out of three parts the highest degree in this field is obtained and that is: certified professional in special event organization.

The book „Special Events” is a practicum in the field of special event organization. It points precisely to every detail of the event which manager should pay attention to. Most problems that really occur on the ground in the event organization are very easily to described and reviewed, and thus understandable for everyone. Great advantage of this book is the large number of case studies that has been processed; they presented real problems in real life situation during event organization. As shown this book is a useful practicum that can assist in the event organization and it is adapted to wider audience not just experts in the field of management.

On the basis of presented facts, it can be summarized that this work can serve all managers and professionals in the field of economy, tourism, marketing and similar fields. This work is historical in field of special event organization and hope that this is the very beginning and there will be more such literature which will allow the easier and better organization and management of special events.