

University/College Module

Events Development

© Created and written by William J O'Toole to be used with the textbook *Events Feasibility and Development*, Elsevier UK 2011.

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The course module is written for advanced event students and event professionals with an interest in the system of event management and the management of a portfolio of events. It introduces and applies advanced business and project concepts to the study of the events.

The concepts are:

- **Asset management:** the event portfolio as an asset to the host organisation and the application of asset management principles to events development
- **The events strategy:** the three to five year planning needed for an effective events portfolio.
- The tools and techniques used in event and **event portfolio development** such as: decision criteria tables, event support systems, the event forum, the events unit and the quasi government event agency.
- **Competency** training and the new International Standard.
- Application of the **Maturity Model** to event management.
- The three dimensional model of event management.
- Event management as a system and described in spreadsheets.
- **Process mapping** event management.
- The feasibility study.
- Event operations as illustrated by numerous detailed case studies written by those responsible for operations.

Suggested delivery method: The module comprises ten one-hour presentations supported by tutorial discussion. The tutorial can use the **discussion** ideas outlined in each presentation or the discussion topics at the end of each chapter of the textbook. The tutorial may include the group work suggested below.

References: As this is a new area of teaching in the subject of event management, there are few academic books or articles, However there are many primary resources easily obtained from the internet or from the author.



Vacant site ready for the Desert Festival in Hail, Saudi Arabia 2010

Section 1 Strategic feasibility and development

Presentation One: Events strategy

Textbook: Chapter 1 Event Strategy

The core to this lecture is to paint the scene of the event industry as reaching a stage whereby the individual events become part of an overall business/social strategy. To maximise the benefit of events there must be a long term plan both for the individual event and for the portfolio of events. For this reasons more and more organisations are employing asset management principles to events.

Topics

- Introducing the concept of asset management
- Introducing the concept of a strategy
- Introducing the idea of an event portfolio

Teaching ideas

There are many events strategies published on the internet. The objectives of the strategy can be used as a teaching example. You are welcome to contract the author if you would like copies of published event/s strategies. Email : events @ epms.net

Discussion topics

1. Is there any other way to develop events? Is an events strategy necessary? What did the world do before the concept of an events strategy?
2. Religious events have been occurring for thousands of years. Do they use an events strategy? Analyse a religious event from the asset management perspective.
3. Choose any local event - such as a wedding or a concert. What are the strategic concerns of these events? Do they have a cascade of objectives? (Hint - first list the stakeholders)
4. "Event" or "events" are often used interchangeably – is there a difference?

Other references: numerous textbooks have a history of events and their impacts such as Glenn Bowdin *Events Management* 2nd Edition Chapters 1,2,3
Don Getz *Event Studies*, Chapters 11 , 12 has some excellent background material that can be used in this topic.

Presentation 2 Preparing the Strategy

Textbook: Chapter 2 Preparing the Strategy

This presentation takes the students through the necessary tools and techniques to prepare for the creation of an events strategy. These tools are adapted from marketing and business. The decision criteria table is used in many aspects of event and portfolio management.

Topics

1. Decision criteria tables
2. The situation analysis

Teaching ideas

The students can use their local area to create situation analysis for an events program.

Discussion topics

The limitation of a situation analysis is that events drive the change in a situation. The Olympics for example create infrastructure that was not there. Other events will grow over time and therefore develop the situation to be more conducive for events. Is this true? Find examples of events that were thought to never be possible and yet they have flourished. Is this the very nature of an entrepreneurial event that the risk is high and therefore the event thought to be impossible?

References

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) published an excellent explanation of their decision criteria methodology complete with an explanation of the fuzzy logic involved. If you can not find this on the web - please let me know and I can send you a copy events @ epms.net

Presentation 3 Directing the development

Textbook: Chapter 3 Event support: directing the development

An important new direction in events has been the role of the government and the organisation such as a major company in directing their development. Supporting the events that can be shown to achieve the objectives of the organisation. This happens in governments, departments and private companies. Events that under perform must be ended. This may seem obvious, however without a way to classify events and understand their results, it was impossible to compare them and assess their true success.

Topics

- Event development options
- Event support process
- Event typology

Teaching ideas

The students can classify the events that occur over a year at the university or college. The process is to examine the development objectives of the institution and link these to the outcomes of the events. Which events should the college support? Which ones need to be cancelled and why?

Discussion Topics

1. Compare the events development tactics of devolve, develop, support and close with those used in product development.
2. A common term in product development is the product life cycle. Do events travel this path? How does that explain religious events that have lasted thousands of years?

References

As these topics are the frontline in the development of the industry there is little academic material available. However there is abundant primary material available. Use the terms "event support" or "event strategy" in a search engine to find examples.

Presentation 4 Events Strategy Implementation

Textbook: Chapter 4 Implementation of the strategy and Chapter 5 The techniques and tools for events development

The strategy is merely a document unless there is a person or team who will champion it and implement the recommendations. The most recent way to do this is to create a specialist events unit within the organisations. The events unit is found in many large companies and government organisations. The tools and techniques for the development of an events

portfolio have been borrowed from other industries. Putting events out for competitive tendering is one of the tools from project management.

Topics

- The role of the events unit
- Examples of events units
- Flagship events

Teaching ideas

At this stage of the presentations it is important to stress that the growth of the event industry requires an accountable system to develop events. The governments and large companies use their current project management tools. Once again the university or college can be used as an example. It will have quite a few different events such as: graduation ceremonies, plays and concerts, conferences, seminars, symposiums, special training events, exhibitions, book launches, readings, debates and talks, parent days, careers day as well as the regular civic and religious occasions and many more. This provides an excellent illustration of an event portfolio.

Discussion

The university or college portfolio of events can be used to promote discussion on the concepts such as: Would the university/college benefit from a more centralised events unit to over see all these events?

Presentation 5 Competency in event management

Textbook: Chapter 5 The techniques and tools for events development and Chapter 6 Building competency: Associations, Awards and Training

The future of events and the event industry will depend on the abilities of the event teams. This presentation examines the methods to raise the expertise of the people who organise the events and ways to ensure the quality of the management of the events and the events portfolio.

Topics

- Licensing event management
- The event conferences and the event association
- Event education
- The new International Competency Standard

Teaching ideas

The event industry can be compared to the engineering, accountancy or project management. In each case there is licensing, conferences, competencies and certification.

The topics of the practitioner event conferences and forums provides an interesting indicator of current issues in the events industry. A list of these and their change over time can inform this presentation. The author has the event conference topics for Dubai for seven years and can supply these to the lecturer. Contact: events @ epms.net

The New Zealand model is a good one to illustrate the points in this presentation. Information can be gained from their website <http://www.nzaep.co.nz/>

The students can use the International Competency Standard – Event Management (ICS-EM) to assess their own competency in event management and identify the gaps. The ICS-EM is freely available on the web.

Discussion

Event licensing is a topical issue and related to the risks involved in events. It provides a good topic for debate as it brings to the fore many of the issues involved in a growing industry. Should the event team be licensed by the government? Should there be an association license such as the 'gold card' used in the trades?

Section 2 Management feasibility and development

Presentation 6 The management environment

Textbook: Chapter 7 Management models and the business case and Chapter 8 Setting up the management system

At this stage the students are taken to the theory of managing one event. The complexity and uncertainty of this environment is explained. The business case is introduced and the stability provided by a management framework. The development of this framework is related to the maturity model for management. All of these tools are needed to develop the events portfolio.

Topics

- Complexity and Uncertainty in the event environment
- Intangible outcomes and the ROI
- Creating a management framework
- Maturity Model
- Setting up the spreadsheet framework

Teaching ideas

Once the theory has been explained, the students can create their own worksheet for an event. They can do this in groups as this will bring different perspectives, promote discussion and it reflects the actual event planning sessions. These spreadsheets can be used in the next presentation.

Discussion

The nature of complexity and uncertainty promotes plenty of controversy. The way to use this is to give a list of specific events and attempt to place them in order according to these characteristics. It is the similar issue with intangible outcomes and can prove material for discussion.

References

The PMBOK Guide 4th edition is the most comprehensive for this section. Also it assists in introducing the student to the next two lectures on process mapping event management.

Presentation 7 Management Processes

Textbook: Chapter 9 Event management processes

Process mapping originates from the old workflows found in manufacturing. In this presentation the concept of the workflow is introduced. It puts *time* into the thinking about management.

Topics

- What is process mapping?
- Applying this to event management
- Introducing the processes involved in the management of Stakeholders, Scope, Design, Marketing, Financial

Teaching ideas

The student may like to draw their own processes or workflow from an example event or from their own experiences. There are a number of free software packages that can be use to assist them. ARIS Express is an example.

References

There are numerable web sites for business process mapping on the internet. Perhaps the most up to date and closest to the event management environment is found at Business Process Trends website: <http://www.bptrends.com/index.cfm>

Presentation 8 Process and Event Metrics

Textbook: Chapter 10 Event management processes – section two and Chapter 11 Event metrics and checklists

The second lecture on business process mapping event management. The concept of event metrics is introduced.

Topics

- The importance of the fixed deadline in all areas of management
- Introducing the processes involved in the management Time, Risk, Communication, Procurement and Human Resources
- Event metrics - establish a system to measure event management progress and outcomes

Teaching ideas

If the students are working in groups on an event, they can create their own system of event metrics and checklists. It is important they do this through discussion and not by cut and paste from the internet. Once they have compiled their checklists, they can compare them to the ones in the textbook.

References

For the risk management processes: the ISO 31000 is mandatory. An excellent book is the Julia Rutherford Silvers *Risk Management for Meetings and Events* (Elsevier). A more in depth look at the process is found in my other book *Corporate Event Project Management* (Wiley). Once again the PMBOK can provide a project management view of the processes.



Decorations for the Festival of the Winds, Bondi Beach Australia 2009

Section 3 Operations feasibility and development

Presentation 9 Feasibility and event element case studies

Textbook: Chapter 12 Event operations: upstream design and Chapter 13 Cases studies

The central question of Feasibility is 'Will it work?' In the case of events it is very much an operational issue. Hence event feasibility is left until the last section of the book. It is here that the central role of operations is illustrated and the way operational problems can be traced back - or upstream to management decisions. The case studies used are illustrative of aspects of the event that are important to feasibility.

Topics

- Feasibility Study
- Tools of feasibility such as the Logistics mud map
- Case studies: Heritage Concert (p266), Tunnel Walk (p273), Predicting Crowd Numbers (p276)

Teaching ideas

The students' experiences gained from attending or working on events can be used to examine operations and the management decisions that could have caused any problems. A Effect to Cause diagram can be used to attempt to trace back any problems at an event to their possible cause.

The students, in groups of five, can propose an event and undertake a feasibility study using the headings in the text.

Presentation 10 Event operations - the case studies and module wrap up

Textbook: Chapter 13 Cases studies

The last presentation includes the major case studies and the summary of the themes of the module. The two major case studies illustrate the use of asset management, risk management, project management and the workflows in action. The Torch Relay (p281) and A Qatari Ceremony (p297) are both major undertakings and employ the best in management systems.

Topics

- The Torch Relay and the Qatari Ceremony
- Other case studies (to be chosen by presenter)
- Review: How it all fits together: the three interlocked levels of the mature events industry ; strategy, management and operations, the event portfolio as an asset, the developing and controlling the events strategy, competency, spreadsheet system as a tool, process mapping events and operations.

Teaching ideas

Both the case studies can be viewed from the system set out in the textbook

1. As an asset: the question to ask is *what is the return on this asset?*
2. As a process: each of the case studies can be mapped to processes
3. As operations: each aspect of the operations can be traced back to management decisions

Discussion topics

In the textbook it is asserted the event industry has matured and therefore the tools and techniques of other industries can be carried across and employed. This can be used now as a discussion topic to wrap up the series of presentations.



The African Children's Choir in action at conference opening in Nairobi 2010

Review of relevant books

Global Meetings and Exhibitions (2007 Wiley NY) by Carol Krugman, and Rudy R. Wright, written by two highly experienced professionals. Although it is a bit 'over worded', their on the ground experience shines through. Understandably their experience is from the USA perspective and there are some obvious issues that are mentioned. Recommended as an example of operational issues around the world and as an example of the numerous management processes interweaving to create an event. Note that this book can teach the students about aspects of all international events - not only the meetings and exhibitions.

more book reviews to come

Video Support for the textbook and the course, is found on Youtube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePd9vIxglQI>