

teaching note

Strategic Event Planning for the Florida Music Festival, (FMF), USA

Summary

This case study explores the strategic event planning process and sets out to determine how it can effectively establish events as tourist attractions. In order to exemplify the strategic event planning process, the Florida Music Festival is analyzed. It is a music festival in downtown Orlando, Florida, that has existed for 15 years, yet has not grown beyond a local event. The problem appears to stem from this event's inability to increase the return on investment for stakeholders, their understanding of the current visitor profile and its incapability to grow the attendance reach beyond that of local residence. Through a detailed breakdown of the four-step process, the tourist market is strategically positioned in context of its current visitor profile and the external environment and around the internal organizational factors.

Target Audience

This case study requires knowledge of analysis techniques like strategic planning, SWOT analysis, visitor profiles, implementation factors, and Return On Investment (ROI). Students will be required to think critically about strategy implementation and each individual affect they may have on the internal and external environment. Therefore, the case study is directed at undergraduate level students who are enrolled for event and festival management courses and the knowledge and skills gained from this case study can be used to expand their knowledge of the field. The case study can also be used at graduate level event and festival management courses if the overall assignment is to create and evaluate students' own strategic event planning process for a similar event.

Explanation of Teaching Objectives

Instructors will have the opportunity to introduce event tourism to their students and will be able to effectively demonstrate one of the established ways of creating this type of tourism in the context of specific events and festivals. Through the evaluation of the strategic event planning process, instructors will be able to discuss the relevance of event tourism to the event industry, the ability of a destination to capitalize on tourism, the differences in how the internal and external environment affect the strategies involved, the variances in benchmarking techniques, and how each play a role in the modification of existing or less successful strategies. Due to the comprehensive nature of the case study, students will have to reflect on many aspects, and by the end should be able to:

Define the concept of event tourism.

- Discuss the four sections of the strategic event planning process and their respective evaluation techniques with regard to building event tourism.
- Identify major market segments and areas of improvement based on the current visitor profile and the external and internal environmental analyses through the creation of a SWOT Analysis.
- Create a survey and data collection spreadsheet in order to use comparison techniques and calculations between current and past years to determine the most effective strategies.
- Apply the strategic event planning process to specific events.
- Offer recommendations on how the strategic event planning process can be utilized to analyze and manage other events and festivals.

Teaching Approach

Each learning objective should be subdivided into a separate topic of discussion that each build onto the previous ones. It should take around thirty minutes to discuss the first topic and about thirty minutes for each topic afterwards, totaling three teaching hours. This timeframe allows for an instructor to introduce the topic, outline of industry examples, facilitate a full class discussion, and conduct an assessment.

Phase One: Introduction (30 minutes)

When introducing the case study, the instructors will request the students to read it privately, in their own time. After reading, the student should annotate their thoughts on what the purpose of the case study is and how it is relevant to them and the event industry as a whole. Each student will be required to bring the annotations to class with discussion points and any questions they may have.

Phase Two: Outline (1 hour)

Due to the required pre-knowledge needed for the basic understanding of the case study, the instructor should briefly review the topics of strategic planning, SWOT analysis, visitor profiles, implementation factors, and Return On Investment (ROI). After this, the instructor should open the class for discussion on the questions assigned for homework. Each question should take up around five minutes of discussion.

Once the initial discussion is over, the instructor will open a presentation detailing what event tourism is and how it affects the event industry; he or she will outline the strategic event planning process and how it helps to achieve the goal of shaping an event to be a tourist attraction. He or she should begin with the definitions and present a visual display of each topic that can be further expanded with industry examples.

² This case study was written for the purposes of classroom discussions. It was not intended to show effective or ineffective handling of decisions or to interrogate a managerial situation. Published materials and academic sources were used when preparing this case study.

After describing the basic principles, the instructor will then outline the main point of the case study for the students as well as the learning objectives.

Phase Three: Implementation (30 minutes)

Once the students understand the objectives, the instructor will lead the class in further discussions regarding the five main questions that the case study aims to answer. The instructor will pose each question and allow five minutes for feedback.

Phase Four: Evaluation of Understanding (1 hour)

After briefly discussing the overall case study questions, students should break up into groups of five or less and write answers to the comprehension questions and tasks:

- Why are domestic and international tourists a viable market for events in Orlando?
- How can the strategic event planning process be used effectively to capture the local community and the tourist market for the Florida Music Festival?
- Based on the current visitor profile and external and internal environment and mission of the event, what new tourist market segments and initiatives should be targeted?
- What are the perceived and actual effects of implementing strategies compared to the desired outcomes?
- How do the implemented strategies affect the return on investment for stakeholders?

Once all answers have been recorded, there should be another full class discussion during which each group provides input on each question. Instructor should pay close attention to answers and help steer students in the correct direction answers are ambiguous or misguided.

Additional Reading

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