Section One

Analysis

Introduction

Within Section 1, the event operations management model is introduced and explained. The event operations management model provides the structure for the entire book, and the four sections within the book relate to the four stages of the model.

The importance of analysis is stressed in Chapters 1–6. An event manager must work with eyes, ears and mind open to activities that are going on around the organization – not only those that are close to the organization but also those that are thought to be remote and of no direct importance to the event. The concept that everything has a knock-on effect somewhere is very difficult to challenge.

This book identifies how, by using conventional operational management theory and project planning techniques, the event manager can be better equipped to manage events in the twenty-first century.

The chapters in Section 1 therefore concentrate upon internal and external analysis to identify the environments in which the event manager is working.

Chapter 1 introduces the development of the event operations management model. This model is proposed as the ideal process for an event manager. It is based on extensive research, and brings together aspects of previously published models. The model embraces all the aspects of managing an event, from concept through to implementation and review.

As alluded to in the preface, today’s environment is dynamic, competitors are aggressive, and customers can be fickle and demanding. Many events organizations are small entrepreneurial companies, others are part of large companies often seeking to promote brands and excellence, and others are charitable or community based. None of these organizations can afford to make financial errors, lose reputation or fail to meet agreed objectives.

The event operations management model seeks to explore all the elements and issues that an event manager should be aware of as the event is considered from concept to completion.

Chapter 2 identifies some of the major terminology used within the operations management and the project management literature, which can clearly be applied to managers within the event industry. These previously very well researched and documented approaches are relevant and can be appropriately transferred to the event industry.

Critically, the importance of having a clear mission and objectives is discussed, as is the importance of knowing who the customers are and how their needs can be satisfied.

The notion of transformation of resources is introduced. This is the process whereby both tangible and intangible resources are utilized to create, and be consumed by, the event. Often creation and consumption is simultaneous.

The chapter concludes by examining the different formats that events can take. It is very important for an event manager to be able to consider the impact of these variances on costs, training needs, standardization and flexibility.

Chapter 3 considers in depth the external environment. It offers various techniques that can be used to appraise external factors, and explains the importance of both creating and understanding objectives set by and expected by a diverse range of people. In order to cover these points succinctly the importance of business policy is introduced, since this will have an impact on the event operations management model.
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The chapter explores in depth many of the external issues and groups that influence organizations, and it offers a technique that can be used by an event manager to explore and analyse the impact of stakeholders on an organization.

Chapter 4 considers some aspects of marketing. This chapter provides a bridge between the internal and external environments. The main aim of the chapter is to demonstrate the importance of knowing what the customer wants and values. This is a significant aspect of the event operations management model.

The chapter considers specifications, consistency of provision, timeliness, flexibility, price and added value. The issues within this chapter are of considerable importance to the event manager.

Chapter 5 covers in depth the needs of the customers and the various stakeholders. It examines the amount of interaction between the organization and the customers, and the effect that different levels of contact can have on the management and control of the different elements of the event. Similarly, the chapter considers the degree of influence on the organization from the different stakeholders, and analyses the influence and impact that stakeholders can have on an event and how the event manager can aim to control this.

The concept of critical success factors is introduced and various techniques are explored to evaluate how well an organization is meeting the needs of its customers. This section culminates in exploring the concepts of gap analysis.

Chapter 6 focuses on the internal environment. This is an important part of the event operations management model. The chapter examines the culture of an organization and how this can influence quality decisions, what information systems are required and the importance of financial strength.

The chapter explores the efficient use of resources and the varied competencies of employees. A technique is offered which will enable the event manager to make efficient use of resources so as to provide the best possible customer satisfaction – i.e. the critical success factors (CSFs). The chapter closes with a discussion on the different management structures that organizations can create, and their varying advantages and limitations.

Hence, Section 1 offers a set of tools and techniques for events management, using a logical and clearly described event operations management model.
Chapter 1
Development of the proposed event operations management model

Learning Objectives
After reading through this chapter you will be able to:

- Define a project, and understand the various approaches to event operations and the management of a project
- Explain the importance of project management and its application to event operations management
- Appreciate how the event operations management model has been created
- Understand the four stages within the event operations management model.

Introduction
Tukel and Rom (2001) have researched various definitions of what a project is, and cite the work that has been put forward over a period of time by Kerzner (1994). Initially he offered three objectives for a project – that it should be:

1. Completed on time
2. Completed within budget
3. Completed at the desired level of quality.

It can be seen that these are only internally focused objectives, and are concerned with the success of the project from the organization’s point of view.

By the late 1980s, after the introduction of Total Quality Management (TQM) into academic literature, Kerzner (1994) added a further two performance measurements:

4. Customer satisfaction and acceptance of the outcome
5. Customers allowing the contractor to use them as a reference.

This is an example of a trend by researchers to integrate customer involvement as a factor in determining project success.
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Turner’s (1999: 8) definition of a project starts to reflect some of the known and expected constraints and characteristics of a project:

... an endeavour in which human, financial and management resources are organized in a novel way to undertake a unique scope of work, of given specification, within constraints of cost and time, so as to achieve beneficial change defined by quantitative and qualitative objectives.

This development of the definition is supported by Cicmil (2000), who argues that traditional project management had developed a range of specific techniques for planning, monitoring and control which used to be applied to industries such as construction, aerospace and defence. However, he also recognizes the limitations and challenges of modern projects. It is precisely those challenges that can often be present within virtual teams in the event industry – i.e. there exists complex and diverse customer–supplier chains and multiple stakeholders who have a complexity of expectations of an event.

It can be seen that project management is becoming more common and necessary as stakeholders and the business environment are demanding professional and commonly agreed standards. Bowdin et al. (2001) note that project management methodology is being used in fields as diverse as software management, business change management and event management.

Other work (Bubshait and Farooq, 1999) has focused on the person who is in charge of a project. This person is vital in providing, and often being, the main focal point. Gray and Larson (2000) advise project managers to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances in order to maintain control. Even well-planned projects in the event industry are likely to face unexpected challenges – customers’ changing needs and numbers, variable weather conditions, road access closures, failures of suppliers etc. Cooke-Davies (1990) notes that any one of these changes may result in significant modifications being made to the project schedule and resource requirement. In the event industry, however, no changes can be made to the end time of the project, since this is the start time of the event. No slippage is possible, and there is only one opportunity to get it right. To quote from O’Toole and Mikolaitis (2002):

What separates the corporate event contract from others is the overriding importance of time.

The dynamic nature of events and the way that the functional areas are so closely linked means that a small alteration in one area can result in crucial changes, and may affect the whole event (Bowdin et al., 2001). Since an event has a start and an end point, it can also be defined as a project. It has a life expectancy, and the time from its inception to completion can be termed ‘the event project life cycle’.

The work of Robbins and Coulter (1998), Cicmil (2000), Ibbs and Kwak (2000), Wright (2001), Grundy and Brown (2002), Wild (2002), Czuchry and Yasin (2003) and Slack et al. (2004) has been analysed in preparation for the following chapters regarding what they propose as an ideal project management methodology. The major elements, which are constantly highlighted as being essential, are to:

- Understand the external environment
- Establish a vision
- Define the nature and scope of the project and formulate clear objectives
- Plan, organize and manage the project
- Monitor and evaluate as the project develops
- Implement and control
- Take corrective action, review and learn.

Similarly, the works of Getz (1997), Goldblatt (1997), Watt (1998), O’Toole and Mikolaitis (2002) and Shone and Parry (2004) present ideal event management
processes. There are no major differences between them and, as before, although the words may differ, the essential concepts remain the same:

- Research
- Clarify aims and objectives and feasibility
- Design and present preliminary plan
- Organize and coordinate
- Implement
- Close down
- Review and evaluate.

Shone and Parry (2004) show that there are considerable similarities between the management of projects and the management of events, and they believe that there are techniques from the project management literature that can be adopted by event managers. These include:

- The use of work breakdown structures
- Identification of critical tasks and external dependencies
- Gantt charting, related to critical path analysis
- Risk assessment.

We will come to these techniques and others as we work through the event operations management model used in this book, and through the various sections. There are four stages within the event operations management model (see Figure 1.1), and hence there are four sections to this book:

1. Analysis
2. Detailed planning
3. Implementation and delivery
4. Performance evaluation.

The process presented in Figure 1.1 shows a linear progression through four stages. This is a useful method of presentation, as it enables us to see and understand each stage clearly. Each stage will be covered within the relevant section of the book.

Figure 1.2 shows the same event operations management model, but it is presented in an iterative format – i.e. where each stage is dependent upon another and \textit{vice versa}. Using this model, the event manager should be flexible enough to return to any one stage and re-investigate changes as they occur. Due to the dynamic and changing nature of the external environment, analysis cannot be static and plans need to be constantly revisited to verify original assumptions.

Each of the four main stages is split into sub-sections, and each of these is discussed and applied to the event industry in the relevant sections and chapters within this book.

\section*{Analysis}

The analysis stage is covered in Section 1 of this book, and it looks at both the environment external to the organization or specific event and the internal environment of the organization itself. Section 1 is concerned with introducing the event industry in greater depth, and examines the background of operational management theory in an event management context. All organizations should have clear objectives and goals, and these should be encompassed within the mission for that organization or for a particular event.
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Event Operations Management Model: Tum, Norton and Wright 2005

Figure 1.1 Event operations management model
An analysis of both the internal capabilities, values and resources of the organization, and the external environment in which it operates, assists in determining the objectives for an organization. It is essential that a full analysis be undertaken prior to launching an event in order to move towards success.

**Detailed planning**

Section 2 looks in detail at all the planning activities that must be undertaken in order to stage an event. In some instances planning may take many years, as in the Olympics, and in other cases the planning may take just a week or even less. In each case many of the stages and techniques are the same, and these are detailed in the chapters. The topics cover the detail of the planning process and the management of the supply chain. Also within these chapters you will find work on choice of location for both the event organization and the events themselves. An important topic covered here is risk management. Although it sits within this section of the book, it should be understood that risk management should be considered throughout the life of the project.

Section 2 provides a basis for implementation, which is the next stage in our event operations management model.

**Implementation and delivery**

As its name suggests, Section 3 is concerned with the allocation of resources against the specifications designed for an event. Amongst other topics, this section of the book looks at motivation and the management of people, forecasting and planning for optimum capacity, and scheduling and coordination of all of the activities that bring an event to fruition.
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Performance evaluation

Section 4 covers the last stage of the event operations management model, and it looks in detail at how the standard specification can be used in order to monitor and correct any stage of the operation both during and after the event. It is important that for future events, managers develop and learn from successes and mistakes of the past. The section also looks at how events can be evaluated, and offers various techniques to aid the event manager.

The important topic of quality is critically analysed within the last chapter. Although it is investigated here, quality should not be considered as a separate subject; it pervades every action and every stage of an event. Quality management is a fitting topic with which to conclude this book on event operations management.

Chapter summary and key points

This chapter has explored the varied definitions of a project that have developed over the years. In tandem with this investigation, the chapter has explored the various operations management models from both the general literature and the event management literature. It has been possible to consider the most relevant aspects of all these models and create a model that is appropriate for the management of an event operation. Incorporated into that model is an ideal model for managing an actual event, based on the project management literature.

The outcome is portrayed in this chapter, and is called the event operations management model. This has been shown in two formats; one linear and the other iterative. The linear approach is ideal to use as a structure for this book; the other is what will really happen in practice – i.e. as soon as one element of the model has been achieved and completed, before moving onto the next stage the event manager will invariably have to return to some earlier decision since the marketplace and the customer will be always changing. The model identifies that the event manager has to be nimble, and it also identifies that the event manager should be well organized and methodical.