

Lecture 2

The impact of special events

Learning Objectives

- Appreciate what are the key impacts of events and how they impact the host community
- Examine the socio-cultural, political, environmental and tourism-economic impacts of events
- How the negative impacts can be limited and positive impacts maximized

Introduction

- Events do not take place in a vacuum – they touch almost every aspect of our lives both negatively and positively.
- The benefits arising from such **positive connections** are a very large part of the reason for the popularity and support of events.

Introduction

- Events are increasingly well documented and researched, and strategies are being developed to enhance event outcomes and optimise their benefits.



Governments are paying attention

- Governments often consider the investment of substantial taxpayers funds in events want to know what they are getting for the investment and how it compares with other investment options.
- This climate has given rise to economists' detailed studies of events and to the development and application of increasingly sophisticated techniques of economic analysis and evaluation.



The impact of events

- Events can have unintended consequences that can lead them to have public prominence and media attention for the wrong reasons.
- **The cost of event failure can be disastrous**, turning positive benefits into negative publicity, political embarrassment and costly lawsuits.

The impact of events

- An important core task in organising contemporary events is the **identification, monitoring and management of event impacts.**



Balancing the impact of events

- Events have a range of both positive and negative impacts on their host communities and stakeholders.
- It is the task of the event manager to identify and predict these impacts, then manage them to achieve the best outcomes for all parties so the overall impact of the event is positive.



Balancing the impact of events

- To achieve this, the event manager must develop and maximise all foreseeable positive impacts and counter potential negative impacts.
- Often, negative impacts can be addressed through awareness and intervention, so good planning is always critical.
- Ultimately the success of the event depends on the event manager achieving this positive balance sheet and communicating it to a range of stakeholders.

Balancing the impact of events

- Great emphasis is often placed on the financial impacts of events, partly because employers and governments need to budget goals and justify expenditure, and partly because such impacts are mostly readily assessed.
- However governments policies commonly acknowledge the “triple bottom line” of **social, economic and environmental goals / yardsticks in relation to events.**
- Event managers should not lose sight of the full range of event’s impacts and need to identify, describe and manage those impacts.

The impacts of events

social & cultural

Positive Impacts

- *Shared experiences*
- *Revitalising of traditions*
- *Building of community pride*
- *Expansion of cultural perspectives*
- *Introduction of new and challenging ideas*
- *Improvement of or new amenity*

Negative Impacts

- *Community alienation*
 - *Manipulation of community*
- *Negative community image*
 - *Bad behaviour*
- *Social dislocation*
- *Loss or damage of amenity*

The impacts of events

Physical & Environmental

Positive Impacts

- *Provision of models for best practice*
- *Increased environmental awareness*
 - *Infrastructure legacy*
- *Improved transport & communications*
 - *Urban transformation and renewal*

Negative Impacts

- *Environmental damage*
- *Destruction of heritage*
- *Noise disturbance*
- *Traffic congestion*

The impacts of events

Political

Positive Impacts

- International prestige
- Improved profile
- Social cohesion
- Development of administrative skills

Negative Impacts

- Risk of event failure
- Misallocation of funds
- Lack of accountability
- Loss of community ownership and control

The impacts of events

Tourism & Economic

Positive Impacts

- Destinalational promotion and increased tourist visits
- Extended length of stay
 - Higher yield
- Increased tax revenue
 - Commercial activity
 - Job creation

Negative Impacts

- Community resistance to tourism
 - Loss of authenticity
- Damage to reputation
 - Exploitation
 - Inflated prices
 - Opportunity costs
- Financial mismanagement
 - Financial loss

Social & Cultural Impacts

- All events have a direct social and cultural impact on their participants and sometimes on their wider host communities, as outlined by Hall (1989) and Getz (1997).
- This impact may be as simple as a shared entertainment experience, as created by a sporting event or concert.

Social & Cultural Impacts

- Other impacts include **increased pride** – which results in some community events and the celebration of national days.



Social & Cultural Impacts

- Events also have the power to challenge the imagination and explore possibilities.
- Events can also contribute to the political debate and help to change history.



Social & Cultural Impacts

- Research suggests local communities often value the **“feel good”** aspects of hallmark events and are prepared to put up with temporary inconveniences and disruption because such events generate excitement and long-term expectation of improved facilities and profile.

Social & Cultural Impacts



- The larger the event and higher its profile, the greater is the potential for things to go wrong, thus generating negative impacts.



- E.g death at events, car crashes, infrastructural damage causing injury



Managing Crowd Behaviour

- Major events can have unintended social consequences such as substance abuse, bad behaviour by crowds and an increase in criminal activity.
- If not managed properly, these un-intended consequences can hijack the agenda and determine the public perception of the event.

Pause for a cause ? Let's Chat !

- **What modifications can be done by the event organiser to influence crowd behaviour.**
- **Site using an example from a popular caribbean event.**