

Lecture 6

Project Management for Events

Learning Objectives

- Discuss project management as an approach to the management of festivals and events.
- Describe the phases of event management
- Discuss the knowledge areas involved in conducting an event using project management techniques.
- Describe the project manager's place in the event management structure and the competencies they require.
- Use the fundamental techniques of project management.
- Comment on the limitations of the project management approach in event management.

Introduction

- The production of a festival or event is a project. There are many advantages in using project management techniques to manage the event or festival.
- Project management oversees the initiation, planning, and implementation of the event, in addition to monitoring the event and the shutdown.

Introduction

- It aims to integrate management plans from different knowledge areas into a cohesive, workable plan for the entire project.

Project management

- Due to the changing nature of modern business, products and services now have to be managed as projects as a response to this change.
- A product in the modern world is continually evolving. Software upgrades are an example of this and they create an environment that is constantly changing.

O'Toole & Mikolaitis (2002)

- Note that the expansion of the event industry is a result of this change. New events needed to launch products: new conferences needed to reposition towns and regions in the marketplace as the national economy changes.

Project Management

- As project management is used to manage these developments, the event industry appreciates that these techniques can be successfully employed in the changing business and cultural environment and as projects - they can import increasingly pervasive management methodologies.

What is a project ?

- A project is a complex non-routine one time effort limited by time, budget, resources and performance specifications designed to meet customer needs.
- Gray and Larson (2000)

What is a project ?

- According to this definition, special events and festivals are projects. The project produces an asset such as a building, film, or a special event or festival.
- The asset is the ultimate deliverable of the project. The management is the planning, organising, leading and controlling of the project.

Project Management

- The project management of events concentrates on the management process to create the event with its management. The event is the deliverable of a management process.
- A bridge for e.g. is the deliverable of series of processes calling engineering and construction.

Project Management

- The event management process may take place over many months or years. Project management is a system that describes the work before the event actually starts, the event and finally the shut down of the event.

Project Management

- Project Management is called the “overlay” as it integrates all the tasks of management. Event management is made up a number of management areas including planning, leading, marketing, design, control and budgeting, risk management, logistics, staging and evaluation.

Project Management

- Each of the areas continuously affect each other over the event life cycle. Project Management can be regarded as integrating all of these disciplines; thus it covers all the different areas of management and integrates them so they all work toward the event objectives

The advantages of using project management for events:

- O' Toole and Mikolaitis
(2002 p. 23)

The advantages of using project management for events:

1. It is a systematic approach that can be improved with every event. Project management describes the management system. Once something is described it can be improved.
2. It avoids the risk that the event's success relies on one person. By having a system with documentation, filing and manuals, as well as clear communication and teams, the event is understood by anyone with the right experience.

The advantages of using project management for events:

3. It uses a common terminology and therefore facilitates clear, timely communication.
4. It ensures accountability to the stakeholders. Stakeholder management is a fundamental knowledge area of project management.

The advantages of using project management for events:

- 5 It makes the management of the event apparent. Too often the management is hidden by the importance of the event.
- 6 It helps train staff. Project management provides the framework for step-by-step training of staff.
7. It is used in all other area of management, not just events. The management methodology used for the event can be transferred to any project. Once the event is over, the staff will find that they have learned a useful transferable skill.

Project Management

- Clear and timely accountability to numerous event stakeholders is a requirement for event managers. The accountability cannot wait until the event is delivered.
- Stakeholders, such as police, sponsors and government may want a series of reports on the progress of the management.
- It is too late to find out the management company was incompetent during the event.

Project Management

- Clients are demanding a work in progress (WIP) report. A project management system has this reporting facility as part of its methodology.
- Project management comprises basic concepts that are not necessarily found in ongoing management.

Project Management

- The management of the project passes through phases. The management has to be aware of the knowledge areas and the way they change over the project life cycle.

Phases of the project management of event



Project Management

- A project phase is a series of related tasks, performed over a period of time and under particular configuration of management to produce a major deliverable.
- The end of a phase is often characterised by a major decision to begin the next phase.

Phases of Events Management

- Event and festival management is accurately portrayed as having five phases.
- Some project phases overlay – planning and implementation can take place at the same time in different areas of management.

Phases of Events Management

- The promotion schedule, for e.g. may be happening at the same time as aspects of the program are being redesigned.
- This chaos, however does have a pattern and the five phase approach is a useful tool to help understand it.

Initiation

- The first phase is characterised by the idea of the event being developed and setting the objectives.
- It may be a vague idea, as well as it may include a feasibility study. The project feasibility study will report on the viability of the event and the management required to deliver it.

Initiation

- It may include site and date suggestions, possible sponsors and supporters a draft budget, possible risks, required management for the event and event logistics.
- The feasibility study may incorporate a number of alternative configurations of the event, so that the sponsor or client can choose the best options that will suit them.

Initiation

- The initiation phase interfaces and overlaps with the process of conceptualising the event.
- The project objectives will relate to the objectives of the host in sponsoring the event.

Initiation

- The business case for the project is often used as a form of feasibility study. It describes the reason for the event in terms of the return on investment to the host community or company. The end of the initiation phase is characterised by a go / no-go decision – whether to proceed with the event or not.

Planning

- The second phase is the project planning. Planning is characterisd by working out what is needed and how it will fit together.
- A major role of project management is to integrate all these plans; that is, to make sure they all work together. For this reason the plans are often called baseline plans. They are regarded as a starting point rather than a finishing point.

Implementation

- Implementation is the third phase. The characteristics of this phase in project managing events are:
- The application of all plans, such as hiring staff, sending out request for tender, confirming contractors and carrying out the promotional schedule

Implementation

- Monitoring and controlling – testing the plans and confirming how relevant they are as organising progresses.
- Making decisions based on the comparison between the plans and reality.
- Work in progress reporting to the key stakeholders.

Implementation

- Active risk management.
- The beginning of this phase is a time of high activity with meetings to discuss specific issues, decisions to be made and communication between various parties.

Implementation

- The management may need to visit the planning phase when there are major changes and the plans need to be revised.
- At this time the team has to be focused on the project scope and ensure all the plans are compatible with each other and with the overall objective of the event.

Implementation

- In traditional project management, this third phase is the final phase and involves handover of the deliverable. Events are not a tangible asset that can be handed over in the same way as a building.
- For this reason, it is wise to add an extra phase into the project phases and call this the “event”.

The event

- Although this is not seen as a separate phase by traditional texts on project management, it fits into definition.
- During the event, the tasks and responsibilities tend to roll on regardless of what the management wants to have happen.

The event

- The staff numbers during the event, including volunteers, may increase dramatically. The short time period, attendance of the major stakeholders, the audience and the participants, means that the management cannot rely on the same management techniques used during the lead-up to the event.

The event

- This is recognised in all events, when the operations manager or the stage manager takes over the running of the event. At a certain time before the event the management team will move into operations mode which might mean getting out of the office and into their “costumes” for the event.

The event

- The monitoring and controlling at this point will be developed to other teams and the management will run the event by looking to other teams and the management will run the event by looking for errors and making on-the-spot decisions.

Shut Down

- The event manager will be responsible for the shut-down of the event. It is the phase and requires a separate series of tasks and responsibilities.
- Management will be scaled down and return to their pre-event formation.

Shut Down

- This phase includes the on-site shut down and the management closure. The shut down plans will be created during the planning phase, and the shut down ideally is implementation of these plans.
- However, in an industry beset by major changes, the shutdown will rarely go exactly to plan

Discussion

- What event are you planning for your group and what are the key Project Management Elements and how will you address them.

References

- Wiley: Corporate Project Management O'Toole & Mikolaitis (2002) p.g 23
- Project Management: Gray and Larson (2000)