

Planning Models for Sustainable Event Management of Tourist Destination

Mojić, J.

Faculty of Economics, Trg kralja Aleksandra 11, 18000 Niš, Serbia, jmojic@sezampro.rs

Abstract: *This paper examines the theoretical and practical aspects of marketing planning in tourism. The research focuses on the planning model of sustainable event management of tourist destination. The aim of this research was to identify the model through the creation of the planning of sustainable event management. The steps are going in the direction of research planning and development of strategic plans, concept creation, implementation and evaluation of sustainable events. Special attention in this work is focused on sustainable event planning model with the primary areas and features. Presented model provides an opportunity to exchange ideas with stakeholders to design and communicate a shared vision for the events. At the same time, presented a model may encourage event managers to explicitly consider issues of sustainability of event management at each stage of the planning process and also visually illustrate the destination event performance. This study provides information on how the tourism marketing plan should be monitored and adjusted as necessary in light of changing circumstances, and give priority to assessing value in relation to set goals.*

Keywords: *tourist destination, event management, tourist organizations, planning process, event managers*

1. INTRODUCTION

There is no single universally accepted definition of the event. The differences are manifested as a result of access by individual definition of the event. Most authors agree that the event in the economic sense is part of the service economy, and different approaches to defining are determined by the specific characteristics of the environment in which some authors work and create. Events can be viewed as an exciting and fastest growing form of phenomena arising from leisure, business and tourism (Getz, 1997).

In its simplest form, the event planning process consists of determining the organization and its next steps in the future with a specific tactic or strategy to achieve a certain position. In other words, the planning process is in connection with the final results and the means to achieve these results.

Perhaps the best summed up value of planning was by U.S. General Douglas MacArthur, who noted: 'Without a plan you're just tourists'. MacArthur's comments allude to the value of planning with an emphasis on the organization (such as an event), the specific goals and create specific routes by which these objectives can be achieved. The basis of establishing these roads is understanding of internal (eg. available resources) and external (eg. economic conditions) factors that influence decisions made. Other benefits associated with strategic planning include its ability to: identify and solve problems, generate a range of potential strategies for consideration, employees gain a better understanding of the organization and be more committed to making strategies, and clarify roles and responsibilities in order to reduce uncertainty about the future which may decrease resistance to change (Hannagan, 2005).

In the past, planning has often largely been a reactive process in response to perceived problems. Today, planning has become more proactive process. Holiday planning is especially concerned with ideas about the future of tourism. Modern western style of planning can be traced back at least 200 years since urban planning in Britain (Gunn, 1988; Williams, 1998). However, the spatial planning of urban space dating from the Greek (Gunn, 1988). Williams, (1998) suggests that the goal of modern planning is to seek optimal solutions to these problems and is designed to improve and, hopefully, develop and maximize benefits, which will produce predictable results. Planning can be encouraged through a variety of ideas and to present specific plans. Hall, P. (1992, p.1) suggested that this part of the problem arises with the concept of planning. As stated: *Although people realize that planning is a more general significance, they tend to remember the ideas and plans as a physical representation or design.*

Tourism planning should represent the opinions of all stakeholders and interest groups, as would be obvious that there will not automatically be unanimity and homogeneity in values and attitudes. However, Wilkinson (1997) argues that a lot of thinking and writing about planning tends to assume such a simple process, virtually free values of the scientific process. He said, compared to the conventional definition of planning that 'the emphasis is on a simple approach that accepts the (positivist) possibility of comprehensive rationality. Such a process involves several factors: a consensus on the objectives, the lack of uncertainty, known alternative, a high degree of centralized control, and enough time and money to prepare a plan' (Wilkinson 1997, p.24).

Planning for sustainable event management is discussed in detail by increasing a number of texts, including Allen (2000), Hall (1997), Getz (2005), Goldblatt (2005), Masterman (2004), Shone and Parry (2004), Silvers (2004b), Torkildsen (2005),

Tum, Norton and Wright (2006), Van Der Wagen and Carlos (2005), Watt (1998) and Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond and McMahon-Beattie (eds) (2004) which formed the basis useful guidelines for management.

Many events occur after long planning and their implementation will take time. Also, the events seem to influence internal changes in certain destinations, which can be economic and environmental nature. As a result, the plan assumes a key role in ensuring the principles adopted in the planned scope of work, and in recent years, many of these principles have begun to include the practical concept of sustainability and environmental protection. While event managers must maintain a certain level of flexibility in their plan, because every event is different, there must be a framework to assist in achieving the key principles that are applicable to all or most of the events. It is equally vital to long-term planning to ensure that changes in market conditions-cultural, political, economic, linguistic, meteorological and demographic-are not only taken into account to achieve a successful outcome of events, but the event itself does not result in `unsustainable` or indeed a negative effect on these factors (Torkildsen, 1999, Allen, 2002; Bowdin et al., 2006).

Planning models for sustainable event management should be based around the activities and issues identified by the situational analysis, which provides considerable scope for development of tourist destinations. Also, as Northwest Development Agency (NWD, 2006) points out, new developments should be coordinated in order to contribute the maximum benefit of the region, with a substantial development plan process, the sustainability assessment process, relevant plans and programs, a key problem facing sustainability, as well as an appropriate model that includes sustainability of objectives. In this way tourism planning should specifically define the area of development and present modes of cross-border cooperation in the field of planning and development. Tourism planning should include the objectives of the development of certain areas, the correlation of geographical, historical, cultural and economic resources. At the same time, tourism planning must be based on a balanced development of complementary rural and urban areas and the use of physical resources through active cross-border cooperation and participation of local stakeholders in interior design.

2. EVENT PLANNING

The planning process depends on whether the event is planned for the first time or is already there. In the case of a new event, the proposal is a broad concept of events with key stakeholders, and then to do `Feasibility study` of proposed event. The feasibility study covers issues and considerations: What are the necessary resources?, What are the costs?, Can the problems be solved? If the event is not feasible, planners should clearly formulate such a negative assessment. If the event is feasible and if there is agreement about the project, it is important to make the first decision, which gives enough time for planning and approximate planning in detail. At the same time, the study should demonstrate that the proposed event will meet certain criteria (such as profitability), and then it starts from the development plan for its creation.

One of the key elements of the planning process is decision making (Veal, 1994; Hall and Kearsley, 2001). How Veal (1994, p.3) states `planning can be viewed as a process of decision making`. Hall (2000a) suggests that this process is not simple, and that decisions are interdependent and system related, not just individual decisions. The planning process involves `negotiation, compromise, coercion, values, and policy choices` (Hall, 2000a, p.7).

Finally, in order to develop the planning of events, it is important to understand the decision making process. Decisions should be based on making optimal solutions for the development of certain geographic areas that consist of various urban and rural areas, designed to produce a predictable outcome, complementary to the present requirements of the tourism market. In essence, that the events were to succeed, a financial planning and control are needed. Event managers have a role of assessment of costs and revenues. Also, event managers must be aware that planning needs to adapt to different and changing circumstances (Hannagan, 2005, Thompson, Martin, 2005).

In addition, they must be aware that the planning does not fall into the trap. These include:

- during the planning they become obsessed with details, as opposed to much-needed strategic thinking,
- plans showing off as exercise, rather than as an active document that should be regularly consulted and adjusted,
- seen as the final plans, more than the direction in nature available to them (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington 2005).

In order to participate productively in the process of planning, event managers should hold a series of questions in mind. Central among these issues are the need to monitor and evaluate progress, coordinate decisions in all areas, so that the objectives of the event progress in communications, inspire and motivate those who are responsible for implementing the various elements of the plan. In other words, planning is the foundation of all successful events. To make the event a successful event managers must have a clear understanding of why there is an event. In this sense, the event managers are to select multiple options depending on the assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of each. Plan is to be implemented through a series of processes developed in the context of the concept of events. Below (Figure 1) shows the process of strategic planning events.

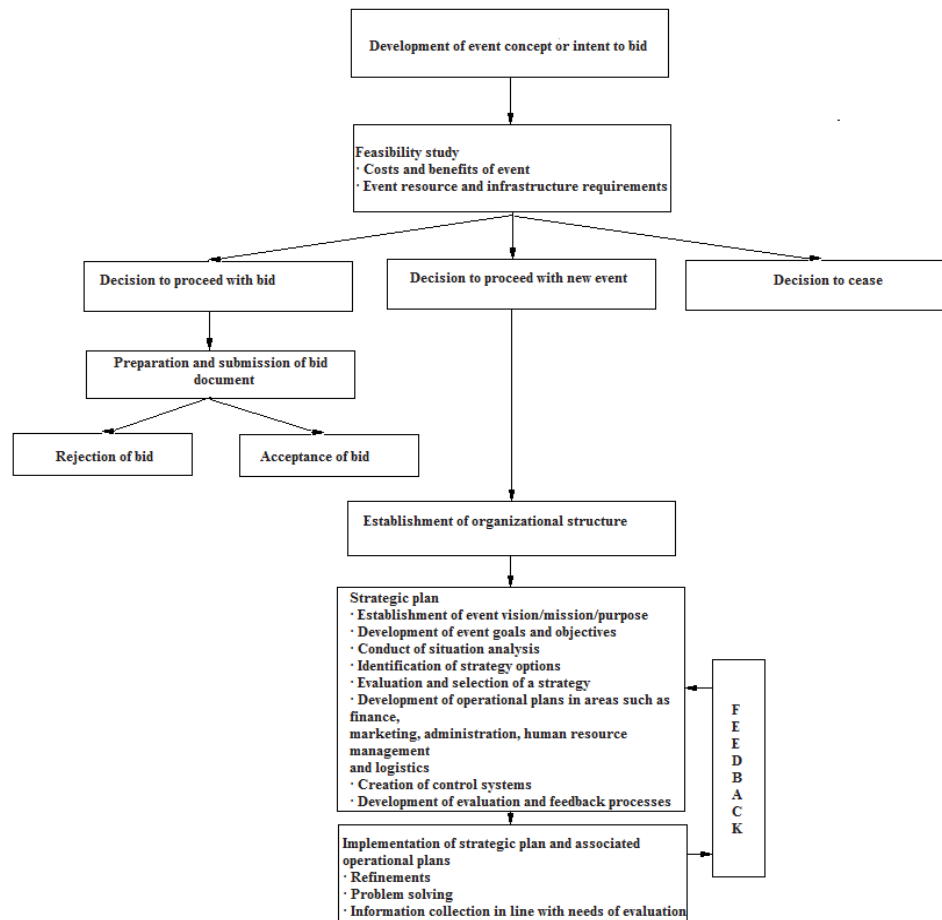


Figure 1 The strategic event planning process
 Source: adapted from Getz (2005), p. 63

In this situation, the steps in Figure 1 are not all relevant. In such cases, managers begin to assess the events of the current situation facing the events and their earlier plans. This process is likely to lead to changes or improvements to existing established missions, goals and / or strategies and contribute to the development of revised / new plans in areas such as marketing, human resources and finance. Also, sometimes these comments can lead to large changes in the existing strategy, or form for event planning. Indeed, the event managers must keep in mind, as Mintzberg (2003) points out, that the planning process seeks to encourage incremental change, when what we need finishes by reviewing the current strategy.

2.1. The concept of creating events

Goldblatt (2005) suggests five issues as very important in developing the concept of events. These are:

1. Why is the event taking place? There must be compelling reasons to affirm the importance and legitimacy of holding the event.
2. Who will be the participants in an event? This includes internal stakeholders (public, customers) and external stakeholders as stakeholders (media, politicians).
3. When will this event be held? Is there enough time for research and planning events?
4. Where will the event be conducted? The choice of sites must represent the best compromise between the organizational needs of events, comfort for the audience, accessibility and cost.
5. What is the content of a product or event? It must meet the needs, demands, desires and expectations of the audience, and must be sinergized with: why, who, when and where events are planned.

An important part of events is to determine the unique elements and resources that can make a special event and contribute to his image. Once the parameters of the event set, it is desirable that the idea of the concept of events let your imagination run wild and consult with interested parties as possible for. Stakeholders is very important general impression and priorities in creating events. The first step in the development of events should be economically viable and socially acceptable.

Sustainability depends on the event to monitor and address the needs of stakeholders and their concerns (Goldblatt 1997, Getz 1997).

2.2. Implementation of events

The implementation phase is the direct management of resources and coordinating activities to achieve the objectives and planned activities or commitments done on time and within planned costs. At the same time, implementation of events is associated with the strategic plans. When the strategic plan is selected, the next step is its implementation by taking appropriate actions, which can vary from providing advice and marketing activities, to the actual development and implementation of new events.

When all the objectives are set, the plans specified, all organizational preparation and completion of all required resources are provided, one comes to the key stages of the process management, to the moment when all activities should start and begin execution - implementation of strategic plans. This point is important because of the fact that until that moment, for objective or subjective reasons, the entire procedure can be stopped or postponed for a definite or indefinite period of time - consciously and without major breakdowns. The very fact that the implementation of strategic plans does not begin at the appointed time can be related to inadequate planning and certain omissions in the whole process, (although this possibility can be immediately included in the plan), it produces much less damage than when the strategic plan is stopped or interrupted at the moment its implementation has already begun.

Activities related to the implementation process can be divided into two groups. One group consists of activities related to technology, procedure and needed surgery, and other activities related to humans - such holders and a key factor in any implementation. Seen from this angle, any successful implementation has more preconditions:

- the existence of clearly defined primary objective,
- identification of individual goals,
- determining phase criteria, activities, relationships, time, money and other resources,
- determining the sequence of activities of each participant,
- development of people-individually and in teams,
- providing confidence, dedication and commitment to,
- communication between themselves,
- conflict resolution and reaching agreement,
- risk and creativity, and
- the key role of the event manager.

To implement the event successfully in tourism, tourist organizations have a key role. Tourist organizations are known to play different roles and have different responsibilities in the field of tourism. According to Wöber et al. (2003), tourist organizations perform a variety of tasks including managing and providing destination with attractions, planning and management of infrastructure that depends on tourism, coordination between tourist products, promotion of tourism locally and internationally, and providing market research. Other basic features include the organization of tourist development of the brand, mediation between the private and public sectors, as well as leadership in the tourism industry (Getz et al., 1998). Based on typical roles tourist organization is the body responsible for developing strategic plans for tourism. Other community groups such as government agencies, centers and nonprofit groups are also an integral part of successful implementation of the strategy of an event in tourism. However, they usually follow the leadership of tourist organization in defining and implementing the strategy. Strategic plans are obviously at different levels in the organization and it is also true of tourist organizations, which have a corporate strategies that cover and define all business areas that are involved in tourist organizations (Botten & McManus, 1999).

Getz (1997) argues that a long-term strategic approach to event planning in tourism needed if tourist organizations are able to realize the full potential of the implementation of the event.

2.3. Evaluation of sustainable events

Evaluation is a process that occurs throughout the course of events in which it criticizes, measure and monitor the implementation of an event, in order to accurately assess the results. This allows the creation of the profile of events that briefly describes the main features and important statistical information about the event. This also provides feedback to the participants of events who play an important role in the management of the event by providing the necessary tools for analysis and improvement. At the same time, evaluation is fundamental to the success of any strategic plan. At the level of tourist destinations, there are broad objectives that can be set for sustainable tourism in the event, as well as goals related to these goals. Collection and interpretation of information is central to this process, with data on the visitors of events flows in tourism.

Getz (2005) and others have identified three key periods that are useful to undertake the evaluation:

- *Assessment of pre-event* - the evaluation of the factors that regulate an event that normally occurs at the stage of research and planning. This is sometimes called feasibility studies, and is used to determine what level of resources will be required whether or not to proceed with the event. Such studies can include market reaction to the event and is likely to include some degree of research and forecasts on the participation of pictures of events, costs and benefits. Often the event is comparable to the profiles and outcomes of previous similar events. The study could lead to the establishment of goals or criteria upon which project success can be measured.
- *Monitoring of events* - the process of moving the event through the various stages of implementation, and allows adjustment of the factors that govern the event. Observing the flow of events can lead to changes that improve the organization of events, such as adjustment or changing the required factors. The process of tracking is vital to quality control, and will also provide valuable information in the final evaluation of an event, for the purpose of future planning.
- *Post event evaluation* - is the most common form of evaluation, which involves the collection of statistical data derived from a single event. Key performance indicators are sometimes used to achieve the objectives of the event in the measures that can be applied to the measurable success of the event. An important aspect of testing is usually through briefing meetings. Participants and stakeholders recognize the strengths and weaknesses that are presented at the meeting and evaluate for future reference. Post event evaluation may also involve some form of questionnaires or surveys of participants in the event in order to obtain information about their satisfaction with the event. This often involves the collection of data on financial expenditures of participants, so that it can be compared with the revenue generated by the event. The nature of the evaluation will be determined largely by events and purposes of the intended audience.

The process of event management, illustrated in Figure 2, is the cycle in which input and analysis of data from the event allows decisions to be made on the basis of information and the plan be more efficiently done, and improve the outcomes of events. This applies to individual events that are repeated, where the lessons learned from a single event can be incorporated into planning the next one. This refers to general knowledge about the event, which contribute to the overall knowledge and effectiveness of industry events.

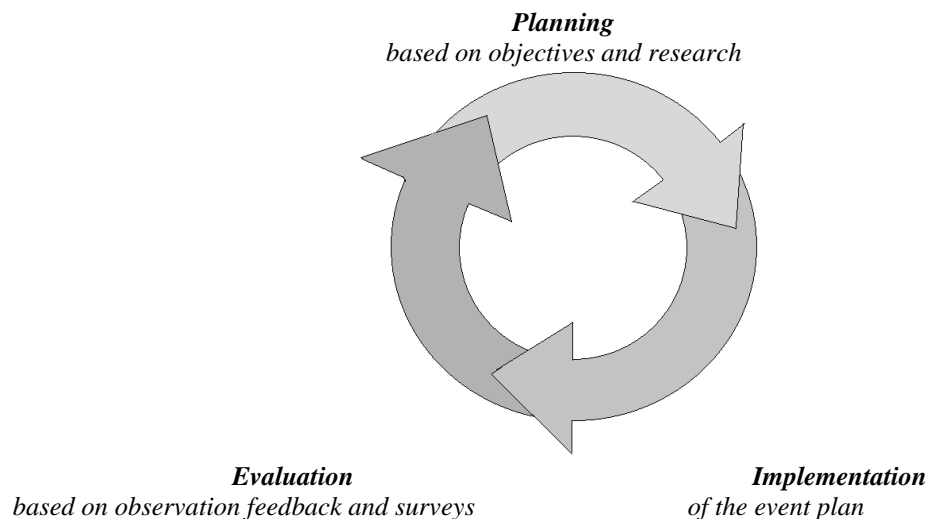


Figure 2 Evaluation and the event management process
Sources: Bowdin et al., (2006) p.413

Figure 2 shows the cycle in which input and analysis of data from the event, allow more information for the decision to do efficient planning and improve outcome.

Innovation in terms of communication events, products and technology are constantly expanding and redefining the process of evaluation of events, which leads to better planning of events, the implementation and further evaluation. It is a spiral that goes up and that leads to improvements in individual events, and increasing higher education of industry events.

3. PLANNING MODELS FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

When planning a sustainable model of events there are a number of key questions that apply not only to sustainable development in general, but especially to events. First, the model of sustainable event planning should be defined for the sustainability of the economic, environmental and social domains that may be considered. This can be broken down into

various components with specific characteristics and indicators that can be used to measure or estimate in relation to its objectives. Below (Table 1) shows the model of sustainable planning events with the general terms of individual components.

Stage	Primary domain				Characteristics				Indicators	Domain implications	
	Economic	Environmental	Social	Issue	Components	Quant.	Qual.	Func.			Spat.
Feasibility and research	√			Economic viability	Event profitability	√		√		Revenue/cost analysis	Environmental - social
					Cash flow	√				Cash flow forecast	Environmental
					Stakeholder investment	√			√	Investment source?	Social, economic
			√	Community involvement	Consultation process	√	√	√	√	Profile of decision makers	Economic
Planning and coordination			√	Supply chain management	Local suppliers versus outside the region	√			√	Location/proximity	Economic
		√		Supply chain management	Sustainability policy	√	√	√		Record keeping, word of mout	Social
Implementation of event		√		Waste management	Recycling	√	√	√	√	Waste audit	Economic, social
	√			Economic viability	Event profitability	√	√			Ticket receipts	Social
			√	Labour force	Event employees	√	√	√	√	Employee profile	Economic
Breakdown, evaluation and legacy			√	Legacy management	Community usage of facilities	√	√	√	√	Facility users by demographic/geographic profile	Economic
	√			Evaluation	Method of evaluation	√	√		√	Evaluation method chosen	Environmental

Table 1 Sample Sustainable Event Planning Model.

Source: Raj, Musgrave (2009) p.147

This model shows how in the various stages of planning the sustainability event, the three primary domains may play an important role. It should be noted that the examples do not represent a definite list, but illustrates the relationship, course and consequences of each element of the events relating to the special event. Of course, as every event is different in size, scope, etc., elements that are taken into account at each stage will vary. The model explains the process of planning events in four generic phases. The primary domains (economic, environmental and social) are divided in their major issues, and then divided into their relevant components. The characteristics are then identified in terms of whether the component is, for example, measurable, such as income or data traffic. The qualitative characteristics may include a plan for collecting certain types of waste for recycling and refer to members of the committee that makes decisions. Functional characteristics can be related to the ability of suppliers, which affects the organizational decisions, and spatial characteristics may be related to the participants by geographical origin and source of investment case. Indicators are guidelines on how and where these components can be measured.

A model shown is by no means definitive and prescribed, but should encourage debate and at least offer a template for planning and creating sustainable development model, in which event managers can explicitly consider issues of sustainability at each stage of the planning process, thereby taking a holistic approach to ensure true sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable planning is increasingly becoming a requirement in tourism, including the management of events that must be tested at each stage of development. Because of the diverse nature of the event it should not be considered appropriate or feasible to plan the sustainability by observing only one area. The presented model of sustainable events may allow the practice to consider the primary domain and the individual event, while at the same time must take into account the consequences as holistic as possible, because every event has a certain range of impact that goes far beyond the events and actors in the field events. Also, presented model takes into account all possible surprises that may occur, so the event can be planned in a truly sustainable way. We hope that managers will use the presented model of sustainable event planning as a first step in creating its own model in the future, by which sustainable event management of tourist destination will be incorporated into a part of their practice.

References

1. Allen, J. (2000). *Event Planning: The Ultimate Guide to Successful Meetings, Corporate Events Fundraising Galas, Conventions, Conferences, Incentives and Other Special Events*. Ontario, John Wiley & Sons Canada Ltd.

2. Allen, J., O'Toole, W., McDonnell, I. and Harris, R. (2002) *Festival and Special Event Management*, 2nd edn. John Wiley and Sons, Sydney.
3. Botten, N. & McManus, J. (1999). *Competitive Strategies for Service Organisations*. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.
4. Bowdin, G., McDonnell, I., Allen, J., Harris, R. and O'Toole, W. (2006) *Events Management*. Second edition. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, UK, p.413
5. Goldblatt, J. J. (1997) *Special events: Best Practice in Modern Event Management*, 2nd Edn., Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.
6. Goldblatt, J. (2005). *Special Events: Event Leadership for a New World*. 4th edn. Hoboken, John Wiley & Sons.
7. Getz, D. (1997) *Event Management and Event Tourism*, Cognizant Communication Corporation, New York.
8. Getz, D. & Anderson, D. & Sheehan, L. (1998). *Roles, issues and strategies of convention and visitors' bureaux in destination planning and product development: a survey of Canadian bureaux*. *Tourism Management*, 19(4), pp.331-340.
9. Getz, D. (2005). *Event Management & Event Tourism*, 2nd edn. New York, Cognizant Communication Corporation.
10. Gunn, C. A. (1988). *Tourism Planning*, 2nd edn. New York, Taylor and Francis.
11. Hall, P. (1992). *Urban and Regional Planning*, 3rd edn. Harmondsworth, Penguin, p.1
12. Hall, C. M. (1997). *Hallmark Tourist Events: Impacts, Management and Planning*. Chichester, John Wiley & Sons.
13. Hall, C. M. (2000a). *Tourism Planning*. London, Prentice Hall, p.7
14. Hall, C. M. and Kearsley, G. (2001). *Tourism in New Zealand: An Introduction*. Melbourne, Oxford University Press.
15. Hannagan, T. (2005). *Management Concepts and Practices*. 4th edn. London, Financial Times, Prentice Hall.
16. Johnson, G., Scholes, K. and Whittington, R. (2005). *Exploring Corporate Strategy*. 7th edn. Harlow, Financial Times, Prentice Hall.
17. Masterman, G. (2004). *Strategic Sports Event Management: An International Approach*. Oxford, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
18. Mintzberg, H. (2003). *The Strategy Process*. 4th edn. Harlow, Pearson Education.
19. Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) (2006). *Arpley & Bridgefoot Area Action Plan Scoping Report*, Environment Services Directorate, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH. Available from: nwda.cms.amaze.co.uk/DocumentUploads/Tourismfinal.pdf (accessed 10, February 2012).
20. Raj, R., Musgrave, J., (2009). *Event Management and Sustainability*, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK, p.147
21. Shone, A. and Parry, B. (2004). *Successful Event Management*. 2nd edn. London, Thomson Learning.
22. Silvers, J. (2004b). *Professional Event Coordination*. Hoboken, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons Inc.
23. Thompson, J. L. with Martin, F. (2005). *Strategic Management: Awareness and Change*. 5th edn. London, Thomson Learning.
24. Torkildsen, G. (1999) *Leisure and Recreation Management*, 4th edn. E & F N Spon, London.
25. Torkildsen, G. (2005). *Leisure and Recreation Management*. 5th edn. Abingdon, Routledge.
26. Tum, J., Norton, P. and Wright, N. (2006). *Managing Event Operations*. Oxford, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
27. Van Der Wagen, L. and Carlos, B. (2005). *Event Management for Tourism, Cultural, Business and Sporting Events*. 2nd edn. Frenchs Forest, Pearson Education Australia.
28. Veal, A. J. (1994). *Leisure Policy and Planning*. Harlow, UK, Longman/ILAM, p.3
29. Wöber, K. W. & Hwang, Y-H & Fesenmaier, D. R. (2003). *Services and functions provided by European city tourist offices: a longitudinal study*. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 5(1), pp.13-27.
30. Watt, C. (1998). *Event Management in Leisure and Tourism*. Harlow, Addison Wesley Longman.
31. Williams, S. (1998). *Tourism Geography*. London, Routledge.
32. Wilkinson, P. (1997). *Tourism Planning on Islands*. New York, Cognizant Communications, p.27
33. Yeoman, I., Robertson, M., Ali-Knight, J., Drummond, S. and McMahon-Beattie, U. (eds) (2004). *Festival and Events Management: An International Arts and Cultural Perspective*. Oxford, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.