An analysis of audience experiences during a range of planned events in Ireland and how these can be influenced by event design

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Master Business Administration in Business Management at Dublin Business School and Liverpool John Moores University

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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to Dublin Business School and Liverpool John Moores University for the Master Business Administration in Business Management is my own work, unless referenced in the text as specific source and included in the bibliography.

Signed: ____________________

Date: ____________________
Acknowledgements:

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Abstract:

Event designers are continuously developing new strategies that will optimize any competitive advantages that their event may have, while, at the same time, minimizing their operation’s vulnerability to external threats and emulation. Yet, limited research has been done to date with respect to visitor experience at events, in the Irish setting. With this in mind, the principal aim of this study was to establish how event design techniques and practices are influential to attendees’ experience and to determine main motivations for attendance and to review the range of satisfaction levels. Overall, a total of 100 visitor surveys were collected, with results showing that there was a significant difference among event visitors with respect to their reasons for attending the event, intensity of event design factors that influence their experiences and assessment of it when comparisons across key study variables were determined. These findings provide clear insights into the changing nature of visitor behaviours in the experience economy and the importance of responding to the diverse needs of discrete niche groups who might congregate at a particular event.
Chapter 1: Introduction

The events industry expands as a professional area of study making a significant contribution to business and events-related industries. Therefore there is a need to understand the dynamics of the world in which events are situated and to which they contribute. The study of events from an event design perspective provides a greater understanding and the significance of the creation of event experiences. The approach of event studies is largely focused on attempting to provide solutions to a perceived problem where the challenge of the solution is to create an experience that connects with people (Berridge, 2006).

This study examines the event design principals and techniques that can be applied to influence audience experience at planned events within the Irish context, capturing the importance of studying audiences’ behavior. Structure for the article was provided by a framework for understanding and creating knowledge about events that places planned event experiences and meanings as the core phenomenon of event studies. The other elements in this article are motivations to attending events, audiences’ experiences, satisfaction in the light of the attended event, knowledge creation, and the design elements utilized to create enhanced experiences for event attendees. Although confined to event design, this process will also contribute to event studies generically, as many of the concepts and research themes are shared. Event design is an important sub-field within event studies and of particular interest to scholars in many disciplines because it relates directly to development of the event concept and experience and enables the event managers to envision and implement the event (Berridge, 2006).

Event management has emerged as a profession and a fast-growing field of studies in universities around the world. Within event studies, event design is also emerging as a distinct sub-field, in large part because design is a creator of experiences and such experiences can be envisioned from start to finish. To be successful in events it is most essential to be able to picture how a guest’s experience will unfold. Design, as a result, has a pivotal role to play in shaping experiences, for the experience itself has to be designed (Silvers, 2004). This dissertation is aiming to enrich the study of events, and provide the readers with new knowledge and ideas in event design and enhance the existing ones through this research. Also this research will be useful for stimulating creative thinking of readers to
find new approaches to design events and festivals using several event design techniques. As a part of the entertainment business, events are often featured in the field of marketing and tourism, and have become permanent elements in both popular and high culture (Getz, 2010). Thusly this study will also be demonstrating that event design is attracting more and more scholarship, from many perspectives. Design has a relationship with industry and society and any changes in those relationships can influence how design is applied.

1.1 Background of the problem

In order to establish the important fundamentals of the problem of this research, it was important to look at the background of events management, especially the concepts that surround this practice and strategy. A major challenge facing the study of events in general and in the perspective of event design alike is the vast volume and diversity of organized activities or occasions that may be described as events. Numerous authors have attempted to define events, however, with the emergence of event textbooks there has been an emergence of different definitions. Looking at a dictionary, the following can be found:

happen, occurrence, an incident, any one of the possible occurrences which happens under stated conditions, an item in a sports programme, that which results from a course of proceedings, a consequence, what becomes of a person or thing (fate), to come to pass, to expose to the air. (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary [SOED])

The above definition is very broad and can be interpreted in many ways. Therefore it is no surprise that one may not be clear as to what constitutes an event. Nevertheless we need to have a clear understanding of the terminology.

An extensive literature by Jago and Shaw (1998, p. 29) confirms that it is unlikely that a single, all-embracing definition of events can be developed as such phenomena include a vast array of types and perspectives an event can differ when viewed from a national, international or local level. Getz defined events from the perspective of the client and the organizer (Van Der Wagner & Carlos, 2008, p. 4). From the perspective of guests, special events are an opportunity for relaxation, and an extraordinary and unusual social or cultural experience, while from the perspective of the organizers, the event is held only once or rarely, and is not part of regular programs and activities of the sponsors or organizers. J. Goldbatt gives a definition of the event as a unique moment to be marked by special ceremonies and rituals to
meet the specific needs (Goldbatt, 2000, p. 73). In any case, all events are designed for a specific purpose, and depending on it, there are different types and sizes of events (Getz, 2008). The Goldblatt and Getz paradigm, that events are “a unique moment in time” has become commonly understood and adopted. The principal of the definition is to set events aside from everyday occurrences as those things that we do as a routine and part of our regular living. The table below presents the different genres of events management (Getz, 2005).

**Table 1.1: Types of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural celebrations</th>
<th>Festivals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carnivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commemorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>religious events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and state</td>
<td>Summits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>royal occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>political events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vip visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and entertainment</td>
<td>Concerts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>award ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and trade</td>
<td>Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consumer and trade shows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fairs, markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and scientific</td>
<td>Conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport competition</td>
<td>amateur/professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>spectator/participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>sport or games for fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private events</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Socials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Getz (2005, p. 2)*
Based on these genres and the definition of events, it can be gathered that different categories of planned events have different purposes and program. Some are established for public celebrations, while others are planned for purposed of fun, competition, entertainment, and business or socializing.

Every event is a unique activity that has its own unique objectives and, hence, unique outcomes and impacts. They involve people of different socio-cultural backgrounds and incorporate elements of business practises. Figure 1.1 demonstrates the links between the practice of events management and the socio-cultural and place elements that this article seeks to illuminate.

**Figure 1.1** The main features of the studies of events

![Diagram showing links between place, business, and socio-cultural elements in events management.]

*Source: Andrews and Leopold (2013, p. 3)*

Event management is a fast growing professional field that brings understanding how research can contribute to events’ success. In addition to commonly targeted topics such as the events logistics, staging and marketing-driven approaches, there is a growing stream of research focusing on the social perspective of events (Mair J. and Whitford M., 2013).
Studying the social dimension of events helps in the understanding of issues such as how to market events more effectively by emphasizing the social benefits to attendees, as well as a means of understanding how to control crowds and increase event spending.

Place theory has also contributed to event studies. Massey’s (2005) exploration of the role of space and place could be applied when examining settings for social encounters. Castells’s (1996) mention of territorial identity is also relevant. The aim is to connect people with an idea of a place using image and design associations.

All these aspects play a crucial role in events studies. Therefore comprehensive understanding of all three features will contribute to the making of an event regardless of its purpose.

Events operate on a range of scales from the small, private community events to the professionally organized, politically driven mega-events which takes up to few years to plan and attracts thousands of people. Events encompasses a wide variety of themes and formats from film festivals to sporting competitions and non-profit events. Despite their differences, all events share a common characteristic: they are vital part of human experience.

The nature of experience society and the anesthetization of everyday life have been described in sociological literature since the beginning of 1990’s (Featherstone, 1991; Firat and Venkatesh, 1995). The nation of experience however has become the key element in understanding customer behaviour (Addis and Holbrook, 2001) and a foundation for the economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1998, 1999). Morgan, Lugosi and Ritchie (2010) stated that the essence of leisure sector is to provide consumers with experiences, since leisure revolves around what Abrahams (1986) called “extraordinary experiences”, something that will stand out from everyday life and from all the competition for people’s spare time and disposable income (Morgan and Watson, 2007).

Events provide “extraordinary experiences” (Abrahams, 1986) and therefore event goers perceive an event as “a space set apart to which they come seeking an extraordinary experience” (Morgan, 2007, p. 1). The event design approach, called audience-centric approach, is mainly concentrating on capturing and engaging the audience to maximize the effectiveness of communication with the audience; to provide the foundation for the delivery of an optimal or peak experience for the audience; and in doing so, increasing the potential for the event to meet and exceed its stated aims and objectives (Brown, 2013). It is thus
important for those engaged in the event studies to understand experiences and experience design paradigm.

1.2 Need for the present study

The number of events management courses available in Ireland and the emerging profession of events management on a global scale in recent increases rapidly years (Harris and Huyskens, 2001). Researchers have focused almost exclusively on the importance of event management and the growth in the number of texts, journals, university-level training and education programs placing the event design perspective under the umbrella of events management and business concerns. Thus, event design is not simply a matter of production but participation to create memorable and unique events. In today’s experience economy, event design management is moving beyond the ordinary to extraordinary. According to Brown and James (2004, p. 54), the design of an event is “the very heart and soul, the raison d'être of any truly great event”. However, despite the central role of design in events “the job description for the event manager, fails to include the design component” (Brown and James, 2004, p. 54).

Getz argues that “of considerable relevance to everyone interested in what events can accomplish as instruments of policy and strategy are event experiences and the meanings attached to them. The essence of the planned event is that of an experience that has been designed (or at least the experience is facilitated) and would not otherwise occur” and that “in every case there is intent to create, or at least shape, the individual and collective experiences of the audience or participants” (Getz, 2012, p. 30). Designing the experience of an event can maximise the effectiveness of communication with the audience and as a result it can increase the potential for the event meet or exceed its stated aims and objectives while providing the foundation for the delivery of an optimal experience for the audience. The creation and staging of an event experience is based on the knowledge and theory of the psycho-social domain of the audience. By studying the motivations, the behaviours and the combination of attitudes that the audience brings to the event, and how event design elements and techniques can be applied to influence audience behaviour, the event designer is able to more successfully create and stage the event experience to meet the aims and objectives of the event (Brown, 2013). Moreover event designers have a potential to influence positive effects on the people and communities that interact with them.
Feedback and reports from audiences in combination with ontological constructs of the theoretical experience provide a very significant contribution to effective design and management of planned events. However, a successful event experience design requires a more complete understanding of the audience member or participant. This understanding includes, but is not limited to: knowledge of the predispositions of the audience; the physiology of the human body and, in particular, the human response via the five senses to stimuli and knowledge of range of discipline areas (e.g. anthropology, sociology, philosophy, religious studies and psychology; Getz, 2012, pp. 74-104). This “event design body of knowledge” can be considered part of the lifelong learning required of the event designer” (Brown, 2010).

This research undertaken is also investigating the positive and negative experiences of the audience after attending an event in order to determine how the design of the event could be used to influence those experiences and potentially, the behaviour of the audience. How people describe event experiences as they occur, and talk about them afterwards, remains a large literature gap therefore a potential research topic. This study will highlight all those issues that create obstruction to the success of an event and provide solutions to those problems as well giving a great contribution to research in Ireland.

1.3 Research aim, research questions and objectives

1.3.1 Research aim

The aim of this research is to identify factors that impact the experience of the audience at planned events and to outline a strategy to manage them effectively. Furthermore, this study is to explore events management as a professional field in greater depths by means of analyzing the principles and practices involved. Through drawing on factors that impact audience experience and the practices of events management; this study may provide insight into the effective design and management of planned events and therefore it may help event organizers to better meet the aims and objectives of an event.

1.3.2 Research question
According to Saunders et al (2009), the key criteria of research success is determined by setting clear conclusions from the data collected. In order to fulfill this, a well defined research question needs to be posted. The research question of this dissertation is defined as:

“\textit{What are the principles and techniques of event design and how event managers can apply them to more successfully create and stage audience experience at planned events?’’}"

Providing positive and meaningful experiences is not an easy task. It may be challenging for the event designers to successfully stage an event and to meet variety of visitors’ needs. Studies have shown that failure in doing so can seriously affect the quality of visitors experience.

\textbf{1.3.3 Research objectives}

According to Saunders et al. (2009), objectives are more generally acceptable to the research community as evidence of a researcher’s clear sense of purpose and direction. The research objectives are likely to lead to greater specificity than research or investigative questions. The objectives of this research work are hereby highlighted and they are:

- To explore range of motivations that the audience brings and event
- To establish how event design principles and practices are influential to attendees’ experience
- To review the range of customer satisfaction levels

\textbf{1.5 Research methodology}

Aiming to answer the objectives and research question of this document involves use of both primary research and secondary research. The approach followed in the research methodology, is the one proposed by Saunders et al. (2009) as further explained in the third chapter. The empirical method to gain the primary data in this research was based on survey. Utilizing survey as the research method enables to collect quantitative data which provides more control over the research process (Saunders, 2009). Survey was be performed using questionnaires method to evaluate the experience of the audience attending an event. A brief of the research design is as follows:
1.6 Suitability of the researcher

As with most of the dissertations, the themes identified reflect the interests of the authors. The choice of the dissertation topic helped the researcher to get into more inside knowledge of events management and do an in depth analysis of the industry. The researcher is aiming to develop her career in events management field and become an owner and CEO of an events planning organization in the future. Academic background and work background are explained below to better understand the suitability of the researcher for this topic.

1.6.1 Academic background

The researcher's academic background is rooted in Business Management, albeit with a strong Leisure and Recreation orientation. Personal interests and enthusiasm for tourism led the researcher to do the Honours Degree in Business Management with Leisure & Recreation Management stream. In 2011, the researcher has graduated from Dublin Business School, Ireland's largest independent third level college (www.dbs.ie). In the same college, the
researcher is completing a Master Business Administration in Business Management which helped her to significantly foster professional and academic knowledge on the scope of business that she will be able to apply in order to perform as an effective manager in the future.

1.6.2 Learning style

During the course of International Business and Trade, the researcher has completed a questionnaire which Honey and Mumford (1986) devised to assign a particular learning style to an individual. The results of the questionnaire have shown evident that the researcher’s learning style is predominantly that of pragmatist, which means, that the researcher tend to be keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. Indeed, the researcher generally searches out new ideas and responds to problems and opportunities 'as a challenge'.

1.6.3 Professional background

The researcher’s professional background encompasses travel and tourism, sales, event planning and management and fundraising. She has worked within the commercial industries and voluntary organisations. This breadth of experience has given the researcher a broad understanding of a range of roles and industries. Constant engaged in communication with clients, suppliers and managers, helped the researcher to gain a set of skills as ability to negotiate, attention to detail, creativeness and also improved her networking skills. The study of the social impacts of events is largely related to researcher’s personal interest as well as an advantage in future career development.

1.7 Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

**Chapter 1:** In this introductory chapter one have given an overview of the main concepts that are used throughout the body of this dissertation and explain the terms used in the event industry. It also contains background and need of the study along with the overview of research question, objectives, and research methodology.
Chapter 2: Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of the main focus of event management literature, in particular examining event design and experience. There is also a preliminary discussion on the role of design in event literature and more other concepts that are relevant to this research study.

Chapter 3: Chapter three outlines the research methodology that represents the research approach, research philosophy, and research strategy used in this dissertation.

Chapter 4: Chapter four presents the data analysis and the findings from the primary research. The findings are the perceptions and personal opinions of visitors to a range of planned events in Ireland in relation to their experiences.

Chapter 5: Chapter five is the conclusion of this dissertation. In this chapter, the researcher answers the research question and addresses the objectives by summarising the results obtained and drawing conclusions from the findings of the primary research.

Chapter 6: Chapter six is a self reflection piece on learning and performance. This chapter reflects the personal learning achievements and their application to his personal and professional life.

Chapter 7: Chapter seven is a bibliography mentioning all the references from books, journals and internet websites using Harvard referencing format.

Chapter 8: Chapter eight contains of Appendices.

1.8 The scope and limitations of the research

Events have a range of consequences for visitors. While this research has focused upon experience assessment, there are some fundamental issues that require addressing. Firstly, the research investigating audience experience to a range of events use predefined quantitative assessment techniques as tools. These tools limit the ability of respondents to indicate the diversity of personal opinions that they may experience. Secondly, the labelling of event experience as positive or negative fails to acknowledge the "shades of gray" that may exist. Thirdly, some of the theories explored in the literature review may need further investigation. Furthermore, the sampling design used in this study was convenience sampling. However, random selection of prospective respondents would have been ideal for such a study, as more accurate. Due to the timeframe, budget, and deliverables imposed upon the researcher made
the use of such a method unpractical. Lastly, the respondent profile is very limited geographically concentrating mostly on Dublin area due to time and access issues.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to literature review

In the 1960s and 1970s the events sector was not recognized as an area of separate study within leisure, tourism or recreation, all of which were rapidly growing in the academic community and in professional practice (Getz, 2007). Broorstin (1961) first drew attention to the phenomenon of “pseudo events” created for publicity and political purposes. The initial research on festivals was confined to anthropology, sociology and art. Throughout decades a large number of research projects have been published, and with it a more legitimized advancement of scholarship on event studies. The 20th century was very significant to the events sector due to numerous special events celebrated in the world. The literature on events now has grown beyond anyone’s capability of reading it all, with a number of distinct specializations having emerged and gained recognition (Getz, 2007).

Researchers have focused almost exclusively on the importance of events management providing a number of texts, journals and related literature. Events were viewed to be too important to entrust to individuals without training and experience thus it created a need for professionals in this field to have a solid academic background (Getz, 2007). In turn that created university-level and educational programs, leading to highly qualified professionals who put their efforts to better run events that are; safer, often more sustainable, and which are able to more easily meet the stated objectives. However, the year 2004, brought a shift in thinking by some researchers who combined the roles of professional practitioner and event research academics (Berridge, 2006; Brown and James, 2004; Brown, 2005; EMBOK, 2005; Getz, 2007). That shift by practitioner academics, from an event management predominant paradigm to an event (or experience) design dominant paradigm is gaining greater acceptance and provides a rich, new field to be explored (Brown and Hutton, 2013).

2.2 Defining Events Management

The literature on event management has seen a dramatic growth in recent years, with notable examples from Hede, Jago and Deery (2002, 2003), Silvers (2007) and more recent by Getz (2008, 2010) and a range of other associated texts and monographs. Whilst the events industry has become so extensive, specific management practises have been adapted to meet...
its needs. The term ‘event management’ refers to the practice of managing events. EMBOK (Events Management Body of Knowledge) defines an event management as follows:

Event management is the process by which an event is planned, prepared and produced. As with any other form of management, it encompasses the assessment, definition, acquisition, allocation, direction, control and analysis of time, finances, people, products, services and other resources to achieve objectives (Silvers, 2004).

In broad terms this tends to look at the following: economics, planning, communication, concept, human resources, marketing, promotion, sponsorship, finance and budgets, feasibility; project management; monitoring and evaluation; safety, legal and risk; technology, logistics, evaluation, design and checklists (Getz, 1991; Watt, 1998; Masterman, 2004; Silvers, 2004; Van der Wagen and Carlos, 2004; Allen et al., 2005; Goldblatt, 2005; Tum et al., 2006). Modern event management however, is largely about the delivery of experience, this is applied irrespective of the size and type of event (Silvers 2004).

The role of event management is therefore to facilitate the design of the event as well as the fulfilment of the needs and expectations of the customers or guests attending the event and the goals and objectives of its host or client. The first steps in effective event design are to determine the core values of the event. Goldblatt (1997) posits that there are five questions that must be posted and answered before any event is attempted: why? (the purpose and role of the event); who? (the audience and stakeholders); when? (day, date, and duration); where? (location and available space); and what? (the resources available and desired outcomes). The event organizer must examine many factors that will shape the design and production of an event, even the simplest of events (Silvers, 2004).

Research into the event management body of knowledge (EMBOK) suggests the scope of event management consists of phases, processes, core values and functional areas (Silvers, 2004; Silvers, Bowdin, O’Toole, and Nelson, 2006). The EMBOK Model (Figure 3) proposes a knowledge framework and descriptive summary of the scope and processes that are used in the management of events.
The EMBOK model is organized into five domains with 35 functional areas of event management, where each domain represents an overarching area of activity, which may reflect an organizational structure or a modularized category for study and analysis. Within each functional area are found numerous aspects or elements that have specific characteristics and are affected by and subject to different objectives, procedures, constraints, and standards during the different phases and processes. The model offers one of the strongest advocates for the inclusion of design and the domain itself consists of: catering design, content design, entertainment design, environment design, production design, program design and theme design.

Therefore the design element is seen as a central core activity within event management as it relates directly to development of the event concept and experience and enables the event manager to envision and implement the event (Berridge, 2006). As such event managers should see themselves as ‘experiential engineers’ who are able to piece together the overall picture of the event. They should regard themselves as ‘packaging and managing an
experience’ from start to finish and imagine all aspects and details of that experience (Silvers, 2004).

It is said that the events management plays a significant role in achieving the quality of audience experience. Its practices involve enhancing the collaboration across its disciplines at different stages of planning in order to improve customer experience as a competitive differentiator. An event becomes recognizable according to its offer that leads to satisfying the needs and motives of visitors. Event management deals with various aspects of the organization and management that are increasingly focusing on engaging individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. Looking at the event management process leads to the conclusion that it is a combination of several activities for whose conduct and monitoring a high level of expertise and skills of managers of events is required, together with the teamwork. The entire process consists of a series of steps that are shown in Table 2, along with a description of the activities needed to be implemented in each step.

**Table 2.1: Steps in the process of event preparation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps in the process of event preparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Event description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Event organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Permits and agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Financial control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Risk management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Event staging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Security and insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Operational plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source*: Van Der Wagner & Carlos (2008, p. 287-290)

Modern management leadership of events is contained in the orientation towards: guests, employees and the constant innovation and change. During their competition for every participant and visitor, event management companies are aiming to offer quality programs,
and superior entertainment experiences beyond the everyday in terms of achieving and maintaining their competitiveness.

Berridge (2006) argues that planning the event itself needs to be treated as a total designed experience since it is, in effect, a problems solving activity. The study of event management should give a greater importance to design activity as it marks events out from other professions, as i.e. project management. The concept of design is positioned beyond the defined knowledge and skill into “the realm where a planned and deliberate process is undertaken to reach a specific outcome or set of outcomes” (Monroe 2006; Berridge 2006). Such an idea of the platform used for design, is that it is essentially seen as a ‘purposeful activity’ in which not only do design ideas emerge to solve a problem, but the occurrence that solves the problem is the result of the predetermined activity of designing. Nevertheless, its use is often limited to certain aspects of the event process. A useful summary of the general consensus on design within event management is provided in a glossary of terms by Sonder, who states that design is ‘the incorporation of a themed message along with audiovisual, entertainment and musical elements’ (Sonder 2004: 411). This appears to immediately confine design to a limited role with no other function within an event other than when there is a theme.

2.3 Impacts of events

Events operate on a range of scales from the small, private community events to the professionally organized, politically driven mega-events which takes up to few years to plan and attracts thousands of people. Events encompasses a wide variety of themes and formats from film festivals to sporting competitions and non-profit events. Despite their differences, all events share a common characteristic: they create impacts.

A significant amount of research sources seek to understand the impact of events (Chernushenko, 1994; Getz, 1997; Hall, 1997; Roche, 2000; Gratton & Henry, 2001; Shibli & Gratton, 2001; Berridge, 2004; Shone & Parry, 2004; Allen et al., 2005; Bowdin et al., 2006b quoted in Berridge, 2006 ) and acknowledge that events have an impact upon society at both the micro and macro level and most take the view that this constitutes a shared experience, although explanations of the experience are limited. An overview of existing literature identifies event impacts as the economic impact, the ecological/environmental
impact, and the socio-cultural impact. Events outcomes can be viewed from multiple perspectives, ranging from personal to societal and at the local, regional, national and international levels. They include those that are intended - reflecting the objectives and aims of events - and those that are unintended and potentially negative. However, several authors have suggested that the local community and key event stakeholders may ignore the negative impacts while glorifying the expected benefits, which may never occur (Kim, 2006). A balanced event impacts evaluation, including the social dimension with economic and environmental outcomes is vital, according to Fredline et al. (2003), particularly for industries that aim for sustainable development. As Bob (2010) illustrates, event factors such as the process of incorporating sustainability have a direct relationship to how the event is designed, whilst Singh et al. (2008) observe that specific indicator tools need to be designed into the process at an early stage if sustainability is going to be effectively implemented and monitored.

Hiller (1998) suggests event impact research has focused on fairly simple analysis of immediate impacts and outcomes or legacy. Most research has been directed at assessing economic impacts to justify event spending (Hiller 1998) and this aspect is reasonably well established (Chhabra et al 2003; Crompton and McKay 1994; Crompton et al 2001; Daniels et al 2003). However, there has been a lack of comprehensive analysis in literature on post-event testing of the outcomes that were predicted (Barker et al 2002). The personal dimension, from antecedents to experiences to outcomes, is the least researched and most poorly understood theme in Event Studies (Getz, 2007). Although event tourism literature is well researched in this area, its findings do not apply to all types of event setting and experiences. What emerges from studies of event impacts is that they tend to address the positives and negatives of events via measurable outcomes that place high importance on financial impacts (Allen et al., 2005) and by contrast provide little exploration of impacts that are less clearly measurable. The need to assess the contribution that events make in this less tangible area is recognised (Hall, 1997; Allen et al., 2005) but to develop such an analysis requires a narrative as opposed to a statistical approach (Allen et al., 2005). Limitations of found in the literature may be a result of little uniform understanding or integration of two key areas of events: design and experience (Berriague, 2006).
Getz (2007) has created a framework for guidance in pursuing knowledge of how individuals are affected by events (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2.2:** Personal outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressors or causal forces</th>
<th>Potential personal outcomes</th>
<th>Possible responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The individual’s actions in attending events are the stressors or causal factors. These actions relate to:  
  • Anticipation  
  • Travel to the event  
  • The event experience  
  • Post-event evaluation | Negative experience:  
  • The event was boring or over-stimulating; did not meet expectations (in terms of quality and/or experience)  
  • Perceived lack of value for money or a ‘waste of time’  
  Positive experience:  
  • Met or exceeded expectations  
  • Pleasantly surprised  
  • Achieved peak or flow experience  
  • Satisfaction; happiness  
  • Attitude change (towards the event, sponsors, causes, or events in general)  
  • Transformation (fundamentally changed by the experience in terms of personality, values, lifestyle) | Negative experience:  
  • Loss of interest in event or event type; no intent to repeat  
  • Negative word-of-mouth communications  
  Positive experience:  
  • Increased interest in the event or event type  
  • Positive word-of-mouth communications  
  • Loyalty to specific events  
  • Higher level of involvement or specialization (in specific pursuits) resulting in increased event participation  
  • Development of an ‘event career’ |
| • General social, economic and environmental circumstances surrounding the event (or events) as they impact on individuals  
  • A dominant view of the event (or events) might arise through media coverage and other opinion-shaping forces  
  • The influence of organizers, designers and managers on personal experiences at events | Negative perceptions:  
  • Direct and indirect effects  
  • The event (or events) considered to be harmful, a threat, or undesirable  
  Positive perceptions:  
  • Direct and indirect effects  
  • The event (or events) considered to be useful, beneficial or desirable | Perceptions affect attitudes toward the event or events in general  
  • Political action might result |

*Source:* Getz, 2007

Getz (2007) explains that there are several ‘stressors’ acting on individual event experience which result in either positive or negative outcome. The experience might be judged negatively if ‘optimal arousal’ was not achieved, quality was disappointing, or it was not as advertised. Positive experiences should follow from having expectations met or exceeded. He states that the influence of media shapes expectations and event-related behaviours within the audience and points out that those can be pre-determined by event organizers, designers and managers. However, many contributors to positive, memorable and transforming
experiences are actually beyond the control of the organizers and designers, who can only hope to suggest and facilitate great experiences.

‘Social exchange theory’ (Homans, 1960 quoted in Getz 2007) can also be applied in measuring the event impacts on audience attending an event. The theory explains that individuals who believe they benefit from the event are likely to think more highly of it. Others may form a negative value, believing they have been harmed or affected by a high costs (cost can be time, money, effort, etc).

2.4 Events Design

Steve Brown, an event designer and the Head of Tourism at Flinders University, has described event design as “the creation, conceptual development and staging of an event using event design principles and techniques to capture and engage the audience with a positive and meaningful experience”. Brown states that “the event designed experience that is the result of the ongoing event design process maximises the effectiveness of communication with the audience and can both influence and modify audience behaviour which, as a consequence, increases the potential for the event to meet and exceed its stated aims and objectives while providing the foundation for the delivery of an optimal or peak experience for the audience”.

Event design considers experiences of the audience as a primary component of the event and event designers create the event assessing what is the best for audience (Brown, 2005; Getz, 2007). Brown states that “creativity is based on the audience’s experience and the audience experiences the event through their five senses and through the layers of ritual and meaning that are enmeshed within it” (Brown, 2005, p.3). While creativity and experience are emphasised, it is also important for event designers to apply design principles, concepts and techniques in event design to create successful events (Brown, 2005).

Design features as a key activity component in the planning, development and management of events (Berridge, 2010; Goldblatt and Nelson, 2001; O’Toole, 2011; Silvers, 2007). In the event management process, Goldblatt and Nelson classify design as a main activity, in addition to research, planning, coordinating and evaluating events. Silvers (2007) conceptualize design as a core domain or function within events management, which consists
of seven facets: catering design, content design, entertainment design, environment design, production design, program design and theme design.

**Table 2.2: Event Design Domain**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catering Design</td>
<td>The determination of suitable catering operations and the selection of the menus, quantities and service styles to meet the food and beverage needs of the event, including the specific requirements associated with the serving of alcohol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Design</td>
<td>The selection of the appropriate topics, formats and presenters to achieve the communication objectives and educational obligations of the event project, incorporating the principles and dynamics of adult learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Design</td>
<td>The sourcing, selection and control of suitable entertainment, ancillary programs and recreational activities for the event project and coordinating the support requirements for the entertainers and activities in a manner that delivers the desired entertainment experience and that benefits the audience and organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Design</td>
<td>The creation or acquisition and arrangement of décor items, props, furnishings, decorative embellishments and way finding systems to enhance the attractiveness and functionality of learning, marketing, ceremonial and entertainment environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Design</td>
<td>The incorporation, sourcing and selection of the appropriate sound, lighting, visual projection, multimedia, special effect and other theatrical elements and services to meet the communication objectives and create the desired impressions and ambiance of the event project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Design</td>
<td>The formation and choreography of the agenda of activities, elements, exhibits and amenities that shape the composition of the event experience to address the ceremonial, hospitality and communication requirements of the goals and objectives of the event project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Design</td>
<td>The application of theme development principles and cultural iconography to communicate and integrate the purpose, message, image and branding of the event project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Silvers, 2007*

The design domain focuses on artistic interpretation and expression of the goals and objectives of the event project and its experiential dimensions. Its seven elements should not
be considered as singular entities or in isolation, but rather as interrelated domains which drive event design. These elements developed within each functional area combine to create experience encounter that will either be enjoyed or endured, with some options consider being risky by their nature or by design.

Event designers are to plan and manage the experience from the guests’ point of view. It is important to notice the significant difference between the event design approach which focuses on the audience first and the event management approach which prioritises logistics and operations. The audience experiences the event. But can experiences be designed? It is possible to get people involved, have them to do specific things, and receive desired stimuli, but it is not possible to guarantee or predict what individuals actually ‘experience’ cognitively and emotionally as an outcome (Getz, 2007). Nor can the event designer know for a certainty what meanings will be attached to those event experiences, or whether they will have any transforming impact. Getz (2007) concluded that experiences cannot be designed or engineered, but can be suggested and facilitated. On the other hand, design and management also seeks to constrain undesired experiences, including aggression, violence and over-stimulation.

As experience is so highly personal that it cannot be planned, designed, or even promised to event audience, the purpose of staging an event and the success of an event will depend on creativity that the event designer can bring to it. That creativity is based on the audience’s experience which they receive through their five senses. Event design as a stimulus activates the five senses of hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste, embedded in the event experience. It acts as an experience-maker and experience-enhancer, which provides ample opportunity for the attendee to engage in sensory and emotional interaction with the event. The more senses an experience engages the more effective and memorable it can be (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Therefore event design makes the best use of experience of the audience through five senses as event design technique (Brown, 2005; Getz, 2007).

Brown and James (2004: 59) argued that ‘Design is essential to an event’s success because it leads to improvement of the event on every level.’ But, can design principles be established that will help any event manager or planner understand how settings and environments can be created? Events literature explores theoretical constructs around design practices attempting
to identify factors that influence experience of the audience. The most prominent sources of material on events and design in practice are Malouf (1999), Silvers (2004a) and Monroe (2006), Gardner et al. (1989) all of whom, in general, contextualise underpinning design principles within an event management framework. Berridge (2006) argues that by understanding the event design perspective, the managers will subsequently have a conceptual base from which to carry out detailed analysis about the nature of experiences at the event. Embracing the core design principles of an event gives that event a clear direction that is easily marketed and easily understood by all those involved, whether internal or external to the organization. It is clearly understood by the event management team that every decision made must relate back to, and be in accord with, the core values for the event. Research into the theoretical constructs that might underpin discussion of the audience and the response to the purposefully designed event experience have included a number of event design principles (emotion, meaning, authenticity, narrative and surprise) that have built on the first five (scale, shape, focus, timing and built) indentified in 2004 (Brown and James, 2004).

Scale - Matching the scale of the activity to the venue and ensuring that, regardless of the distance from the activity to the audience, the audience can clearly see and understand what is being presented. This may involve using elements that are visual rather than aural, three-dimensional rather than two-dimensional, multiple rather than single. It allows for the psychological impact of the space on the audience and the audience’s need for a sense of enclosure, but not restriction.

Shape- The layout of event is to focus on simple and clean lines. The removal of any visual clutter and/or distractions is essential. Understanding audience psychology – which way will they want to walk or turn and how will they respond to site layout – is crucial. Visitor observation surveys or tracking will provide invaluable information. Ensuring clear sight lines for every seat in the house is vital.

Focus- Ensuring that the audience is focused on what you want. Utilizing blocking techniques from theatre and film direction to ‘force’ attention to specific locations will prove useful, as will understanding the physiological response of the human eye to colours, movement and changes in intensity when lighting an event, and the psychological response of audiences to shape and structure.
Timing - Accurate timing throughout the event will go a long way towards maintaining the contract established with the audience. Allowing sufficient time for each and every programme element and programming tightly (to the second) creates a feeling of spontaneity, and relaxed ‘flow’ to events. Understanding an audience’s likely attention span and response to programme elements, and being able to programme to maximize their attention, is also critical. ‘Event time’ is different from real time and audiences respond differently to it. Event design needs to incorporate local social, cultural and environmental conditions when scheduling activity, and allow for a ‘time contingency’ in the schedule.

Build- Understanding the ‘event curve’ (McIlvena and Brown, 2001) and how to apply it to the programme to ‘build’ the event over its duration, including the ebbs and peaks, so as to maximize its impact with the audience, is vital. So is how to maximize limited event and programme resources to create high impact.

Collectively and individually these principles can be applied while conceptualizing, designing, and planning the various stages of an event, and they will provide the event organizer with a basis for creating a memorable event experience. Principles of design according to Monroe (2006) should have a focus, must consider the use of space and must consider and reflect the flow of movement (cited in Berridge, 2007: 97 and Berridge, 2010: 190). Pine and Gilmore also identify five principles which can be applied to event theme design management:

- It must alter guest’s sense of reality
- It must affect the experience of space, time and matter
- It must integrate space, time and matter into a cohesive realistic whole
- It is strengthened by creating multiple places within a place
- It must fit the character of the enterprise staging the experience

The very creation of such planned event experiences should be part of a deliberate and integrated design-based process whereby each element of the event is carefully mapped out in order to produce an environment (or setting) where there is the opportunity for experiences specific to that event to be consumed, and that this includes the pre-, actual and post-event stages. Design activity, in this context, therefore ranges from initial concept of the event
through to all the successive elements that are required to ultimately deliver the experience (Allen 2002; Silvers, 2004; Berridge 2007, 2009; Goldblatt 2008; Van der Wagen 2008).

2.5 Event experience

The core phenomenon of event studies is the event experience and meanings attached to it (Getz, 2010). The term “experience” can be defined as a “direct observation of or participation in events: an encountering, undergoing, or living through things in general as they take place in the course of time” (Schmitt, 2011). The experience itself can be personal or social, and will vary from culture to culture and over time. Event designers are particularly interested in exploring how their manipulation of setting, program and various human interactions affects the audience and participants, and whether or not the desired experiences are achieved. Designers can make the experience special through décor, entertainment, activity and sensory stimulations. The aim is to create a “wow factor”. Event designers strive hard to deliver emotionally engaging and memorable experiences. But how people describe event experiences as they occur, and talk about them afterwards, remains a large literature gap therefore a potential research topic.

The concept of customer experience was intimately conceived in the mid-1980s when Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) introduced a new experiential approach into the consumer behaviour domain. Current theoretical constructs have adopted experience as a new mean of competition, especially in the era of experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Shaw and Ivens, 2002; Meyer and Schwager, 2007). Pine and Gilmore (1999, p. 10-11) write, "While commodities are fungible, goods tangible, and services intangible, experiences are memorable". They state that memorable experiences rather than product- or service-quality are the factors creating sustainable competitive advantage.

The concept of experience has grown in importance across the business, tourism, leisure, hospitality and event sectors (Pettersson and Getz 2009) as organisations operating within the sector must provide customers with memorable customer experiences to survive in the new economy (Kale, 2009). Economists tend to attribute experiences to services, whereas experiences are a distinct economic offering, as different from services as services are from goods. Today we can identify and describe this fourth economic offering because consumers unquestionably desire experiences, and more and more businesses are responding by
explicitly designing and promoting them (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). While the economy is changing and the customers are becoming more demanding, experiences have emerged as the next step in what we call the *progression of economic value* (Figure 3). According to Pine and Gilmore the way to retain competitive advantage for a brand is to turn a service into an experience. An experience occurs when the service is performed in a unique, memorable way which involves the customer as a participant.

**Figure 2.3:** The Progression of Economic Value

![The Progression of Economic Value](image)

*Source:* Pine and Gilmore, 1998

Experiences are claimed to be part of a new economy, diverse from traditional industry and mass-production, an economy given labels such as “experience economy”, “creative industry”, “network society” or “dream society”, where our dreams can be fulfilled (Jensen, 1999), (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), (O. Löfgren, 2003), and (O'Dell and Billing, 2005). According to O'Dell and Billing (2005), “experiences have become the hottest commodities the market has to offer”. The key ingredients of a successful experience are pointed out as
being personally relevant to the customer and containing elements of novelty (learning new things and growing as a person (Lilja, et al., 2007)), surprise (providing something unexpected often leading to feelings of arouse and astonishment), learning (the perceived challenge of the task and skills add to the richness of experience) and engagement (interacting with the customer) (Poulsson and Kale, 2004) all leading to a memorable experience to the customer. Poulsson and Kale (2004) suggest that the greater the assortment of these elements the more intense will the final experience result.

Experiences can be defined as “an engaging act of co-creation between a provider and a consumer, wherein the consumer perceives value in the encounter and in the subsequent memory of that encounter”. The nature of experience and the relationship between the experience creator and experience receiver is complex. Experience is not static and is always open to the effects of people’s interaction, and it is also multi-dimensional (Lee et al. 1994; Botterill and Crompton 1996; Hull et al. 1996; Li 2000) and multi-faceted (Rossman 2003; Ooi 2005) across the course of any given time period. Experiences are said to have three dimensions to them: the conative (behaviour), cognitive (awareness, learning, perception) and affective (feelings, emotions) dimension (Mannell and Kleiber 1997). These represent, respectively, the behaviour and what people actually do, how they make sense of experience through awareness, judgement, etc., and lastly the feelings and emotions that they use to describe the experience.

Getz (2007) provides a model on planned event experience to explain the liminal zone and comunitas aspects of an event. This theory is adapted from Van Gennep (1909) and it seeks to highlight the importance of comunitas at an event. It is said that the ‘communitas’ is applied to that of a temporary state within which people are altogether, removed from everyday life, therefore these individuals can all be seen to have a very specific and common interest. Ones experience should be random and can be related to in the outside world and fully equal or egalitarian. When ‘communitas is experienced at an events it is a state that is constantly sought after. However an event organizer cannot guarantee such togetherness of an event in things such as a wedding or christening.
Victor Turner (1969) describes this same transitional state as ‘Liminoid’ but this is rather more profane than sacred as described above in communitas. In this state it is believed that people can become more relaxed, uninhibited and open to new ideas. One such example could be burning man almost seen as a spiritual right of passage for some. At the centre of the model we are concerned with ‘liminal/liminoids distinctive experiential properties. It must be removed from both spatial and temporal term to have greatest emphasis in the model.

2.6 Motivation of the audience

In Getz book Event Studies (2007) ‘Motivation’ refers to the process by which people are driven to act in a certain way, thus influencing audience behaviour’. As Getz (2007, p.240) further explores ‘personality traits have a rather permanent influence on behaviour, whereas motivation is dynamic, its can change and does change’. Getz (2007, p.240) perfectly sums it up by stating, ‘another way to look at motivation is to think of a need which is accompanied by an expectation that action will reduce it’. If the expectation is met, satisfaction results’ (Getz, 2007 p. 240). Thus, motivation involves exploration of why people attend events, and how they make their choices and decisions. Events are mostly created and designed based on their motivational appeal (Fisher, 2000). Once an event organiser has an understanding of what motivates groups of consumers to attend planned events, or in fact what precludes
others from attending, it is possible for the organiser to develop tailored and desired services to ensure maximum satisfaction.

Since the elements of an event program must be designed in order to satisfy different needs, emphasis is given to identifying the needs of visitors to create customized events that will meet the needs of all visitors. Identification of their needs is a significant for effective development of elements of the event. According to Crompton and McKay (1997, pp. 426) there are three reasons for investing effort in better understanding the motives of event visitors:

- designing offers targeted at visitors, and insurance of benefits that meet their needs,
- understanding the relationship between visitors and the ultimate motive of visitors’ satisfaction, and
- facilitate the effectiveness of other marketing activities

Motivation explains why an audience will attend an event, why they will behave in a certain manner and thus how event organizers can influence their behaviour. In his discussion of motivation, Berridge (2007) focuses on needs, and how audience members express choice by attending an event, even though it was designed by someone else. This is because the Event fulfills their needs. In looking at motivation to attend an event, a relevant concept is the decision making process for the events that is expressed using the acronym PIECE:
Table 2.3: Decision making process (manifestation visitors) – PIECE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>Problem recognition</th>
<th>Difference between someone's existing state and their desired state relative to leisure consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Information search</td>
<td>Internal or external search; limited or extensive search processes of leisure (including event) solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Evaluation and selection</td>
<td>Evaluation and selection of leisure alternatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Choosing</td>
<td>Choosing whether to attend an event and which optional purchases to make at the event of festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Evaluation experience</td>
<td>Evaluation of the post-event experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Visitor expectations derive from a combination of marketing communication, recommendations from friends and family, previous experience with this or similar events, and the image of the event. The expectations of visitors affect their satisfaction levels with the quality of services perceived, as Getz (2007) argues "events do contain tangible elements, such as food, beverages, and other products sold or given away, but they are essentially a service which consists of intangible experiences of finite duration within a temporary, managed atmosphere”.

Motives for event attendance are characterized by constant change and can be examined through a number of different frameworks. These approaches include early studies such as Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, Iso-Ahola's (1982) escape-seeking model, the premise of push-pull factors (Crompton, 1979), psychological needs (Sloan, 1989), and stages of increasing involvement (Funk & James, 2001). It has been suggested that "tourism may share or be subject to the same theories and concerns that characterise leisure" (Mannell and Iso-Ahola 1987, p. 315). Indeed, Iso-Ahola (1982) suggested that "tourism motivation is a part or one form of leisure motivation" (p. 257). Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) argued that both tourism and leisure should be viewed as an experience and that this "experience emanate(s)
from the interplay of two motivational forces: to escape from routine and stressful environments and to seek recreational opportunities" (p. 314).

Most contemporary theories of motivation assume that people initiate and persist at behaviours to the extent that they believe the behaviours will lead to desired outcomes or goals (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The specific goals they select and the patterns of action they undertake to achieve their goals are the results of individual thinking and learning (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2009). Self-determination theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan, 1980, 1985b, 1991) has differentiated the concept of goal-directed behaviour, yet it has taken a very different approach. The model takes into consideration different types of motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic and amotivation) at three levels of generality, how these various motivations are related as well as the determinants and consequences of these motivational representations.

**Figure 2.5: Self-determination theory model**

![Self-determination theory model](image)

*Source:* Ryan and Deci, 2000

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be conceptualized as opposites on a continuum of individual behaviour. When people undertake activities because they like them and want to participate in order to enjoy the activity, rather than to achieve specific outcomes, this refers to intrinsic motivation. Both autonomy and competence in leisure activities foster intrinsic motivation (Walker, 2010). Extrinsic motivation is the opposite; an activity is undertaken for
the sake of outcomes or expectations. Extrinsic motivation has a multidimensional nature. Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that there are four types of extrinsic motivation that vary in the extent to which they are controlled versus autonomous; and they are: external (to attain a desired consequence such as tangible rewards or to avoid a threatened punishment), introjected (to avoid experiencing feelings of anxiety and guilt), identified (in accordance with personal values) and integrated (desire to integrate).

These different motivation types are used to predict cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes. Intrinsic motivation generally predicts the most positive effects and extrinsic motivation predicts the most negative consequences (Vallerand, 1997). In contrast, amotivation is a state in which people lack the intention to behave, and thus lack motivation as that term is defined in the cognitive-motivational tradition (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Amotivation is the opposite of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations; it represents the lack of both types of motivation and thus a complete lack of self-determination with respect to the target behaviour.

By understanding attendee’s motivations, the event designers are given the opportunity to maintain attendees and develop tailored and desired services. Event motivation is a way to monitor satisfaction, and a tool for understanding attendees’ decision-making processes (Crompton and McKay, 1997).

2.7 Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is a concept that has been widely debated in literature and it is an important aspect within a service-orientated domain such as leisure and event settings (Dunn Ross and Iso-Ahola, 1991). A number of definitions have been proposed, yet there still is no consensus (Vanhamme, 2000). This fact has hindered both the development of valid measurements and the comparison and interpretation of empirical results (Giese & Cote, 2000). There are numerous and, at the same time, very different approaches to the concept of consumer satisfaction. Depending on the author, satisfaction is purely emotional (Oliver, 1980) or a cognitive comparison (Giese & Cote, 2000). The combination of these two approaches reveals that satisfaction with a product or service contains both emotional and cognitive components (Bigné & Andreu, 2004) and is the result of a comparison between a subjective experience and a prior base of reference.
Also contained in the literature is discussion on customer experience as a key determinant of customer satisfaction and loyalty (Caruana 2002). Customer experience and satisfaction, while discrete constructs (Garbarino & Johnson 1999), are connected through a contributory relationship (Fornell 1992). Researchers suggest that customer experience not only drives customer satisfaction (Anderson and Mittal 2000) and loyalty (Fornell et al. 2006), but also word-of-mouth (Keiningham et al. 2007b). Creating memorable, transforming event experiences is therefore a goal of many event producers. It is believed that if the audience really enjoy and recollect events they are more likely to return or seek out comparable experiences. After attending the event, visitors begin to compare what they expected from events with what they experienced - evaluation after attending the event (Bowdin, 2006).

The customer could judge the quality of the service delivered as “good” but they may not have had satisfaction from the experience (Randall and Senior, 1996). Crompton and MacKay (1989) argued that satisfaction and service quality are not the same thing, stating: “satisfaction is a psychological outcome emerging from an experience, whereas service quality is concerned with the attributes of the service itself”. Pararuraman et al. (1988) agreed but stated that customers use the same criteria to judge both, as the two are interrelated. When customers’ expectations are met or even exceeded, the service would be viewed of high quality. At the same time, when the services experienced did not meet the customer’s expectations, the service quality is considered low, and the customers would be left unsatisfied.

Exploratory research of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) revealed that the criteria used by consumers in assessing service quality fit 10 dimensions. These dimensions were tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding/knowing the customer and access. In 1990 the authors had refined the model to the useful acronym RATER (reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy and responsiveness), which is a useful model for quantitatively exploring and assessing customers' service experiences and has been used widely by service delivery organizations. This framework can be used in measuring the event attendee satisfaction level as shown in Table 2.4:
Table 2.4: Dimensions of service quality from the aspect of events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality dimension</th>
<th>Event aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability – ability to perform service dependably and accurately</td>
<td>Reliability – has the event started on time, and whether it was consistent with what was promised to guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assurance – knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence</td>
<td>Assurance – refers to the kindness, the ability of communication and security aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangibles – appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials</td>
<td>Tangibles – refers to the scene, the appropriateness of theming, the setting of the venue, waiting time, equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy – caring, individualized attention the firm provides to customers</td>
<td>Empathy – implies considerate, caring and personalized relationship of staff to guests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness – willingness to help customers and provide prompt service</td>
<td>Responsiveness – refers to the timeliness and accessibility in the process of providing services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Visitor satisfaction is influenced by their expectations, so if those expectations are not met the visitor may be dissatisfied. It is therefore in the interest of an event designer to remove the gaps between the customer expectations and customer perceptions. The Integrated Gaps Model of service quality by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) outlines four gaps:

Gap 1 – Not knowing what customers expects

Gap 2 – Not selecting the right service designs and standards

Gap 3 – Not delivering to service standards

Gap 4 – Not matching performance to promises
**Figure 2.6:** The Integrated Gaps Model of Service Quality

Gap one occurs when the event designer perceives different expectations to the ones desired by visitors, which may be the result of poor communication. The second gap takes place when the needs of guests fail to be translated into clear specifications and standards. The third can arise if the specified standards of service quality are different to the actual service delivered to customers. The fourth gap occurs in cases where, for example, the event is not adequately promoted, and as a result, guests are expecting something different compared to what has been promised. Each scenario of these gaps has an influence on the visitor’s satisfaction.

*Source: Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1985*
Kendrick, Haslam and Waterson (2012) conducted research on events planning in order to achieve high participant satisfaction. Their findings suggest a lack of knowledge and limited literature evidence for events designers in relation to important aspects affecting participant satisfaction. The research however explores the audience experience and different factors affecting crowd satisfaction, varying with regard to age and expectations. Additionally, venue design, organisation, safety and security concerns were found to highly affect visitor’s satisfaction, irrespective of group differences or crowd environments, showing the importance of these issues when considering crowd satisfaction for all planned events.
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology is the study of methods and it raises all sorts of philosophical questions about what it is possible for researchers to know and how valid their claims to knowledge might be (Fisher, 2007). According to Sauders (2009) methodology refers to the theory of how research should be undertaken. For purposes of this study, a combination of both primary and secondary data-gathering techniques was conducted. The paper opted for a quantitative survey to meet the objectives and answer the research question. Mixtures of different tools used in the research are described under separate headings with a rationale behind choosing each of the tools with appropriate options.

The theoretical constructs for research methodology feature heavily in the literature, which explores a variety of different approaches. According to Saunders et al (2009) research is something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge. Two phrases are important in this definition: ‘systematic way’ and ‘to find out things’. ‘Systematic’ suggests that research is based on logical relationships and not just beliefs (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). Brannick and Roche (1997) define research methodology as a decision making process where each decision is affected by other decisions previously made. They explain that it is a system of interrelated decisions where the researcher focuses on one particular decision that results in the rest, which at a later stage becomes the definition of the research questions. According to Schwardt (2007), Creswell and Tashakkori (2007), and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2007), methodologies explicate and define the kinds of problems that are worth investigating; what constitutes a researchable problem; how to frame a problem in such way that it can be investigated using particular designs and procedures; and how to select and develop appropriate means of collecting data.

From the definitions of research provided above, it is understood that research is a planned activity, aimed at establishing new facts and information about a particular phenomenon. The research process involves the identification of a particular problem of area of interest, translating that problem into a research problem, collecting data, analyzing the data and reporting the findings of the research. In order to give direction to this study, the research process “onion” of Saunders et al. (2009) was adopted. This onion illustrates the range of
choices, paradigms, strategies and steps followed by researcher during the research process (see Figure: 6).

Figure 3.1: The Research ‘Onion’

Source: Saunders et al, 2009, p108

Saunders (2009) introduced the research onion as a way of depicting the issues underlying the choice of data collection method or methods by highlighting the layered approach to research. The different layers of the onion serve as a basis from which to consider the following: the philosophical orientation of the researcher; the research approach adopted; appropriate research strategies; the time horizon over which the research project is undertaken; and the data collection techniques employed by the researcher.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Easterby-Smith et al (2008, p. 56) explain that failure to think through philosophical issues can seriously affect the quality of management research. They also outline that knowledge of philosophy can help the researcher recognise which designs will work best and that it enables the achievement of a satisfactory outcome for the research activity. Saunders et al (2009, p107) develop this further and explain that research philosophy supports the creation of
knowledge in a particular field and is influenced by the way a researcher thinks. Saunders et al. (2009) outlines three research philosophy methods: Positivism, Realism and Interpretivism.

The social world of events which this study is based upon exists externally and is not related to the researcher; therefore it would be measured through objective methods rather than being inferred subjectively through reflection, sensation or intuition (Easterby-Smith, 2002). This study would therefore adopt a positivist approach as credible data could only be derived through quantitative analysis of phenomena observed (Saunders et al, 2007). Most research done on events has been in this tradition Getz, (2007). The social interpretivism philosophy, which aims to study and reflect on the inner feelings of participants, is not being utilized in this study, due to the study’s research objective, which is to establish how event design principles and practices are influential to attendees experience. Details regarding positive experience are measured using objective means (such as motivation, design principles and techniques, and satisfaction levels), thereby warranting a positivist approach.

Positivism is based on the scientific nature as it is conducted with the factual reality, figures, facts and surveys (Saunders et al, 2007). This presents percentage, numbers, charts, statistics, tables etc during the data collection and analysis. The process is not affected by other researchers work (Garner et al, 2009). This philosophy leads the researcher to gain comprehensive knowledge of research approach.

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach plays an important role in selecting a suitable methodology. It directs research to develop research design and increase the effectiveness of the research study. According to Saunders et al. (2009), research approach can be divided into two categories: deductive approach and inductive approach. He suggests that it is useful to attach these research approaches to the different philosophies; deduction owes more to positivism and induction to interpretivism. Moreover, the deductive approach is known as testing a theory, in which the researcher develops a theory or hypotheses and designs a research strategy to test the formulated theory, on the other hand, the inductive approach is known as building a theory, in which the researcher starts with collecting data in an attempt to develop
a theory. Marshall (1997, p. 17) illustrated the theoretical use of both terms (inductive and deductive) as follows:

When researchers first begin to open up any new line of enquiry there will be no useful theories available from which to deduce propositions for testing. According to Samples (2007), knowledge has to begin with collecting facts and then trying to find some order in them. This is known as induction. Deduction is the technique by which knowledge develops in more mature fields of enquiry. It involves a sort of logical leap. Going a stage further than the theory, data is then collected to test it.

Samples (2007) distinguishes the main differences between deductive and inductive approaches in the following manner:

**Table 3.1: Deductive and inductive approaches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deductive Approach</th>
<th>Inductive Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certainty of conclusions (primary distinction)</td>
<td>Probability of conclusions (primary distinction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of new information in the conclusion</td>
<td>Possible new information in the conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From general to particular</td>
<td>From particular to general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From cause to effect</td>
<td>From effect to cause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A priori</td>
<td>A posterior reasoning (from experience)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical reasoning</td>
<td>Scientific reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument forms are valid or invalid</td>
<td>Argument forms are strong or weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments are sound or unsound</td>
<td>Arguments are cogent or uncogent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Samples (2007)*

Due to the positivist nature of the research, this study would adopt a deductive approach (Saunders et al, 2007). This approach represents the most common view of the relationship between theory and research and results obtained from this approach are developed through logical reasoning (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The findings are based on the analysis of questionnaire results and compared against existing literature to ascertain if they concur with what has already been published in the field of experience design.

**3.4 Research Design**
Research purpose and research questions are the suggested starting points to develop a research design because they provide important clues about the substance that a researcher is aiming to assess (Berry and Otley 2004; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009; Yin 2012). According to Hussey and Hussey (1997, p. 54), research design is the overall approach to the research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of the data. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 166) define it as a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (1997, p. 72) state that the research design helps the researcher to:

- make an informed decision about the research methodology (the researcher has to decide how data are to be collected and analysed, and needs an overall configuration of the research process to ensure success)
- adapt the research design to cater for limitations and constraints (these include limited access to data or insufficient knowledge of the subject or an inadequate understanding of the subject or time constraints)
- determine which research methods would be appropriate for the particular study (proper research methods should help to explain the why’s, how’s and what’s of the subject (Saunders et al 1997, p. 72))

The primary focus of research should be to increase knowledge of a particular topic in order to help solve relevant problems. The design of research strategy for this study involves three elements: a survey using a questionnaire method, cross sectional studies as a time horizon and descriptive research process.

3.4.1 Research question

Formulating a research question is an intellectually challenging and time-consuming undertaking (Saunders & Lewis, 1997). In terms of timing, whilst a research question is usually decided at the very beginning of a study, it will invariably be amended and refined as the research progresses and more becomes known, particularly from reviewing academic literature (Saunders & Rojon, 2011). The research question and research objectives provide direction for the researcher regarding the data that needs to be collected from relevant literature and the precise focus of the conclusions based on our study’s findings. By
answering the research question, the researcher is aiming to provide new insights into the topic being investigated. The research question of this dissertation is defined as:

“**What are the principles and techniques of event design and how event managers can apply them to more successfully create and stage audience experience at planned events?**”

Event management literature related to experience design has shown that the design of the event can be used to influence the experience and potentially, the behaviour of the audience (Lee, 2011; Morgan, 2008; Pullman and Gross, 2004; Ralston et al., 2007; Getz, 2007; Ryan, 2012; Tkaczynski and Stokes, 2010; Brown, 2010). For an event designer, a more developed understanding of audience behaviour enables the design of the event to be modified and to adapt settings and programs as a response to observable audience behaviour (Hutton et al., 2012). Event design principles and techniques can also be used as a tool to influence the behaviour of, and the experiential outcomes for, the audience.

### 3.4.2 Research objectives

In comparison to a research question, research objectives are more specific, giving a clear indication of the research purpose and direction and providing additional information over the research question. Whilst a research question indicates the topic or issue of the study, research objectives state precisely what needs to be researched. Research objectives are therefore instrumental in enabling the research question to evolve into an actual study.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher defines the following objectives:

- **To explore the range of motivations that the audience brings to an event**
- **To establish how event design principles and practices are influential to attendees experience**
- **To review the variety of customer satisfaction levels**

### 3.5 Research purpose

According to Saunders et al. (2009, p. 139), the purposes of research can be categorised as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. An exploratory study can be described as finding out what is happening, and asking questions and assessing phenomena in a new light; a
A descriptive study portrays an accurate profile of persons, events or situations; and an explanatory study can be described as establishing causal relationships between variables. These categories are not mutually exclusive; they are a matter of emphasis. The research project may identify more than one purpose; and the purpose may change and develop over time (Robson 2002). Zikmund (1984) suggests that the degree of uncertainty about the research problem determines the research methodology, as illustrated in the Table below:

**Table 3.2: Research purpose**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Problem Definition</th>
<th>Exploratory Research</th>
<th>Descriptive Research</th>
<th>Explanatory Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible Situations</td>
<td>Key variables not Defined</td>
<td>Key variables are defined</td>
<td>Key variables and key relationships are defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Quality of service is declining and we don’t know why.”</td>
<td>“What have been the trends in organisational downsizing over the past ten years?”</td>
<td>“Which of two training programs is more effective for reducing labour turnover?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Would people be interested in our new product idea?”</td>
<td>“Did last year’s product recall have an impact on our company’s share price?”</td>
<td>“Can I predict the value of energy stocks if I know the current dividends and growth rates of dividends?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“How important is business process reengineering as a strategy?”</td>
<td>“Has the average merger rate for financial institutions increased in the past decade?”</td>
<td>“Do buyers prefer our product in a new package?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Zikmund (1984)*

Recalling the aim of this research, the aim is “to identify factors that impact the experience of the audience at planned events and to outline a strategy to manage them effectively”. The aim is achieved by answering the research question, which requires ascertaining the event design principles and practices that are influential to attendees’ experience as well as establishing
how event managers can apply them to more successfully create and stage audience experience at planned events. Therefore, this study appears to be in line with the descriptive research which is an extension of exploratory research. The researcher has a clear idea on where to collect data prior to the collection of data in order to answer the research question and research objectives. Emphasising the descriptive study of research, Saunders et al. (2009) says that descriptive study lets you to go further and draw conclusions from the data you are describing.

3.6 Research strategy

Saunders et al (2009) explains that the choice of research strategy will be guided by the research questions and objectives and whether it will enable the researcher to meet the objectives. According to Yin (1994) there are three conditions which should provide the grounds for strategy choice; the type of question posed; the control over actual behavioural elements; and the degree of focus on historical or contemporary events. He further explains that the research strategy should be chosen as a function of the research situation. Each research strategy has its own specific approach to collect and analyse empirical data, and therefore each strategy has its own advantages and disadvantages.

Table 6 depicts the outcome of the intersection between most common research strategies and the three conditions identified above.

**Table 3.3: Research strategies versus characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Form of research question</th>
<th>Requires control over behavioural events?</th>
<th>Focuses on contemporary events?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>How? Why?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival analysis</td>
<td>How? Why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>How? Why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>How? Why?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Yin (1994)*
Recalling the question of this research, the research question is “What” are the principles and techniques of event design and how event managers can apply them to more successfully create and stage audience experience at planned events? Accordingly, the research strategy applied in this study is survey. Furthermore, the survey strategy is usually associated with the deductive approach as well as with exploratory and descriptive research (Saunders, 2009). This statement support researchers’ decision to choose survey strategy as the research approach of this dissertation is deductive and research purpose is descriptive.

According to Saunders (2009), surveys are popular research strategy as they allow a collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in an economical way. He adds that the survey strategy allows the researcher to collect quantitative data which can be analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics. He further explains that the data collected using survey strategy can be utilised to suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables and to produce models of these relationships. Using a survey strategy should give more control over the research process, when sampling is used; it is possible to generate findings that are representative of the whole population at a lower cost than collecting the data for whole population. Survey strategy used in this dissertation by adopting data collection technique: a questionnaire to measure influence of particular event design principles and techniques over attendees’ experience.

3.7 Time horizon

Most research projects undertaken for academic courses are necessarily time constrained. Saunders et al. (2009) outlines two different types of time horizons to research design: cross-sectional, in which data is gathered once, during a period of days, weeks or months and longitudinal which involves data collection at multiple points in time (usually more suitable for studying change or a long-term development). Many cross-sectional studies are exploratory or descriptive in purpose and often employ the survey strategy (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Robson 2002).

In this respect, the cross-section descriptive questionnaire survey was considered as the most appropriate research approach to gather information for the purpose of this dissertation. The researcher conducts a study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time.
3.8 Credibility of research findings

The credibility of research findings is based on ability of a research process to generate findings that elicit belief and trust. For research to have the potential to create new knowledge, it must be seen as credible (O’Leary, 2004). Without credibility, findings simply will not be accepted into a body of knowledge.

Within the research world, credibility is demonstrated by indicators such as reliability, validity, authenticity, neutrality, auditability, etc (O’Leary, 2004). According to Saunders et al. (2009) in good research design the attention has to be paid to two particular emphases: reliability and validity.

According to O’Leary (2004), reliability is premised on the notion that there is some sense of uniformity or standardization in what is being measured, and that methods need to consistently capture what is being explored. Reliability is thus, the extent to which a measure provides consistent findings. Researcher has to be careful of getting possible errors and faults during the research process for the reasons, when identifying the research population, use of wrong data collection method, interpretation of data, and developing the conclusions.

According to Saunders et al. (2009), validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about. There are chances to get errors concerned with whether conclusions are ‘correct’, whether methods, approaches and techniques actually relate to what is being explored. In this dissertation, each and every stage is carefully planned and the research is carried out according to the plans in a view to avoid the errors and ambiguity. The credibility of this research finding is believed to be reliable and valid under all contexts.

3.9 Research ethics

When completing a master’s level dissertation, there are a number of ethical requirements that must be taken into account. Cooper and Schindler (2008, quoted in Saunders 2009) define ethics as the ‘norms or standards of behaviour that guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others’. Research ethics therefore relates to questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topic, design our research and gain access, collect data, process and store our data, analyse data and write up our research findings in a moral and responsible way (Saunders, 2009).
Within business and management research, Sounders (2009) defines two dominant philosophical standpoints: deontology and teleology. He further posits that the deontological view is one that the ends served by the research can never justify the use of research which is unethical and in contrast, points out that the teleological view is that the ends served by your research justify the means.

While conducting the present research, the researcher followed the ethical norms defined considering possible ethical issues and acted morally towards all those who were involved in the research project. When undertaking quantitative approach the researcher considered ethical issues such as confidentiality and anonymity that were required while conducting a questionnaire.

3.10 Sampling design

Sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enable the researcher to reduce the amount of data that needs to be collected by considering only data from a sub-group rather than all possible cases or elements (Saunders et al., 2009). However, for some research questions it is possible to collect data from an entire population as it is of a manageable size; this is termed a census. Saunders et al (2003) suggest that a sample is needed as it would not only impractical to survey the entire population, but also that the budget and time constraints would prevent the researcher from being able to collect all the information required.

Saunders et al. (2009) identifies two sampling techniques that are available, namely: probability sampling, where each member of the population has a known nonzero probability of being selected; and non-probability sampling, where members are selected from the population in some non-random manner. Whether probability or non probability sampling strategy is chosen, the sampling frame should be relevant, complete, precise and up-to-date (Denscombe, 1998). Four common methods can be used to identify a non-probability sampling: availability sampling, quota sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling. These methods are extremely useful under certain conditions, particularly when the research question seeks an in-depth investigation of a small population or when the researcher is performing a preliminary, exploratory study (Schutt, 2006).

The present research adopted a non probability sampling strategy using a convenience sampling technique as a desired sampling method to achieve the objectives of the study and
answer the research questions. According to Saunders et al (2007), the convenience sampling technique is based on the need to obtain a sample as quickly as possible where the researcher has little control over the contents and there is no attempt to obtain a representative sample which will allow generalising in a statistical sense to a population. Convenience sampling involves selecting haphazardly those cases that are easier to obtain for the sample, such as a person interviewed at random in a shopping centre (Saunders et al., 2009). The selection process is continued until the required sample size has been reached.

The target population for the study were visitors for a wide range of planned events in Ireland. A suitable study respondent was defined as any individual aged 18 years or older who was present in a specified geographical region at the time the research was undertaken and who did reside in Ireland. Domestic as well as foreign visitors were included in the study because of relatively large proportions of foreign visitors at selected events. A sample was split almost equally between males and females to obtain representative result.

A total of 117 questionnaires were distributed through personal interviews that took place during July and August 2013 in Dublin. Potential respondents were randomly approached and asked if they were willing to participate in the study. Once they agreed, questionnaires were distributed. In order to obtain high return rate and usable responses, most questionnaires were collected on site and checked for completeness and accuracy. As a result, 100 usable questionnaires were collected after excluding those with insufficient responses or excessive missing data. The researcher believes that this sample is representative for the purpose of the present research.

3.11 Data collection method

There are two kind of data collection methods used for the research area, namely qualitative method of research that is concerned to the inductive approach and quantitative method of research that is concerned to the deductive approach (Fisher, 2004). The distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is a methodological issue. The decision to choose a specific methodology should be based on its suitability to answer the research questions (Bryman, 1988). Denzin and Lincoln (1998) asserted that qualitative research emphasises the process of discovering how the social meaning is constructed and stresses the relationship between the investigator and the topic studied. By contrast, quantitative research is based on
the measurement and the analysis of causal relationships between variables. Various methodologists (e.g. Mack et al., 2005, p.3) have tabulated the differences between qualitative and quantitative research as shown in the table below.

**Table 3.4: Qualitative and quantitative research**

| Source: Mack et al., 2005, p. 3 |

According to Saunders et al. (2009), questionnaires tend to be used for descriptive or explanatory research. Descriptive research, such as that undertaken for the present study, is characterised by using attitude and opinion questionnaires and questionnaires of
organisational practices. It enables the researcher to identify and describe the variability in different phenomena. Accordingly, data collection method used in the present study is quantitative and questionnaires are used as a data collection tool. Questionnaires, as defined by Hair et al. (2003), are predetermined set of questions designed to capture data from respondents. Oppenheim (1992, p. 7) lists the following tasks or steps in constructing a survey and/or a questionnaire:

1) Identify the study objectives to be investigated.
2) Select a target population.
3) Select a research method and prepare the survey instrument.
4) Pre-test the instrument.
5) Administer the survey.
6) Organise the data.
7) Analyse the data.
8) Interpret the data.
9) Reach conclusions.
10) Make recommendations based on the research findings.

The above steps identified by Oppenheim (1992, p. 7) were covered in the present study analysing audience experiences during a range of planned events and establishing how these can be influences by event design:

- Step (1) was covered in 1.3, and discussed in more detail 3.4.3.
- Steps (2) to (6) are covered in this chapter.
- Steps (7) and (8) will be covered in chapter 4.
- Steps (9) and (10) will be covered in chapter 5.

Data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire that consisted of 20 close-ended questions (Dillman, 2007), sometimes referred to as forced-choice questions (deVaus, 2002), as they provide a number of alternative answers from which the respondent is instructed to choose. Saunders et al. (2009) describes a self completed questionnaire to include the data collection in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. He further states that such questionnaires are administered
electronically using the Internet, posted to respondents who return them by post after completion, or delivered by hand to each respondent and collected later.

The questionnaires were distributed amongst individuals that were in attendance at a range of planned events in Ireland. Prospective respondents were approached to determine if they over 18 years old and if they were residents or just visiting the region to attend the event, and then, based on their response to the filter questions, they were asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. If they declined the invitation, they were thanked for their time, and the researcher then moved on to engage another individual in the immediate vicinity. In order to promote a less influenced response and to maintain respondent confidentiality, the researcher has decided to leave the questionnaires anonymous.

Nearly 120 surveys were collected over a 10-day period at various times of the day from haphazardly selected event-goers. Of the total number collected, 17 surveys were later found to be unusable, leaving 100 usable surveys for inclusion in the final analysis; satisfying the requirements for a sufficient and thorough data analysis (e.g. Hair et al. 1998).

The researcher used statistical package SPSS Version 21.0 (IBM: Armonk, NY, USA) to analyse the quantitative data, and to create tables and diagrams which show the frequency of occurrence through establishing statistical relationships between the variables. According to Saunders et al. (2009), when analyzing data by computer, they need to be coded prior to entry. He further explains that for quantity questions, actual numbers can be used as codes but for other questions, there is a need to design a coding scheme. For the purpose of this study, the researcher highlights four types of closed question that were used in the questionnaire:

- list, where the respondent is offered a list of items, any of which may be selected;
- category, where only one response can be selected from a given set of categories;
- rating, in which a rating device is used to record responses; the types of rating used were: agreement and likelihood;
- matrix, where responses to two or more questions can be recorded using the same grid (Saunders et al., 2009)

According to Saunders et al. (2009), all data types should, with few exceptions (i.e. where a postcode is used as the code for a geographical reference), be recorded using numerical
codes. This enables the researcher to enter the data quickly using the numeric keypad on the keyboard and with fewer errors. It also makes subsequent analyses, in particular those that require re-coding of data to create new, more straightforward variables. Cooper and Schindler (1998) explain that coding involves assigning numbers or other symbols to answers so that responses can be grouped into a limited number of classes and categories. All the quantifiable, categorical and missing data were coded for the purpose of this study.

3.11 Framework of the Questionnaire

A seven-page, multi-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher in order to collect data that was related to the objectives of this study and conducted literature review. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions and is divided into four discrete sections, each containing a series of close-ended questions. They are concerned with the motivations, experience and satisfaction levels of attendees during a range of planned events. All these questions reflect on factors that impact audience experience and design elements.

In terms of its structure and format, the self-administered questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter, which explained the purpose of the survey. Research by Dillman (2007) quoted in Saunders et al. (2009) has shown that the messages contained in a self-administered questionnaire’s covering letter will improve the response rate.

The first section of the survey asked two filter questions (if the visitor was over 18 years old and if they were residents in Ireland) and two of socio-demographic questions related to gender and nationality of the respondents. The same section of the questionnaire included a category question designed to establish the type of event recently attended and a matrix question to measure motivation using multiple items based on 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 5. The second section was related to the Pre-Event Phase. The questions were asking about processes involved before attending an event and overall pre-event experience that was assessed using a rating scale ranging from 1 [dissatisfied] to 5 [satisfied].

The third section of the questionnaire asked the respondents a range of matrix questions regarding the positive and negative factors that influence their experience during the event itself, while the last section collected information regarding their level of satisfaction, revisit intention and likelihood of recommendation and future attendance of a similar event.
The majority of items used in the survey instrument were based on those used successfully in a past research studies, such as: event motivation studies conducted by Backman, Backman, Uysal, and Sunshine (1995), Getz (1991), Nicholson and Pearce (2001), Scott (1996); other studies exploring design features as a key activity component in the planning, development and management of events by Brown and James (2004), Brown (2010), Silvers (2007), Berridge (2006), Goldblatt and Nelson (2001); the core phenomenon of event studies - the event experience featured in Getz (2007), Pine and Gilmore (1999), Poulsson and Kale (2004), Berridge (2006); and concept of satisfaction mentioned in Bigné and Andreu (2004). To suit the needs of this study, the particular wording of individual items were modified to match the event setting and characteristics.

3.12 Pilot test

According to Saunders et al. (2009), prior to using the questionnaire to collect data it should be pilot tested. He further explains that the purpose of the pilot test is to refine the questionnaire so that respondents will have no problems in answering the questions and there will be no problems in recording the data. Such preliminary analysis is implemented in order to access the validity and reliability of the data that will be collected. Bell (2005) compares the pilot test to a ‘trial run’, without which the researcher have no way of knowing whether their questionnaire will succeed.

In that respect a pilot test has been incorporated in this research. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the feasibility of the study, test validity and reliability of the instrument, to establish how understandable the instrument is, to address any problems prior to the main study, and to check the time required for the completion of the questionnaire. “For most student questionnaires the minimum number for a pilot is 10” (Fink 2003b). Accordingly the pilot test was conducted on a sample of 10 individuals, including 5 males and 5 females, taken from a pool of friends and work colleagues who have recently attended an event. To validate the pilot test, the researcher selected individuals of different age groups, who attended different types of events to participate in the pre-test group. The result of the test demonstrated that the questionnaire involved too much time to complete and some of the questions were not relevant to some event types. The respondents were thanked for their time and the researcher then adjusted the indicated errors.
3.13 Secondary data

Saunders et al. (2009) explain that secondary analysis is data that is used for a research project that was originally collected for some other purpose and both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used. Secondary sources can be various - company records, archives, trade union materials, census data and government sources. Secondary data include both raw data and published summaries (Saunders et al., 2009). For the purpose of this study, the researcher used different sources of primary and secondary data in order to answer the research question and research objectives. The secondary research sources used in the present study include a wide range of books, journals, and websites.

*Books* were the main source of secondary data used by the researcher. Many academic publications written by university professors and specialists in the events field as Getz, Brown, Silvers, Berridge provided a basis for theoretical and research underpinning for the present study. Aimed at academic and management development in events management and related studies, the number of textbooks provided insight on how much research has already been done on the topic and helped the researcher to prepare the literature review. Books are believed to be the most authentic secondary data source.

The study used a content analysis of *journal articles* to compile secondary data that supports a richer exploration of research topics. Journals are more frequently updated than books and therefore provided insight into the thought behind the concept of event design, experience design, event motivation, and audience satisfaction.

*Websites* play a major role in secondary data. In present research, only academic websites have been used as many internet sources tend to contain unreliable information. For the purpose of this study, websites were used to gain more specific information on the research topic.

A proper list of references of all the above sources has been included in the bibliography at the end of this dissertation. All the references are in the correct Harvard referencing format.
Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the research design and methodology that underpin the study conducted for the purpose of this dissertation. Detailed information regarding the research philosophy, research approach, strategy, nature of this study and its general characteristics were explored in this chapter. The subsequent chapters build on from the methodological propositions made in this chapter by employing the proposed data presentation and approaches to analyze the quantitative data collected.
Chapter 4: Data analysis

4.1 Introduction

According to Saunders et al. (2009), quantitative data in a raw form, that is, before these data have been processed and analysed, convey very little meaning to most people. Therefore, the “raw” data gathered in the research need to be processed into meaningful information using straightforward methods of data analysis. Quantitative analysis techniques such as graphs, charts and statistics allow us to do this; helping us to explore, present, describe and examine relationships and trends within our data (Saunders et al. 2009).

Regarding the different categories of numerical data, Saunders et al. (2009) explains that quantitative data can be divided into two distinct groups: categorical and quantifiable. Categorical data refer to data whose values cannot be measured numerically but can be either classified into sets (categories) according to the characteristics that identify or describe the variable or placed in rank order (Berman Brown and Saunders 2008). They can be further subdivided into descriptive and ranked. By contrast, numerical data which are sometimes termed ‘quantifiable’ are those whose values are measured or counted numerically as quantities (Berman Brown and Saunders 2008. This means that quantifiable data are more precise than categorical as you can assign each data value a position on a numerical scale. Two types of quantitative data described above are included in the questionnaire.

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings from the primary research that was conducted. Firstly, the coding of quantitative data and the creation of the data file for the study was completed by the researcher. As part of this process, a range of analyses incorporating frequencies, reliability analysis, correlations, and a series of one-way ANOVAs were completed using SPSS Version 21.0 (IBM: Armonk, NY, USA). Visitor responses to each of the survey question were entered into an SPSS spreadsheet, then coded and analyzed to identify key common themes. In terms of analyzing the raw data, Saunders et al’s (2003) Analytical Process was considered to be the most appropriate means, as it includes the categorisation of data, allocation of the relevant parts of data to the different categories that have been generated, recognition of the relationships and the development of conclusions.

4.2 General questions
For the purpose of this research, two filter questions were introduced in the first section of the questionnaire to determine respondent eligibility. In result, 100% of individuals participating in the study were over 18 years old and 100% were residents in Ireland. The sample was almost equally split between females (54%) and males (46%), including 61% of Irish and 39% of other nationalities as shown below:

**Figure 4.1: Gender**

![Gender Chart]

**Figure 4.2: Nationality**
The socio-demographic characteristics of the sample were presented in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2. The result revealed that the sample was a good representation of similar numbers in terms of nationality and gender as aimed by researcher.

4.2.1 Type of event attended

According to the data represented in Figure 4.3, the most frequent attended events were private events (25%) and arts and entertainment (21%). Cultural celebration events reflected 15% of attendance, sport competition scored at 12% and similarly business events at 11%. Moreover, recreational events were represented by 8% and political events showed only 1% preference among visitors from a sample of 100 visitors. The above results reflect a good spread across a range of planned events as aimed by the researcher.

Figure 4.3: Type of event attended
4.2.2 Pre-Event Phase

The results revealed that the majority of respondents heard about the event through ‘word of mouth’ (39%). A total of 55% of the study respondents stated that there was no registration required before the event that they attended, and when asked to describe their preparation before the event, the mode outlined that the majority reported that there was no preparation involved. Approximately half of those surveyed reported that they travelled over 4 miles to the event venue (see Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 in Appendix 2).

Furthermore, respondents rated their overall pre-event experience resulting in 68% satisfaction as shown in Figure 4.4:

Figure 4.4 Pre-event experience
4.3 Objectives related questions

4.3.1 Motivation for attending the event

In the questionnaire, the researcher included questions related to the objectives of this dissertation. In order to explore the range of motivations that the audience brings to an event, appropriate question was put forward. A variety of motivational dimensions were presented and each was measured with multiple items outlined on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all important (1) to extremely important (5). The respondents were asked to rate each factor.
Table 4.6 Motivation types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>( % )</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Slightly important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Mode of importance factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earning rewards</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work commitment</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence or expectations of others</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and discovery</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from personal and social pressures</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Moderately important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing something new</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in event topic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 4.6 and figure 4.5 (see Appendix 3), the study respondents identified that an entertainment was the principal reason for attending the event (56% of respondents rated entertainment as ‘extremely important). The second factor represented as extremely important was ‘interest in the event topic’ indicating 48%, followed by ‘socializing’ at 42%. However, on the other side of the scale of importance, the ‘earning rewards’ factor was the most frequently identified as a ‘not at all important’ motivator for the vast majority of visitors (66%), closely followed by ‘work commitment’ representing 64%. This can be related to differences in the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation types as further explained in the discussion section of this dissertation.

4.3.2 Event design elements impacting audience experience

To establish how event design principles and techniques are influential to attendees’ experience, the researcher introduced a number of questions in the survey, highlighting the factors that are likely to affect the visitor’s experience at planned events, both positively and negatively. The majority of items used in that section of the survey instrument were based on the event design principles indentified by Brown and James (2004). The items appeared in random order on the survey.
Respondents were asked to rate their experience on each element using a 5-point scale (where 1 = poor, and 5 = excellent) or as ‘not applicable’. The Figure 4.6 (see Appendix 4) outlines the results of visitors’ responses.

The results revealed that ‘location and access’ was given the highest score when visitors were rating their experience (46% responded that the location was ‘excellent’). The next highest score was assigned to the entertainment (35% of respondents said that entertainment was ‘excellent’). These were followed by several items that were rated as “very good”, outlining ambient conditions at 41%, visibility and theme and setting, both at 38%, safety and security at 36%, service quality at 35%, way finding, program and food and beverage at 33%.

4.3.3 Interactions, wow factor and value for money

According to data presented in Table 4.7, majority of respondents agreed to the following statements:

- Guest interactions were possible in the designed environment (56%)
- Interactions and communication with staff were possible (46%)
- The event delivered a wow factor (38%)
- It was good value for money (36%)

Table 4.7: Interactions, wow factor and value for money

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guest interactions were possible in the designed environment</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions and communication with staff were possible</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The event delivered a wow factor</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was good value for money</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.4 Conditions impacting audience experience

The following table represents conditions that are likely to have a negative influence on customer experience. A variety of elements were presented and each was measured with multiple items outlined on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all important (1) to extremely important (5). The respondents were asked to rate each factor.

**Table 4.8: Conditions impacting audience experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Slightly important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowding and noise</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and vandalism</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social behaviour</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items stolen or missing</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting time in queue at an entrance/toilet/beverage or food outlet</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather conditions</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 6% of the study respondents identified that they were affected by overcrowding and noise, followed by 5% of respondents affected by the waiting time and 9% by weather conditions. However, the vast majority of visitors did not report any affect of crime, anti-social behaviour or stolen items.

4.3.5 The key ingredients of a successful experience

All the items used in that question of the survey instrument were based on the successful experience factors indentified by Poulsson and Kale (2004). Respondents were asked to rate the contribution of each of those factors on their experience using a 5-point scale (where 1 = not at all important, and 5 = extremely important) or as ‘not applicable’. The Figure 4.7 (see Appendix 5) outlines the results of visitors’ responses:

The illustrated results demonstrate how one or more of the above elements contribute to create various experiences. The impact of each element on the overall worth of an experience
will vary across a wide range of individual experiences. The study respondents identified that ‘personal relevance’ was the most frequently score factor in their experience (39% of respondents’ rated personal relevance as ‘extremely important). Both ‘engagement’ and ‘surprise’ were equally rated representing 24% to be somewhat important. On the other hand learning and novelty resulted in 22% of not at all important. Poullson and Kale (2004) argue that for the experience to be successful, one or more of the above factors need to be apprehended by the customer. This will be further explained in the discussion section of this dissertation.

4.3.6 Overall experience at the event

At the end of the third section of the questionnaire (the event itself), the respondents were asked to rate their overall experience at the attended event. The result is shown in Figure 4.8:

Figure 4.8: Overall experience at the event

![Overall Event Experience Chart](image)

The results revealed that the majority of respondents (54%) rated their experience as had ‘excellent’ and only 8% scored is as ‘average’. None of the lower ratings (‘poor’ and ‘very poor’) were identified in the result. The overall experience can be tested to assess the relationship among experiences and different variables representing event design elements.

4.3.7 Relation between the successful experience factors and positive experience
The tables below outline the relationships between each of the successful experience factors and overall event experience:

**Table 4.9: Personal relevance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate the event overall?</th>
<th>Personal relevance</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.10: Novelty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate the event overall?</th>
<th>Novelty</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.11: Surprise

How would you rate the event overall? * Surprise, something unexpected Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate the event overall?</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12: Learning

How would you rate the event overall? * Learning Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate the event overall?</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.13 Engagement

How would you rate the event overall? * Engagement Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate the event overall?</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The illustrated results demonstrate how one or more of the above elements contribute to create various experiences. For most cases the impact of each element increases the overall experience. As shown in table 4.9, 25% of people for whom the personal relevance was extremely important (out of 39% in total) had excellent experience.

4.3.8 Post-event phase

The last section of the questionnaire focused on accessing post-event behaviours of the visitors. In the next three figures, data is presented regarding customer likelihood to recommend the event, revisit intention and achieved expectations.
Figure 4.9: Likelihood to recommend

Figure 4.10: Likelihood to revisit intention
The results revealed that the majority of respondents (56%) reported that they are very likely to recommend the event that they attended to a friend or a colleague. Approximately half of those surveyed (48%) stated that on the basis of their experience at the event, they are very likely to attend a similar event in the future and a total of 52% of the study respondents reported that the event have exceeded their expectations.

### 4.4 Findings

The above analyses explore audience experiences during a range of planned events in Ireland and how these can be influenced by event design. The researcher has investigated a sample of 100 visitors to a range of different events and their experiences and opinions. The extent and nature of the data gathered from each respondent varied reflecting highly personal experiences and interests. As experience is so highly personal that it cannot be predicted, or controlled, the success of an event will depend on creativity that the event designer can bring to it. Therefore, an analysis of audience experiences may be very useful.

It was found that to understand visitors motivation, the event designer needs to consider their needs and understand that they will make the decision that fulfils their needs and has the
greatest gain or smallest loss for them. A variety of motivational dimensions were measured showing that intrinsic motivations as entertainment, socializing, interest in event topic and escape from personal pressures were dominating over extrinsic motivations as earning rewards and influence or expectations of others. Some of these motivations are representing a need to be social, and thus people formed ‘imagined communities’ with people they related to, creating social or cultural groups. From an event designer’s perspective, this means that by appealing to the collective needs of the community, and creating environments where visitors can socialise or be entertained, event designers can monitor attendees’ satisfaction, and understanding their decision-making processes.

When the qualitative data on which event design elements visitors’ considered as the most influential on their experience were analyzed, essentially two major themes became apparent. The two most commonly stated were the location and access to the event venue and the entertainment at the event. The theme relating to “location and access” refers to the experience directly controlled by the management. This element belongs to the physical operations, which are the arrangements the management makes, or fails to make, to allow the visitor to come and enjoy the visit to the full (Morgan, 2006). Events literature related to mass gatherings explores the elements of the visitor experience and the way in which they evaluate their satisfaction. It is said that location and scheduling of events are important to visitors in terms of vast amount of time saved and used towards enjoyment. The “entertainment” was also an overarching theme from the respondents; that is, the vibe, the energy, the atmosphere, the sense of being able to meet new and friendly people. The entertainment is one of the seven facets of events design and relates to sourcing, selection and control of suitable entertainment, programs and recreational activities for the event project in a manner that delivers the desired entertainment experience and that benefits the audience and organization.

While reference to location and entertainment were repeatedly made, visitors also indicated that personal relevance was extremely important factor contributing to their experiences. Personal relevance is the individual's internal state of arousal, activation, and preparedness to engage in a specific experience. Personal relevance will have a direct impact on involvement with the experience, and hence influence the person's level of engagement with the experience (Poulsson and Kale, 2004). Interestingly, most respondents who were extremely
satisfied with the event also indicated that ‘personal relevance’ had extremely important contribution in their experience.

Satisfaction levels were also reviewed indicating a slight drop in overall pre-event satisfaction (58%) in comparison to overall event satisfaction (54%). That result is supported by 6% respondents who stated that the event has not met their expectations. It was also found that respondents who allocated high scores to elements of event design, wow factor and factors of successful experience were more likely to rate their overall experience as ‘excellent’.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

This study performed a procedure to analyse audience experiences during a range of planned events in Ireland and how these can be influenced by event design. The researcher first clarified this construct by reviewing the literature and conducting a quantitative study. Audience experience is conceptualized as the customers ‘emotional and personal judgment about the entire experience. Factors include the customers themselves, their interactions with physical surroundings, service providers, other customers, and customers’ companions. Furthermore, the researcher generated items and conducted a study to collect data regarding the range of motivations that the audience bring to an event, event design principles and practices that are influential to attendees experience and variety of customer satisfaction levels. The results of developing and assessing the instrument revealed that personal experiences were impacted by numerous factors. The positive experience construct was affected by five dimensions: physical surroundings, service providers, other customers, customers’ companions, and the customers themselves. The physical surroundings, as discussed by Sanocki (2003) relate to image surroundings such as colour, lightness and texture, which contribute to the engagement of an audience. This concurs with Brown (2010) Notion 27 about how an audience responds to the physical environment, the design and layout in relation to the event design principle of shape. The dimension of customer themselves includes their motivations and expectations.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) argued that positive visitor experiences result from engaging in memorable offerings that have an enduring affective element to them. Thus, it is critical that event designers successfully or stage the event mix to ensure that the needs, responses, and behavioural traits of the visitors themselves are effectively aligned (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). This argument was also supported by Hayes and MacLeod (2007), who stated that there is no room in the experience economy for standardized offerings. Instead, they suggested that the visitor should be “. . . encouraged to immerse, and perhaps find themselves in unique self-tailored experiences that reflect their personality and interest” (p. 48). Given the results of this study, the event designers in Ireland can obtain the insights of audience experiences to better meet the aims and objectives of an event.
Finally, an important outcome of this study is that it serves to highlight the critical importance for current event managers of protecting the existing competitive advantage of the managed events. In today’s economy, event design managers are expected to provide customers with memorable experiences. Those experiences then drive the competitive advantage and result in successful events. Therefore, this dissertation investigated visitors’ experiences during a range of planned events to present a variety of different outcomes. It is critical for event designers to understand not only the motivations and behaviours of customers but also how unique they are in order to provide a high quality experience. Failure to do so results in what Dwyer, Edwards, Mistillis, Roman, and Scott (2009) referred to as “strategic drift.” This concept reflects the situation where an organization inadequately matches the changing consumer needs in the external environment with their strategies (Dwyer et al., 2009).

In terms of delivering memorable experiences at events, this can be achieved in part by focusing on maintaining the quality of the experience for visitors, the diversity of entertainment experiences within the type of event, and the uniqueness that it offers. In the longer term, however, it also means that management must recognize that the means by which the event is delivered need to change over time to reflect a changing relationship between the consumer and the event manager. To be really successful on a long-term basis, customer experience needs to be seen as the sum of how customers engage with the company and brand, not just in a snapshot in time, but throughout the entire time of being a customer. Such change brings with it a move away from being a “...marketer of goods and services to being a customer consultant and manager of his or her own saleable consumption assets” (Achrol and Kotler, 1999, p. 146).

Interestingly, the study results also revealed that on closer analysis, visitors to a range of planned events were not found to be a homogenous group of people. Rather, there were actually several points of differentiation with respect the motivations and perceptions of the visitors to the events. Each of these cases provides an opportunity for event designers to consider looking at a larger perspective (including various consumers), when planning an event. Thus, it is of critical importance that the event designers undertake ongoing evaluative research of the needs and wants of the event attendees. As noted by Pine and Gilmore (2000), “Experience stagers must constantly refresh their experiences—change or add elements that
keep the offering new and exciting, and worth paying money to experience all over again” (p. 21).

5.2 Recommendations

The field of event management is an emerging profession in need of academic research. A review of the literature indicates a wide range of research possibilities. Firstly, the research investigating audience experience to a range of events use predefined quantitative assessment techniques as tools. These tools limit the ability of respondents to indicate the diversity of personal opinions that they may experience. The researcher suggests that similar study but adapting a qualitative method might be a way of looking at the same problem from a different angle. Secondly, the labelling of event experience as positive or negative fails to acknowledge the "shades of gray" that may exist. That issue might be resolved adapting qualitative method in potential research in the future. Thirdly, some of the theories explored in the literature review may need further investigation. Poulsson and Kale (2004) identified five successful experience factors: personal relevance, novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement. They argued that the greater the assortment of these sensations, the more will be the intensity of the experience. The researcher would recommend an investigation of each of those factors on a random sample. The authors also suggest that “empirical research is urgently needed to ascertain the impact of each element on the overall worth of an experience across a wide range of experiences”. Furthermore, the sampling design used in this study was convenience sampling. However, random selection of prospective respondents would have been ideal for such a study, as more accurate. Lastly, the respondent profile in this study is very limited geographically concentrating mostly on Dublin area. Future research should ideally include the entire Irish population in their sample.
Chapter 6: Self-reflection

6.1 The process

A timeline was created first to ensure that a disciplined approach to the research was being conducted each week from the commencement to the end of the research topic. The timeline assisted in the allocation of time for various tasks, meetings and deadlines. Meetings with Mr. Martin O’Dea, supervisor and lecturer at Dublin Business School provided support to the researcher and discussions based on the final output of this research project. Research commenced with using predominantly the data source of books through Dublin Business School Library and online journals through the Trinity College Library portal which the researcher accessed by presenting a “letter of introduction” issued by Dublin Business School Library.

Originally, the researcher looked into event management books searching for literature gaps. A large amount of time was spent reading and analysing, which proved to be a very lengthy and time consuming process. The researcher found that socio-cultural impacts of events are an emerging area of academic research within the broader field of events studies. However, it was suggested by researcher’s supervisor that the topic area is very much focused on social studies and not concerned with business management. In that regard, the researcher, inspired by Professor Donald Getz’s quote: “the core phenomenon of event studies is the event experience and meanings attached to it (Getz, 2010), have changed the direction of her research into audience experiences and how these can be influenced by event design.

Further research based on a wide range of articles related to the event design principles of scale, shape, focus, timing and build written by Professor Steven Brown was a starting point in the new topic. The process included finding relevant literature on event design, motivation, satisfaction and experience, which provided a list of articles in this research project. All the articles, books and websites were referenced appropriately and a literature reviewed list was created. From each of the data sources, the researcher then eliminated some of the areas and chapters that were not relevant and too broad and concentrated on supportive evidence in the most related articles and books on event design, event studies and experience. The research findings then provided the information to create this dissertation project.

6.2 Reflection on sources
The researcher found the writing of the dissertation project challenging but at the same time very interesting, creative from a learning perspective. During the process, she clearly acknowledged that academic research and report writing is substantially different from engineering and management reports.

*Formulating the research topic:* Conducting an academic research involves logical and sequential steps as: formulating and clarifying the research topic, creating the research hypothesis, obtaining and reviewing the literature, gathering primary data, designing questionnaire, data analysis and then concluding research with valid recommendations (Saunders, 2009). The key challenge for the researcher was the very first stage of the process, namely, choosing a fresh and new research topic, which can add value to the industry, academia, and the researcher herself. Saunders et al (2009) argue that research topic chosen should be an area that researcher is capable of undertaking, that excites their imaginations and fits with their desired career goals. The area of research for this dissertation is concerned with event studies and very suitable topic for researcher considering her educational and professional background. Moreover the topic covers emerging fields of events design, experience (experience economy), event management and the research is conducted in Irish context.

*Reviewing the Literature:* In the first stage of the research project, researcher looked into academic books related to the research topic. Considering the fact that the topic is very recent and the event management is still an emerging field in event studies, the literature was very limited and some out of date. Research commenced with using predominantly the data source of online journals and books through Dublin Business School Library. However, some of the material was not available in the college library and therefore the researcher looked for more sources, using the British Library and the Trinity College library with help and access given by Dublin Business School. Firstly, a large amount of time was spent on reading and analysing vast amounts of articles and book chapters in order to get familiarised with the research topic. The process proved to be a very lengthy and time consuming process. From each of the data sources, the researcher was eliminating some of the areas that were not relevant and focused on very few books and journals the most. However, even after completing the literature review, the researcher continued to gather data and to analyse different secondary data sources throughout the entire process.
Data Collection: The process of gathering primary data was a challenging for the researcher as she had no previous experience in that area. The researcher followed a quantitative approach, using a questionnaire as a method of data collection that most efficiently enabled her to meet the research objectives.

Designing of a questionnaire was based on the literature review and directed by the supervisor. Researcher made some adjustments to the questionnaire after conducting a pilot test as discussed in the methodology chapter.

Data Analysis: Regarding the fact that researcher had not previously undertaken primary research, administering the questionnaire was also a new experience and part of a learning process. For data analysis, researcher used SPSS Spreadsheet that involves gaining new computer skills. This give pictorial representation of data accumulated over time. All the knowledge gained during the process can be useful in the future carrier for the researcher. The research and investigation skills may be also beneficial professionally.

6.3 Reflection on dissertation formulation

The researcher have investigated and analysed relevant sources of secondary data and attained a good knowledge base on the research topic when conducting the literature review. The data gathered provided support in further stage of the process. The theories explored, in particular the studies on motivation and event design principals and techniques and key successful experience factors, were used in the survey instrument. At a later stage of data analysis, SPSS software, suggested by Dublin Business School requirements, found to be very helpful and made the process less time consuming. The researcher found that a variety of further and more in depth analysis were possible with the data gathered from the primary research. However, as not included in the objectives of this dissertation, no additional analysis was conducted.

The researcher has not come across any similar research that has been conducted in Ireland therefore the findings are considered fresh and new. Moreover, by investigating experiences of heterogeneous groups of people, the researcher was able to present several points of differentiation with respect to motivations, behaviours and opinions. Interestingly, keeping in
mind that the study was conducted on visitors attending a range of planned events, similarities were found. Within eight different event types (based on Getz, 2005), the result have still shown that vast majority of respondents (56%) were motivated by entertainment when deciding to attend. Some of the results however, were very surprising to the researcher. Namely, the fact that the most frequently scored event design element impacting audience experience happen to be location and access and the least frequent was decor, furnishing and equipment. Basing it on literature reviewed, the researcher was expecting to see food and beverage or service quality gaining much higher scores.

Poulsson and Kale (2004) argued that for an encounter to be labelled as an experience, one or more of the following sensations and feelings need to be apprehended by the customer: personal relevance, novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement. They further added that the greater the assortment of these sensations, the more will be the intensity of the experience. The researcher can agree that each of the respondents have scored at least one of the above elements. However, there were cases noted that the elements were highly scored but overall experience was only average or the element got low scores and the experience was still considered to be excellent. The authors also suggest that “empirical research is urgently needed to ascertain the impact of each element on the overall worth of an experience across a wide range of experiences”. Basing it on the present study, the researcher would definitely consider that as potential future research topic.

6.4 Reflection on learning

The term ‘learning style’ was first used by Thelen (1954; cited by Fatt and Joo, 2001) in discovering the dynamics of groups at work. According to NASSP (1979; cited by Fatt and Joo, 2001), learning styles are characteristic cognitive, affective, and psychological behaviour that indicate how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment. They further defined learning styles as the tendency to adapt a particular strategy in learning. It is said that most individuals have a preferred learning style but others adapt their learning styles according to the tasks. Those who adapt are referred to as having a ‘versatile learning style’. David Kolb proposed the concept of learning styles that has grown in managerial circles.
Figure 6.1: Kolb’s experiential learning styles

Source: Kolb (1984)

Kolb’s way of presenting the process of learning was by using a circle where learning was represented as a series of experiences with cognitive additions: concrete experience, reflection and observation, abstract concepts and generalisations, and active experimentation. Kolb’s Learning Style Model (1984) is outlined in figure 6.1 and suggests that there are four stages which follow from each other: the first stage is having a Concrete Experience, which is then followed by Reflection, where the experience is observed and considered. This may then be followed by the formulation of ideas about the process or Abstract Conceptualisation. The final stage is that of active experimentation, so that the next occurrence of the experience can be improved upon, which will in turn lead to the next Concrete Experience.
Honey and Mumford (1986) identified four learning styles based on Kolb’s (1984) theory. The learning styles are: activist, reflector, pragmatist, and theorist, each of which corresponds to a particular stage of Kolb’s learning cycle (1984) and are explained below:

- **Reflectors** like to stand back and ponder experiences and observe them from many different perspectives. They collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion. (Reflective Observation)
- **Activists** involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They enjoy the here and now and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences. They are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new. They tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards. (Concrete Experience)
- **Theorists** adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They think problems through in a vertical, step by step, logical way. They assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories. (Abstract Conceptualisation)
- **Pragmatists** are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications. They are the sort of people who return from management courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice. (Active Experimentation)

As mentioned in 1.6.2 in the first chapter, the researcher has completed a questionnaire which Honey and Mumford (1986) during the course of International Business and Trade back in 2012. The results of the questionnaire have shown that the researcher’s learning style is predominantly that of pragmatist.

### 6.4.1 Development of skills

During the course of MBA, the researcher has gained a variety of new skills and expertise. The most challenging experience was definitely completing this dissertation project. The process involved a variety of tasks from time management, personal organization, planning, extensive research to conducting of primary research.
**Personal Organisation:** The most important skill that the researcher was challenged by was the involvement of self discipline. In the initial stages of the research, the researcher found that she was overwhelmed with the information. Before selecting the most relevant data for the research project, the researcher spend various amount of time on reading and analysing articles and books. Having very limited time it was important to allocate specific tasks into appropriate time frames to complete the research before the deadline. However, the researcher found it difficult while having a full time job and limited time off considering the season of the year and the industry the researcher is working in.

**Time management:** Time management was always challenging for the researcher throughout the course of study. Motivation is very little when researcher does not feel a pressure of time. Therefore she tends to pay a lot of attention on detail or overanalyse aspects that perhaps are not as important. Good time management is however, a key to success in life and this was realised by researcher when she was trying to balance professional work, academic work, and personal life. At the early stages of the project, the researcher realised that she was devoting too much time to reading and reviewing the literature. Given that the thesis involved managing multi-tasks over a long period of time, she felt that a project plan was essential to bring her back on schedule.

**6.4.2 Future application of learning**

In order to maintain the skills acquired during the course of an MBA, they need to be exercised. However, with passion to events, the researcher is aiming to further develop her professional carrier in the field. Therefore, all new knowledge gained and skills learned will be used in practise and improved upon time. Having worked individually and as a member of a team with different people it has helped the researcher to draw different perspective from both lecturers and his peers. Recalling the quote by Brown (2010), “event design body of knowledge can be considered part of lifelong learning required of the event designer”, the researcher is hoping to extend her knowledge and continue to learn new skills on a journey of life.
Chapter 7: Bibliography


Chapter 8: Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

My name is Aneta Lopacinska and I am a graduate student of a Masters Degree at Dublin Business School. For my final project, I am examining audience experiences during a range of planned events in Ireland and how these can be influenced by event design. This study aims to provide insight into the effective design and management of planned events and help event organizers to meet or exceed its stated aims and objectives while providing the foundation for the delivery of an optimal experience for the audience.

The following questionnaire will require approximately 5 minutes to complete. It asks general closed questions regarding your opinions and experiences gained during recently attended event. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and there are no foreseeable risks associated with it. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for me to learn your opinions.

Your questionnaire responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported in the dissertation anonymously. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, please contact me on 087xxxxxx or by email at the email address specified below.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors. The result of this study will hopefully increase the value of events to the audience and provide empirical insights about how subjective experience mediates the effect between motivational style and satisfaction. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me at the number listed below.

Sincerely,

Aneta Lopacinska

Phone: 087xxxxxx
Email: anetalop@gmail.com
College website: www.dbs.ie
1. What is your age?
   - 18 or under
   - 19 or older

2. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

3. What is your nationality?
   - Irish
   - Other

4. Where do you currently reside?
   - Ireland
   - Other

5. What type of event have you recently attended?
   - Cultural celebration (festivals, carnivals, religious events)
   - Political and state (summits, royal occasions, political events, vip visits)
   - Arts and entertainment (concerts, award ceremonies)
   - Business and trade (meetings, conventions, customer and trade shows, fairs, markets)
   - Educational and scientific (conferences, seminars, clinics)
   - Sport competition (amateur/ professional, spectator/participant)
   - Recreational (sports or games for fun)
   - Private events (weddings, parties, socials)

6. Why did you attend the event? Indicate the importance of each item in your decision to attend on a scale of 1 to 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Earning rewards</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Learning and discovery</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Work commitments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Influence or expectation of others</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Entertainment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Socializing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Doing something new</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Escape from personal and social pressures</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interest in event topic</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
These questions pertain to the Pre-Event Phase belonging to the event experience; the period of time between the moment the visitor learns about an upcoming event and the moment the visitor enters the event.

7. How did you first hear about the event?
   - Internet
   - Email
   - Phone/ Text
   - Newspaper/ magazine
   - Radio
   - Television
   - Billboard/ Street signage
   - Word of mouth
   - Other

8. How would you describe the process of registration before the event? Select one that applies:
   - Registration process was looked after by the company I work for
   - Registration was easy and straight forward
   - Registration involved a lot of time and effort
   - There was no registration required

9. How would you describe your preparation for the event? Select all that apply:
   - Reading background information about the speakers at the event
   - Searching for more information around the schedule of the event
   - Learning about the other attendees at the event
   - Arranging time off work
   - Planning budget
   - Arranging a place to stay
   - No preparation
   - Would prepare for the event if the time would permit to do so

10. How far did you have to travel to the event venue?
    - Less than half a mile (1km)
    - Between 1-2 miles (1.5-3km)
    - Between 3-4 miles (4.5-6.5km)
    - More than 4 miles (6.5km)

11. Please rate your overall pre-event experience:
    - Satisfied
    - Somewhat satisfied
    - Neutral
    - Somewhat dissatisfied
o Dissatisfied

These questions pertain to the Event itself; the time between entering the event for the first time until leaving the event after it is over.

12. Please rate the following aspects of the event:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location and access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduling and timing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambient conditions (noise, air quality, room temperature)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Décor, furnishing and equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Way finding and signage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme and setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food and beverage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

13. Beside each of the following statements please indicate where on the scale between 'Strongly Agree' and 'Strongly Disagree' most reflects your experience or opinion. Please tick the box that represents your best answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guest interactions were possible in the designed environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interactions and communication with staff were possible</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The event delivered a wow factor</td>
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<tr>
<td>It was good value for money</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Please rate the impact of the following conditions that affected your experience at the event. The scale below indicates the numbers 1-5 where 1 is a very little impact and 5 a very large:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowding, congestion and noise</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crime and vandalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anti-social behaviour (drunken, rowdy and potentially life and property threatening behaviour)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Item/items stolen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waiting time in queue at an entrance/toilet/beverage or food outlet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weather conditions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

15. Using a scale of 1-5, where 1 indicates very little and 5 very much, please rate how much the following elements have contributed to your experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Relevance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surprise, something unexpected</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. How would you rate the event overall?
   - Excellent
   - Good
   - Average
   - Poor
   - Very poor
These questions pertain to the Post-Event Phase: the executed acts that are related to the finished event experience.

17. How likely are you to recommend this event to a friend or colleague?
   o Very likely
   o Likely
   o Neutral/ not sure
   o Not likely
   o Never

18. On the basis of your experience at the event, how likely are you to attend a similar event in the future?
   o Very likely
   o Likely
   o Neutral/ not sure
   o Not likely
   o Never

19. Was the event better than what you expected, worse than what you expected, or about what you expected?
   o Better than I was expecting
   o About what was expecting
   o Worse than I was expecting
Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your assistance in providing this information is very much appreciated. If there is anything else you would like to say regarding the above please do so in the space provided below.

Thank you for your help
Appendix 2

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>How did you first hear about the event?</th>
<th>How would you describe the process of registration before the event?</th>
<th>How would you describe your preparation for the event?</th>
<th>How far did you have to travel to the event venue?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>No registration</td>
<td>No preparation</td>
<td>More than 4 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frequency Tables

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did you first hear about the event</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone/Text</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper/Magazine</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billboard/Street signage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3

How would you describe the process of registration before the event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration process was looked after by the company I work for</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration was easy and straightforward</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>registration involved a lot of time and effort</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was no registration required</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4

How would you describe your preparation for the event?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading background information about the speakers at the event</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for more information about the schedule of the event</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about the other attendees at the event</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranging time off work</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning budget</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arranging a place to stay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preparation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would prepare for the event if the time would permit to do so</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than half a mile (1km)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1-2 miles (1.5-3km)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3-4 miles (4.5-6.5km)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 4 miles (6.5km)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3 (Figure 4.5)
Appendix 4 (Figure 4.6)
Appendix 5 (Figure 4.7)