

# S.T.E.P. ANALYSIS ON EVENT TOURISM

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**Abstract:** *Events have become more and more important in the tourism sector and in the development of tourism destinations and, under the circumstances, the event domain has had to be researched and analysed like any other economic field. Analysing the social and cultural factors, the technological factors, the economic factors, the political factors and, last but not least, the ecological factors that influence event tourism, we reached another level of acknowledgement regarding this field.*

**Key words:** *event tourism, S.T.E.P. analysis.*

## 1. Introduction

Events are becoming established as an integral and major part of tourism development and marketing strategies. Event tourism could be used to describe this phenomenon and this could be defined as the ‘systematic development, planning, marketing and holding of events as tourist attractions’. The goals of event tourism could be:

- To create a favourable image for a destination;
- To expand the traditional tourist season;
- To spread tourist demand more evenly through an area;
- To attract foreign and domestic visitors.[10]

Special events are a proven way to draw tourists’ attention to the attractions that a community has to offer, while providing at the same time an enjoyable experience for local residents. [1]

Beyond tourism, events are managed for territory image building, brand development, positioning objectives. They target the media, potential tourists, but also investors and potential business partners. [5].

Like any other market, the events tourism market is influenced by external factors, which may have a higher or lower impact on this type of tourism development. To analyse this markets’ macro environment, STEP analysis is a tool that can highlight the influence of socio-cultural, technological, economic and political factors on events tourism.

In his book, *Festivals and Special Event Management*, Johnny Allen synthesized the effects of socio-cultural, environmental, political factors, tourism and economic environment as impact on events: [7]

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*External factors influencing event tourism*

Table 1

<b>Sphere of event</b>	<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>
Sociological and cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared experience</li> <li>• Revitalising traditions</li> <li>• Building community pride</li> <li>• Validation of community participation</li> <li>• Introducing new and challenging ideas</li> <li>• Expanding cultural perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community alienation</li> <li>• Manipulation of community image</li> <li>• Bad behaviour</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Social dislocation</li> <li>• Loss of amenity</li> </ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcasing the environment</li> <li>• Providing models for the best practice</li> <li>• Increasing environmental awareness</li> <li>• Infrastructure legacy</li> <li>• Improved transport and communications</li> <li>• Urban transformation and renewal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental damage</li> <li>• Pollution</li> <li>• Destruction of heritage</li> <li>• Noise disturbance</li> <li>• Traffic congestion</li> </ul>
Politic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International prestige</li> <li>• Improved profile</li> <li>• Promotion and investment</li> <li>• Social cohesion</li> <li>• Development of administrative skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of event failure</li> <li>• Misallocation of funds</li> <li>• Lack of accountability</li> <li>• Propagandising</li> <li>• Loss of community ownership and control</li> <li>• Legitimation of ideology</li> </ul>
Tourist and economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Destination promotion and increased tourist visits</li> <li>• Extended length of stay</li> <li>• Higher yield</li> <li>• Increased tax revenue</li> <li>• Job creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community resistance to tourism</li> <li>• Loss of authenticity</li> <li>• Damage to reputation</li> <li>• Exploitation</li> <li>• Inflated prices</li> <li>• Opportunity costs</li> </ul>

### 1.1. Socio-cultural factors

Events have a direct impact on host communities, by creating a social affiliation to an active society, a culture open to the new, to receive tourists. In the case of an event of a national and especially international scale, this type of tourism can have the effect of national pride and also share traditions and customs, the culture of a region.

Events have the power, property (disseminated in tourism) to bring more cultures together, to exchange cultural and scientific experiences, bringing new opportunities, opening barriers or gates to

open new businesses, to bind Partnerships and so on.

Events and tourism events can be seen as a threat on certain customs and traditions of local people, in that they may be lost or may lose their importance in the community.

Events can mark special events and community life, and "Harvest Day", or Days of the city. Local events have the power and the role to create the opportunity to make people who are part of the community feel more relaxed, but also restore the local traditions in the lives of

the locals, creating a feeling of affiliation to a particular culture and community.

The events are part of the personal life of each individual and are also likely to have an impact on the local community by bringing revenue in the hospitality industry.

### **1.2. Ecological factors**

Today's meeting and event planners are learning that environmentally friendly practices not only minimize waste but also enhance the entire event experience. Green event pioneers look at both preindustrial resourcefulness – such as sourcing local, organic food – and postindustrial technology, using the Internet and renewable energy to reduce transportation and energy usage. Green event pioneers are also inspired by the modern theories of sustainable development, ecotourism, fair trade, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and out-greening for corporate advantage. [6]

Actually, greener events can deliver a huge, spectacular impact on attendee experience, complete with sights, sounds, and foods to consume – and still maintain a low environmental impact. Japan's Fuji Rock Festival, known anecdotally as the world's cleanest music festival, annually presents major bands in a huge outdoor environment that encompasses ten different stages for performance, vendors offering outstanding local cuisines, sustainable campgrounds, and other attractions such as a Japanese „onsen” spa and cable-car ride. Throughout rigorous procedures, responsible land maintenance, and consumer education, Fuji Rock Festival gives consumers a high impact festival experience like none other through sustainable practices that minimize environmental impact.[6]

### **1.3. Political factors**

Governments are often prepared to offer generous funding incentives to attract

events and to allocate large expenditure to upgrading the facilities needed for the events. Internationally, government funded events corporations are prepared to enter expensive bidding wars to secure footloose events. It is recognized that there may be other perceived benefits from events, such as “putting a city on the map,” facilitating business networking, and civic pride. These aspects are very difficult to test or evaluate. Granted this, however, much of the public justification of events funding seems to centre on their expected positive economic impacts. [4]

### **1.4. Economic factors**

Economic factors can influence and be influenced by events and event tourism. Economic factors that can influence events tourism could be: the economic decline of a region can prevent an event of international infuse from requiring the funds to build infrastructure, for instance Olympics. Mega-events act as catalysts for the renovation of some cities and create a new and extensive tourism infrastructure.

Event tourism can influence the local economy either positively or negatively:

- Positive: revenue by bringing local economy, tourists and participants in events not only the money spent on tickets for events, but also on accommodation, food, souvenirs, etc. It also creates jobs in different areas, namely construction, infrastructure, tourism, travel, etc. In terms of tourism, event tourism can mitigate seasonality, tourists can extend their stay, increase the number of visitors / number of nights/ expenses/ tourists, the tourist infrastructure occupancy rate increases, etc.
- Negative: the expenses made for the event, where organizers are local authorities: municipalities, prefectures, government, schools, universities, etc.

Special events are now highly sought after in many countries, regions, and cities, internationally. They are generally seen as leading to increased economic activity and creating new jobs through the net increase in demand for goods and services that they are assumed to generate. [5]

Hosting a major sports event has formed a key part of economic development strategies for many cities. To justify the investment of public funds, promoters often use the promise of significant economic impacts linked to events. [2]

### 1.5. Technological factors

In an era of e-technology, an event does not exist if there is no promotion through the Internet.

Leonard H. Hoyle, in his book *Event Marketing: How to successfully Promote Events, Festivals, Conventions and Expositions*, presents ten marketing influences and trends present on sites, which reveal the improvement in the delivery technology by posting trend videos on the World Wide Web, which demonstrate the possible participants the performance, relaxation and other benefits they may have when attending the event: [7].

*Marketing methods on types of events*

Table 2

Event type	Marketing method	Return on the marketing measurement
Congress	World wide web	Improved early registration and increased sales of other event products (such as tours, special events) through targeted marketing due to database analysis.
Festival	Non-conventional media	Use of doctors' offices, hospitals, and pharmacies to market health and wellness festivals, use of sport venues to market classical and other highbrow musical events will produce higher yield in ticket sales due to market segmentation and avoidance of clutter from other media as it is typical with television, radio and print advertising.
Exposition	Cooperative publicity	Exhibitions will increasingly become co-marketers as well as event vendors to reduce cost, increase the ability to target, and improve yield in attendance.
Education	Marketing	Alumni, friends of the university or school, and other stakeholders will become ambassadors of that institution, will address prospective students or event attendees with a view to providing strong endorsement to third parties and reducing the risk of attendee disappointment.
Social	World wide web and phones	The www will be used to promote attendance at a wider range of social events, the web will be integrated with the telephone system to provide real-time chat capability at reduced cost, and the integration of the web and television will allow event guests to provide, select, and then review activities taking place before, during and after the event.

The technological factors are influenced by the level of technology of a country, affecting especially tourism events, even of small dimensions, such as international congresses, where translation services are provided to participants through new systems, or sound systems which need to be impeccable in a festival of music, etc.

## 2. Conclusions

The STEP analysis makes us better understand how event tourism operates and develops, what external factors interfere in organizing an event.

Understanding how the economic, technological, political and social environment influences the events, from the first steps of the organization until the end, makes better events.

The events have to be seen not only as a source of entertainment for the tourist, but as a way to entertain the locals, as well, to promote traditions and customs. To the visitor, a special event is an opportunity for a leisure, social, or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience.

Special events arouse expectations, and always motivate by providing a reason for celebration. [5]

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