



The role of strategic marketing in Successful Event Management

Abraham Akhaghoria Okhiria

MSc Marketing

19109946

Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2020.

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the role of strategic marketing in successful event management. A survey was conducted whereby a random sample of 206 was derived from the population and questionnaires were distributed online to those sample size. The primary data was analysed through SPSS by using mean and regression analysis to analyse the three hypotheses. The findings from the study indicated that the three marketing strategies looked at in this study (price, promotion, product) all contribute to the success of an event. The findings from this study stipulate that pricing strategy plays a significant role in the success of event management. The findings also indicate that product differentiation impact event management. The findings also show that promotional strategy affect event management. The study therefore recommended that companies should set-up a set of strategic marketing activities such as, price, promotion, product and distribution in order to achieve a better performance than their competitors because the role of marketing mix as a strategy to better improve the company's performance is essential.

Keywords: marketing strategies, event management, pricing strategy, product differentiation, promotion.

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation**National College of Ireland**

Research Students Declaration Form
(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

Name: Abraham Akhaghoria Okhiria

Student Number: 19109946

Degree for which thesis is submitted: MSc in Marketing

Title of Thesis: The role of strategic marketing in Successful Event Management

Date: 17th August 2020

Material submitted for award

A. I declare that this work submitted has been composed by myself.

B. I declare that all verbatim extracts contained in the thesis have been distinguished by quotation marks and the sources of information specifically acknowledged.

C. I agree to my thesis being deposited in the NCI Library online open access repository NORMA.

D. ***Either*** *I declare that no material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

Or *I declare that the following material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for the award of

MSC MARKETING

(State the award and the awarding body and list the material below)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to my supervisor Dr. Danielle McCartan-Quinn for her guidance, patience and encouragement during this study. Special thanks to the staff of the college, NCI for facilitating much needed support especially during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The road leading up to this destination is filled with obstacles which I would never have been able to overcome without the support from my family especially my parents. I am forever appreciative of you for always leading by example, supporting me and being a benchmark. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dad and uncle (Mike) who keep on showing me that “challenges are to not to be feared but embraced as an opportunity for development” and my mum for her unwavering belief in me.

Finally, a massive thank you to all the respondents who participated in the questionnaire.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART A

COVER PAGE

TITLE PAGE.....	1
ABSTRACT	2
DECLARATION	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	5
Table of contents.....	6
List of tables.....	

PART B

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study	9
1.2 Research Aims and Objectives	12
1.3 Research questions	12
1.4 Research hypotheses	12
1.5 Limitation of the Study	12

CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Marketing Strategies	14
2.2 Event Management	18
2.3 Pricing Strategy	22
2.3.1 Factors that affect pricing	23
2.4 Promotional Strategy	24
2.5 Product Differentiation Strategy	25
2.6 Marketing Plan	27
2.7 Objective of Event Management	29
2.8 Preparation of the Event	32
2.9 Challenges in Events Management as Marketing Strategy	33

CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	40
3.2 Research Method and Design	40
3.3 Sample size and techniques	41
3.4 Data Collection and Research Instruments	41
3.5 Data Analysis Method	41
3.6 Research Ethics	42
3.7 Procedure	42
3.8 Timeline	43

CHAPTER FOUR – ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Presentation of Data	43
4.3 Demographic Data	44
4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Responses Relating to Relevant Variables	47
4.5 Hypotheses testing	51

CHAPTER FIVE – DISCUSSION.....52

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION.....54

6.1 Suggestion for Further Research	57
6.2 Contribution to Knowledge	56

References	57
----------------------------------	----

PART C: APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.....	60
APPENDIX II.....	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.2.1 Respondents	43
Table 4.2.2 Reliability Statistics.....	43
Table 4.2.3 Response according to residence.....	44
Table 4.3 Frequency distribution of respondents by their social demographic characteristics44	
Table 4.4.1 Opinion of Respondent on Price Strategy.....	47
Table 4.4.2 Opinion of Respondent on Promotional Strategy	48
Table 4.4.3 Opinion of Respondent on Product Strategy.....	49
Table 4.4.4 Opinion of Respondent on Event Management	50
Table 4.5.1 Hypothesis Summary.....	52

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 1 The four pillars of event management	19
Fig 2 Typology of planned events	20
Fig 3 Categorization of Events	30
Fig 4 Principles of Hallmark Events	31
Fig 5 Event DMO – Destination Marketing Organization	33
Fig 6 Marketing Strategies to Hallmark Events	35
Fig 7 Evaluation and event management process.....	37

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

With the perpetual rise of competition and fluctuations in the events' market, firms have to find a way to gain competitive advantage(s) over competitors and stay relevant. In light of this, Preston (2012) suggests that event managers need to grasp an understanding of the use of strategic marketing as a tool for improving organizational performance.

Marketing strategy is a tool for future planning with the overall purpose of developing competitive advantage(s). Strategic planning requires cautious scrutinization of the strategic current situation of the firm before formulating, evaluating and choosing the marketing strategy that will positively impact the performance of the firm in pursuit of its objectives (Pasha and Kumar, 2018). It is believed that strategic marketing developed around 1960 and was brought about by strategic management to identify the importance of marketing as a communication channel between firms and consumers (Pasha and Kumar, 2018). Strategic marketing tackles three issues: 1) What is the current position of the firm? 2) What is the desired position? 3) How can the desired position be reached?

Marketing is an activity that comprises the characteristics of product(s) or service(s), pricing, distribution and promotion. These activities must function seamlessly to guarantee successful marketing (Abdullah Saif and Aimin, 2016). The companies that successfully integrate marketing tools benefit from brand visibility, increased sales, customer loyalty etc.

The main criticism of the extensive search for marketing tools is the exaggerated belief that they are a solution to any obstacle. Though they do have benefits, the tools

should not be viewed individually. Their utilization has to be aligned with the organization's overall strategic intent(s), regardless of size.

Therefore, when it comes to marketing, it is imperative to highlight how the business can take advantage of the various marketing tools and strategies. The application of marketing tools is beneficial but does not guarantee success in a market i.e. sustainable competitive advantage (Schermerhorn and Bachrach, 2017). In order to achieve success, the marketing department of a business must be aware of the various marketing mix strategies that can impact the overall result of the business's objective. When introducing a new offering, a firm utilises its current marketing strategy or modifies the strategy to attract a different target audience (Abdullah Saif and Aimin, 2016).

Another crucial factor in marketing involves the knowledge and experience of marketing managers and their capacity to utilise marketing strategies. Based on research involving 228 senior marketing managers, each type of strategy demands various mixtures of the organization's marketing structures and strategic behaviour for success (Olson, Slater and Hult, 2005). It is vital to communicate with the marketing managers, when implementing or executing a marketing strategy and innovations, to ensure they possess the knowledge and skills to assume responsibilities and fulfil them (Huy, Corley and Kraatz, 2014).

Each marketing strategy has a different focus and set of objectives, and one used by many companies involves promoting events to publicize the company or marketing can be used as a strategy to promote an event (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2013). Increasingly, events are launched and encouraged for a strategic reason, with economic development dominating (Getz, 2008). However, there is a research gap that incorporates business

perspectives on events and a scarcity of different cultural perspectives in event research (Mair and Weber, 2019).

With the aim of researching marketing strategies in event management, event management involves the planning, organizing and optimal use of the available resources of the organisation to meet the goal(s) and objective(s) of the event (Getz, 2008). The activities involved in event management are recognition of the target audience, specific time for the event to occur, expenses and revenues, logistics, location, customer perspective and evaluation and recording of event data. Regardless the size of an event, which can be a child's naming ceremony with ten guests or the World Cup with thousands of people, they all involve steps that must be followed to ensure the success of the event. More recently, event management is considered to be one of the best marketing tools, which allows for adequate or categorical communication with those who focus on customers, and as it facilitates face to face interaction and allows the consumer an experience with brand as opposed to typical advertisements (Kerzner, 2019). However according to Getz (2008), some event managers still doubt adopting marketing strategies in the formulation of their events.

Regardless of how carefully an event was organized with each variable in the right place, execution on the day of the event should be monitored closely and continuously (Shone and Parry, 2018). Event managers should be able to carry out risk evaluations in order to curb potential errors should they occur. For this, Dowson and Bassett (2015) recommends adhering to an event-planning process, as this will guide an event planner throughout the stages of planning an event whilst ensuring nothing is overlooked.

In light of the above, this dissertation's main objective is to investigate how marketing strategies relate to event management and its success.

1.2. Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to evaluate the role of strategic marketing in successful event management. The objectives of the research are below:

- To determine the role of pricing strategy on event management.
- To examine the influence product differentiation has on event management.
- To investigate the effect of promotional strategy on event management.

1.3. Research Questions

The research will focus on the following questions:

- What is the role of pricing strategy in event management?
- How does product differentiation impact event management?
- To what extent does promotional strategy affect event management?

1.4. Research Hypotheses

To fully capture the role of strategic marketing in successful even management, these hypotheses will be looked at:

H₀₁- Pricing strategy does not play a major role in the success of event management.

H₀₂- Product differentiation does not impact event management.

H₀₃- Promotional strategy does not affect event management.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

For reasons related to Covid-19, restriction of movement and physical interaction with individuals it was very difficult for the respondents to take part in the study. Therefore, one of the challenges faced was getting respondents to respond to the

questionnaire in a timely manner, so the researcher had to rely on personal connections in recruiting respondents thereby potentially influencing the random system used to share the survey. The study is limited to mostly responses from personal and business contacts some of whom are event customers or event staffs within the researcher's network thereby impacting the intended random system to become more of a convenience or judgemental sample. It was not able to capture all of the event managers views and also left out the views of other employees and stakeholders in the event management space. Also, the study could not physically engage with the respondents and event centres which limited the possibility of generalising results from this research across all event companies and agencies. The location of the research was restricted to Ireland and the sample size (206) is not fully representative of the population. Therefore, customising this result from a cultural and country-specific perspective may not be feasible.

Furthermore, being a student with limited financial and mobility resources and the time constraint influences the results of this research.

Finally, the study was limited to the findings from the study variables relating to marketing strategy, event management and organizations performance. The findings of these study are limited to the use of descriptive survey research design through the utilisation of structured questionnaires. Also, the findings made in this study are constrained to the result from the regression analysis carried out to validate the hypothesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Marketing Strategies

The acceleration of the media means that marketing has become an increasingly strategic resource for companies. Without a marketing or consulting department to provide this support, a company may be compromised or even struggle to survive in a competitive and innovative environment (Abdullah Saif and Aimin, 2016). Therefore, strategic marketing is crucial for the survival of the business and is challenging, as it can involve several changes and adaptations (Reeves and Deimler, 2011). For Kerzner (2018), the way to control the execution of a marketing strategy is crucial to the company's performance, which must be carried out with skill and clarity, as long as the strategies and plans are firmly merged into the company's marketing practice.

Mongay (2019) describes strategic marketing as a process that involves looking at all the offerings of a firm and markets, and the management of available resources to meet the strategic target of the firm. Another definition provided by Kotler and Andreasen (1996) views strategic marketing as the process of selecting target audience, marketing mix and setting budgets in an effort to achieve a firm's objectives. The most fitting definition is given by Hamper and Baugh in 1990- they described strategic marketing as formulating strategies for the future that will help the firm achieve its long term objectives in relation to customers i.e. customer acquisition and retention (the customer is a strategic factor to consider) whilst making profit and staying relevant in a competitive market i.e. a firm must be flexible enough to adapt its marketing strategies to the fluctuations in the market (Mongay, 2019), as the common aim of strategies is to develop a sustainable competitive advantage (Reeves and Deimler, 2011).

A strategic marketing plan is formulated around a company's goal and is the outer side of marketing that consumers face in the real world (Kerzner, 2018).

However, the formulation of a marketing strategy for corporate restructuring that meets the current and future needs of the market is a requisite, but not sufficient, condition for the success of a business.

Restructuring is a complex process, which must be followed with effective implementation (Kerzner, 2019), including the modification of all activities of the company, and the rationale for its implementation must be the need to guarantee or improve the company's competitiveness at all times of operation (Burke, 2017).

Benn, Edwards and Williams (2014), stipulate that for the successful execution of the marketing strategy in the field of corporate restructuring, the relationship between the strategy, its execution in practice and the effectiveness of the company; reactions of consumers to change; implementation objectives needs to be taken into consideration. In a scenario of constant evolution, it is always challenging to face changes, especially in marketing, which is an innovative environment and requires a team that adapts to changes easily. In turn, the execution of the restructuring marketing strategy is connected to specific actions aimed at executing marketing plans (Kerzner, 2018).

In a strategic plan, it is recommended to define names, deadlines, and an accurate description of each stage. Therefore, in the perception of Gassmann, Frankenberger and Csik (2014), it is necessary to focus on the following areas: who is responsible for each activity, how the strategy is to be executed, location for the event(s) and when specific actions should be performed.

Executing a marketing strategy involves four stages: the establishment of goals, strategies, implementation of changes and evaluation, the main element of the strategy

being internal marketing, in which the formulation of an internal execution strategy is equals the creation of an external marketing strategy (Ross, 2015). The introduction of change requires certain skills (persuasion, negotiation and political influence) and an ability to transform them into reality via tactics. Persuasion tactics comprise a clear statement of the outcome; the relationship between nature and the goal of change; Training; misconceptions harmful to the mouth about the result(s) of the change; ability to backup words with actions. Tactics based on political influence can range from developing affiliations and showing support to raising criticism from opposing members and using various means to diminish their credibility (Nanda, 2016). Time-based tactics involve gradually developing a strategy to neutralize the problem and requires persistence in executing change. Negotiation tactics are dependent on the ability to keep an open mind and make compromises. In conclusion, after implementing the strategy, it is necessary to evaluate the work done (Kerzner, 2019).

Market positioning through well-defined and structured marketing strategies is critical to the firm's success. Olson, Slater and Hult (2005) report 3 points of extreme importance in strategic marketing, these being: (1) the successful implementation of the business strategy requires superior performance, (2) marketing plays a crucial role in the implementation of the strategy and (3) the role marketing plays in the implementation depends on the specific strategy in use. Still, Stanle, Olson and Finnegan (2011), in a survey of a sample of senior marketing managers, identified that the high-performing businesses of one type of strategy have a cultural orientation different from the high-performing businesses of the other types of strategy and that the selected cultural orientations have a major influence in developing high performance. A challenge in marketing strategies is related to the relationship with channel partners, which is not

always an answer to all strategic questions, especially when the strategic option is not related to the generation of long-term benefits. (Paswan, Blankson and Gusman, 2011).

Even when we think about strategic marketing, a development observed in recent years is not digital marketing, which in the opinion of Slotweg and Rowson (2018), when it is necessary to focus on specific target groups and, generally, the best way to do this is online. Corroborating, Ratchford (2020), in his studies on marketing research, noticed a significant evolution happening from the 1960s to the present day, but what stands out is the era of the evolution of technology and the learnings and challenges related to marketing focused on this digital moment.

In addition to digital marketing, now deemed an essential activity, a strategy that comes from the 1990s and continues to gain market share and which the business world was quick to discover, is in the power of event marketing and image creation events, now an essential element of the corporate marketing mix. Companies and businesses adopt events as critical activities in their marketing and image promotion strategies (Bowdin et al., 2006). Also, companies and corporations began to form partnerships and sponsor significant events, such as Microsoft and Adecco (Bordin et al., 2018). Events offer immersive opportunities for placing marketing concerning product and promotion (Wang and Jin, 2019).

Preparing, updating and marketing an event is a big challenge. While traditional marketing focuses on the success of the market for a particular product or service, event marketing focuses on a balance between the organisation's goals and stakeholders needs (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012). Still, for the authors, there are different ways for modifying the marketing strategy in response to customer demands, such as the event in response to customer demands, such as the production and consumption of the event.

Therefore, tickets that are not sold after the event cannot be resold, so the marketing strategy must be effective, as a mistake will be costly for the event organizer. (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012).

A tool used in marketing is DMO (destination management or marketing organization), which is effectively an aggressive marketing strategy that uses marketing events for economic development and aims to use services such as leisure, social and cultural agencies to serve to all interactions at events (Getz, 2018).

It is evident that a marketing strategy using marketing events has two different aspects: (1) a marketing strategy that creates an event to promote the company's image; (2) an event that uses marketing to promote the image, as well as other companies that seek the event as an avenue for image promotion, plus of course revenue generation. Regardless of the main objective of the event, it involves marketing strategy and also the management of the event.

2.2. Event Management

Event management is a critical success activity for a marketing strategy, so the two areas need to be aligned to be successful. The event itself has objectives to be fulfilled and strategies defined. However, behind an event, there are several specific factors involved and strategic objectives, in addition to promoting the identity of cities, from community building to urban renewal, in addition to cultural development. (Getz, 2008). The objective is the first component which leads to the organization of an event. The event may well be close to the heart of the community, the organisation, local culture etc.

The determining factor for achieving expected outcome is power, bringing people together to achieve desired outcome(s), such as specialists, volunteers etc. (Burke and Noumair, 2015).

Thinking about events involves 4 pillars (Goldblatt, 1997), as shown in figure 1.

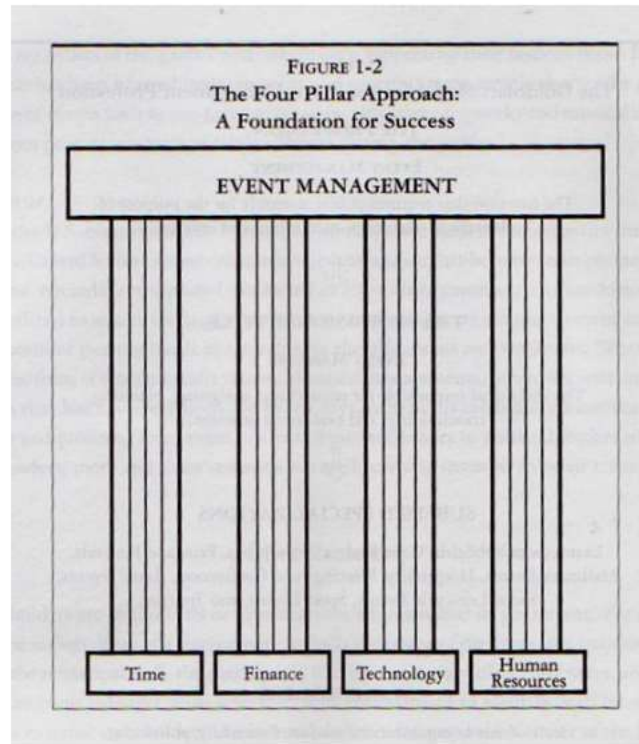


Figure 1:
The four pillars of event management
Source: Goldblatt, 1997

Corroborating with the proposal in figure 1, Dam (2011) presented the best practices framework into the technology, as five categories of code of conduct, location, communication, entertainment and benchmarking. Also, for Dam (2011) into the pillar of human resources are event management, staff, volunteers and customer relationship management (CRM).

Many different professionals are involved and event managers have a core mission to achieve a set of goals to deliver a successful event. Benn, Edwards and Williams (2014) comment that once they are aware of the marketing strategy, to select an idea, the event managers of the companies should brainstorm to find the appropriate ideas that correspond

to the objective of the event. The conceptual process includes a number of achievements, usually accompanied by a precise request. The method includes an analysis and characterization of the event variables. It is crucial to consider several parameters when planning and executing an event (Burke and Noumair, 2015).

The marketing of events in literature can be related to mega-events to promote cities (Chen, 2011) or to various types of events, such as schools (open day), festivals, gastronomy, sports, business, among others (Getz, 2005; Mair and Weber, 2019).

Figure 2 shows the types of events, but in cases such as private events, they do not involve strategic marketing.

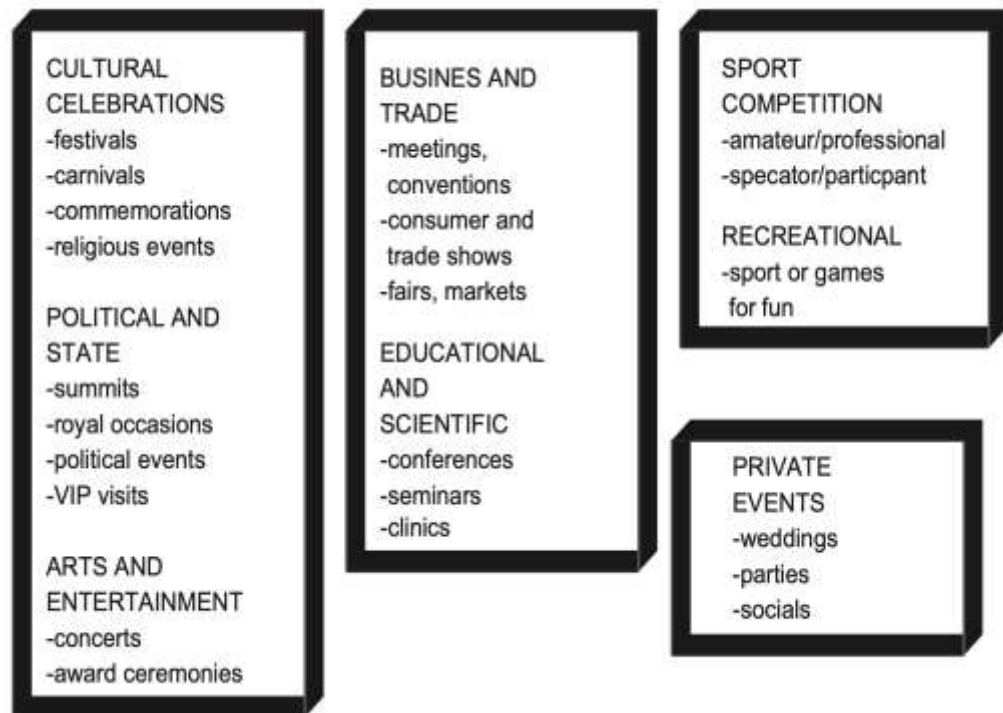


Figure 2: Typology of planned events
Source: Getz, 2005

As shown in figure 2, there are different types of events, each with its primary objective, and with defined marketing strategies. In the literature, the use of event grouping is observed, which is one of the strategies of event management. Xu, Wong and Tan (2016) identified that, for newly developed events, which do not have a strong customer base, might have more benefits with the aggregation strategy than the popular and large-scale ones.

Unique events or grouped events, mainly exhibitions, conventions and business events, are examples of events that also use tourism as a strategy in events. This can be seen mainly in large cities, which have large convention centres, in addition to services dedicated to the sale of spaces and supplier services for events (Getz, 2008) and large-scale events frequently supplement the travel experiences of your customers and bolster perceived value. (Xu, Wong and Tan, 2016).

It is evident how tourism has a relationship with events, mainly on a large scale and needs to be aligned and thought out in advance when planning the management of an event. Event management is a professional sector in which tourism is a core market for events, where tourism has become a vital component of success and attractiveness (Getz, 2008).

Mair and Weber (2019) argue that, in order to survive, events need to be successful business products, managers need to be aware of some of the problems that need to be explored during event management planning. There are challenges for event management, as well as adaptations, to meet the needs of the continually updating market, such as the increasingly evolving digital age.

In addition to digital marketing being used as a core marketing strategy, the latest article by Ryan, Fenton, Ahmed and Scarf (2020) showed that the top of the digital

maturity scale, E4.0, can be defined as an event digital which frequently updates its digital technology; fully integrates its communication systems; and optimizes operations and digital communications for event delivery, marketing and customer experience. Another perception regarding events is in the study by Fenich, Scoott-Halsell, Ogbeide and Hashimoto (2014) with the Millennium generation, and identified that, in meetings and events, they prefer short focused meetings or those that involve specific entertainment.

The event management area requires a strategic plan to remain competitive in an environment of constant change, especially when dealing with events that involve a large volume of people.

2.3. Pricing strategy

The strategy of pricing is critical to every company as it is a bridge between the company and consumers and is vital for the realisation of profit. However, setting the price of an event can be challenging. Most event managers typically set event prices to cover the cost of putting on the event (Cost-Plus `pricing) while others simply just emulate the prices of competitors (Competitive pricing). As a marketing strategy tool, it has a key role to play in any company either in service or production (Baker, Collier and Jayaraman, 2017; Kotler and Keller 2012). Day and Wendley (2015), revealed that from a supply and demand point of view it means a lot of different things to both the customer and the company. They mentioned that from the demand side it is an evaluation of the perceived value the customer gets before buying the product or requesting a service. While from the supply side it shows how a company intends to generate revenue and make profit using its business model. Therefore, pricing strategy is described as the framework for pricing decisions.

Pricing is crucial for an event marketing mix as the right price needs to satisfy both the event organizers and the customers. Eventbrite advises a value-based pricing strategy is guaranteed to attract more customers. A value-based pricing strategy involves the consumer measuring the perceived value and price whilst the event manager utilises the cost per ticket to decide what the baseline price will be in order to still make a profit or avoid loss (Eventbrite, 2020). Although the element of price is important in marketing mix, it cannot be isolated from other elements (Dolgui, & Proth, 2010). Apart from the event program or food and drinks shared during the events, customers rate the price of an event to be equivalent with the value they will get from that event. Therefore, the price objective and structure of any event need to be adequately developed as knowledge of how to appropriate price event(s) as per the variety of consumers will bolster customer attraction by suggesting various perceived value. For this reason, Eventbrite (2020) suggests offering a variety of ticket choices to cater to each consumer type i.e. those who prefer the cheaper option and those who see more value in higher priced tickets- having options of tickets automatically makes the cheaper ticket more attractive and the expensive tickets receive a higher perceived value which can satisfy an individual based on his/her self-concept. Eventbrite (2020) highlighted four common variations of tickets:

1. **Regular Ticket:** standard no extra perks. i.e. Typically just entry fee. E.g. Comic Con Dublin 10euro for kids and 15 for adults.
2. **General Admission Special Access:** extra perk at an increased priced e.g. 30euro and attendee gets a branded shirt.
3. **VIP, Early Access/backstage pass targeted discounts:** this offers discounts to guests who can prove membership e.g. students, veterans or the event membership itself- a good example would be DMX Dublin who

offers discounted tickets to members of the institute of marketing Ireland. Furthermore, the VIP tickets offer an array of benefits which boosts the perceived value. For example, the pendulum summit, VIP tickets offer access to keynote speakers such as SIR Richard Branson.

4. **Group Discounts:** this type is used to encourage bulk buying. E.g. 10 tickets for the price of 3.

Finally, a price strategy can also be used to encourage consumers to purchase a particular ticket. Seeing that most consumers are interested in purchasing the best value at the lowest cost possible. For example, an innovative strategy implemented by Athletics Ireland and Dublin Marathon Organisers was the '**Dublin Marathon Season Pass**' which was primarily available to participants who had secured a place in the Full Marathon. This Season Pass was a *multi-event ticket* comprising (i) Couch to 5 km event at 25euros (ii) 10 km event at 35 euros (iii) Half Marathon event @ 50 euros then (iv) Full Marathon event at 90 euros = sub-total 200, but offered at 150 euros. This strategy creates an illusion of a bargain and increased value. However, event organisers need to be careful utilising discounts so as not to negatively impact the event's positioning, perceived value and run a loss.

2.3.1 Factors that affect pricing

As it relates to an event management company a number of factors influence the prices that are set for an event. The factors range from prices set by competitors, legal framework of the event that is to be held, demand of the customers or society from the event, environmental related issues and also running cost of the event. Some of the factors are explained below:

2.3.1.1 Event Cost

The cost of running an event is a critical factor that needs to be examined (Obigbemi, 2010). This is because for an event to turn out as a success the event manager has to make sure the cost of the event will not offset the profit. The cost may vary between fixed and variable cost depending on the actual event held and other expenses incurred during the marketing process such as logistics and advertising. When the total cost is not fully determined by the event manager the price will not be set correctly and once that happens, it affects the profit of the event and even the long-term existence of the event or the company.

2.3.1.2 Competitors

The nature of market competition is an important element when setting up the price of any event. In a market where the demand is set by the market leader and others follow, the demand of the market leader will also be taken into consideration because the quality of the alternative service rendered may have an effect on the price of the commodity.

2.3.1.3 Demand

Who the buyer of a product is or who are the people that attend an event? Does the customer have a bargaining power? These are some questions that leads to an increase or decrease in demand for a product or service. In the case of a high demand for product or service, the increase in prices may have a negative impact on the demand for those products (Jain, 2014). That is why managers need to analyse the demand for some products before they make a pricing decision. In the case of an event, that event must be

priced strategically in a manner that will lead to an increase in the demand, penetrate the market and not have a negative effect on the target audience.

2.3.1.4 Economy

Macroeconomic trends in the country must also be taken into account when making pricing decisions. In a steady economy, where the standard of living increases without increasing people salary, an increase in the price of a commodity may decrease the demand for those goods and as the earnings of such individuals increases an increase in the price of the commodity at that point in time does not automatically impact the demand for such a product.

2.4 Promotional Strategy

At the hearth of every company today is the competition to attract customers interest through products or services. Consequently, each event manager is required to create an action plan or strategy that is more attractive than its rivals using different strategic tools. Promotion is one of those strategic tools for attracting customer interest to an organization's product/service (Zakaria, Mahat, Kamaruddin, Mud and Rahman, 2018). According to Enitilo, Ajayi and Famuagun (2017), Promotion is a key component of the strategic marketing mix, which plays a significant role in consumer performance. It also serves to ensure consumers know of the products the company offers. Promotion is often the process through which a marketer creates a direct relationship with the target audience (Zakaria *et al.*, 2018).

Promotion strategy is the way in which a business attempts to reach its audiences directly (Onyejiaku, Ghasi and Okwor, 2018) where over-time this strategy offers businesses the advantage over their rivals in an industry. The selling technique consists of five aspects of

the promotional mix: product purchases, commercial public relations, targeted marketing and brand selling (Wangondu, 2016). Companies generally conduct an aggressive sales campaign to encourage development outside boundaries, thus growing visibility and increasing the pace at which their goods or services are purchased by their clients, in order to sustain the attractiveness of the business and the changing demands of buyers. Promotional campaigns allow companies to gain and maintain clients, thus growing their revenue and income development thanks to an expanded consumer base (Kotler, 2007).

An event management business will require a mixture of two or three marketing tools depending on the form of the company or service that is been rendered and the aim of selling a product in the market that is superior to competitors (Sagal, 2015). Private purchases and advertisements are the most influential aspect of the promotional mix and are important in terms of advertisement costs and effects. The components of the marketing promotion mix are used in the distribution of knowledge to consumers, employers or prospective users about the products or services provided. Their fundamental aim is to encourage customers, suppliers or potential users to take positive action by continuously placing orders, carrying out inquiries and buying (Onyejiaku, Ghasi & Okwor, 2018; Kumar & Patra, 2017). The elements in the promotional mix frequently overlap one another. Other elements of promotion such as sales promotion, public relation, direct marketing, although they are insignificant, they make significant contributions in some circumstances.

2.5 Product Differentiation Strategy

Product differentiation is a strategic marketing practice in which businesses seek to gain competitive advantage by improving the perceived value of their offering(s) relative to the perceived value of the competition's offering(s) (Anthony, 2018; Stanley, Fred and

Gregory, 2016). Porter (2008) argues that differentiation and cost advantage are the core assets of an organization and can be applied either in narrow or wide scopes leading to three (3) conventional strategic strategies: cost leadership, differentiation strategy and concentration strategy.

Differentiation strategy aims at delivering products or services that provide results that differ from those of their rivals and are usually appreciated by customers (Virginia, 2017; Alrfou and Trawneh, 2010). If a company is able to deliver a product/service that is distinctive, exclusive and useful to its customers, it may distinguish itself from its rivals (Kago, Gichunge and Baimwera, 2018; Pereira, 2017). Product differentiation is prevalent throughout the financial world, especially in most production sectors, and there is a wide range of differentiated products and services in the marketplace. It is obvious as one walks into a shop, one will find various items, such as soap, which comes in specific types, such as liquid, detergent and bar soap, and all marketed by different firms – some are even marketing competitive product brands e.g. Proctor & Gamble own 3 of the top 10 world selling bars of soap.

Product differentiation strategy is oriented towards creating an environment in terms of their product features, brand identity support, network marketing and efficiency that varies from their competitors. Companies that adopt product differentiation approaches typically build consumer segments and distinction (Onyago, 2017). That means a lot of energy and resources for production. However, the long-term implementation of the differentiation strategy can enhance the success of the organization, boost the image of the brand, improve its distribution channels and improve its outstanding service system, along with the customer group (Onyago, 2017; Lei and Liping, 2012).

2.6. Marketing Plan

Managers need to be aware of their market interest in the planning process. Golblatt (1997) stipulates that the planning process is a vital key to what could occur, in which it needs to identify the element and the problems that need to be solved.

Decisions must be organized in an aligned manner, to be executed at the best time. In the first moment of planning, everyone is invited to choose and refine the idea of the event, if necessary (Cummings and Worley, 2014). Ideas created at meetings must be drawn up and studied, which could aid in determining the best choice to test the process, which corresponds to the ethos of the event (Galpin, 2014).

This phase of planning the construction of an event is an important step for the success of an event. The mix of different ideas, with those involved, is what can bring different perspectives to achieve the proposed objective. The perspective of the event - what constitutes "planned events" - is a spatial and temporal phenomenon, and the interactions between the environment, people and management systems, including the design elements and the program (Getz, 2008).

One of the planning stages is choosing the right market. The special event for the right location is another critical factor that determines the success of the event. It must reach the most relevant group and generate significant potential income, and special events depend on the type and scenario (Chang, 2016). In addition, there are different types of event clients: spectators, participants, exhibitors and exhibition visitors, artists and cultural event participants (Wang and Jin, 2019). Some of the key objectives of the planning process is to make the event as successful, useful and convenient to attend or engage as possible. Ticket sales can simplify the target audience that the event seeks to reach, assigning different ticket sales or ticket sales locations.

Another aspect is hospitality, where some events may not have a global orientation to attract a substantial percentage of international visitors (Wang and Jin, 2019). It is necessary to be aware of and prepared for external factors, such as access to the city's ability to attend an event, depending on the size of the event.

After all the planning stages, in some cases, the event organizers are surprised by adversities, which can result from internal or external factors. In a study by Whalen and Boush (2014), they report that improvisations due to external factors were more likely to be accepted by prosecutors as having been successful. Another crucial factor that the authors realized is related to the manager's experience, in which those with less experience in planning are less successful than planners with more experience who can improvise as required. The premise is experienced professionals can help identify the types of deviations that are likely to lead to successful results and can have a significant impact on managerial marketing.

Whalen and Boush (2014) existing literature focuses mainly on external environmental analysis during the marketing plan. Additional insights should be offered on how to train marketing managers to better analyze, identify and prepare for internal disruptions.

So, it is time to evaluate the event, the "evaluation"; the post-event exercises should consider keeping in touch with the client. This critical structure is perhaps the best option to evaluate how the event was and what modifications should be made in an effort to attract more consumers (Burke, 2017).

The evaluation step has a fundamental role in maintaining a relationship with the client, in improving the performance for the next events, as well as to improve the marketing strategy and event management.

It is evident how much the planning of an event needs to be thought out and structured in detail, going through several stages, from the objective to the evaluation.

2.7 Objective of Event Management

Event planning involves thinking in detail about the purpose of the event, target audience, location, and for all of this, it is necessary to also think about the type of event. The typical event is a massive, periodic celebration which has become a permanent tradition in its community (Getz et al., 2012)

Bowdin et al. (2006) defined essential steps that we have to think about:

1. Size – according to its size, scale and impact.
2. Local / community event – held mainly for its social, fun and entertaining value.
3. Major events – have the potential to draw a significant number of visitors, media attention and economic benefits.
4. Hallmark events - Identified with the culture or spirit of a city, town or region.
5. Mega-events - events so massive that they impact entire economies and on the global media.

This relationship between the event size and the type of event is in figure 3.

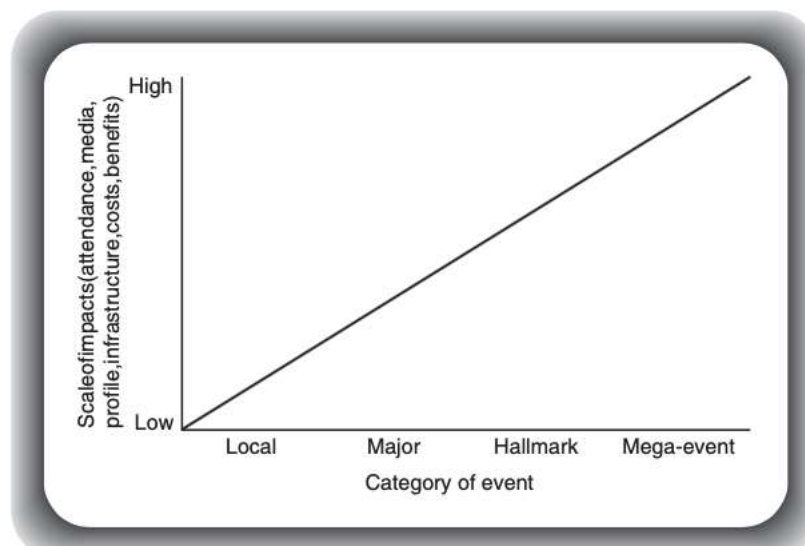


Figure 3: Categorization of Events
Source: Bowdin et al. (2006)

In figure 3 presented by Bowdin et al. (2006), it is evident that the bigger the event, the higher its impact on the society in which it occurs.

An event with a large volume of sub-events can be described as a Major Event or Hallmark Events, as evidenced by Getz et al. (2012), The business market for associations for meetings and exhibitions often called Hallmark events, have their peculiar needs and preferences. They are types of events that involve specific strategic planning, due to the size, impact they may have on society, as well as costs and expected return. These types of events are usually striking, permanent and periodic, such as sporting and cultural celebrations, which can be combined or held in isolation. Still, these types of events generally have an extended program around the main event, generating much broader appeal, visibility and exposure (Getz et al., 2012), which can also generate more significant opportunities for profitability, service offerings, often creating more tourism jobs.

The main objectives cannot be achieved without effective marketing; therefore, hallmark events must be managed professionally (Getz et al., 2012). When an event occurs, behind it, there are several sectors involved, and one of these sectors is tourism, that a significant number of cases of significant events or hallmark events need to accommodate people from different places who need to stay in or near the city in that the event occurs.

Figure 4, presented by Getz et al. (2012) clearly shows the main benefits of Hallmark events in society.



Figure 4: Principles of Hallmark Events
Source: Adapted from Getz et al., 2012

For Getz et al. (2012), there is supply and demand, which reflect on destinations and how the events will attract tourists. Still, for Wang and Jin (2019), some customers may have previous experiences at the event or may have visited the host's destination.

However, significant impacts in terms of tourist attractiveness and image creation can impact significant events (Getz et al., 2012).

The events have been getting bigger and bigger, or even an alignment of events that generate profitability and move other sectors. That factor shows the importance of events within society and their impact. Mainly, it shows how challenging this area is and the existing and necessary relationship between strategic marketing and event management.

2.8 Preparation of the Event

After the proposal of the aligned event, it is time to put the actions into practice. Moreover, this stage, called "event preparation", involves, in addition to marketing and event management, several stakeholders for the complete execution of a successful event. Wang and Jin (2019) argued that the involvement of multiple stakeholders complicates the planning and delivery of an event and the associated marketing results.

We start by locating the event, which depending on the target audience and the size of the event will involve other external factors, such as restaurants, hotels, access to the venue, parking. The location issue is the most critical aspect of every event (Damm, 2011). Moreover, when there is the involvement of many stakeholders, it needs to have excellent communication and involvement from everyone to ensure the effectiveness and success of the events.

In preparation, it is important to consider and be aware that any event has the potential to create risks and internal and external crises, due to its size, scope, use of equipment and attraction of a large number of persons to a location at a set time. Potential risks include all aspects of a firm's operation, including the health and safety of visitors

and employees, agglomerated environmental hazards and compliance with local legislation and regulations. (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012).

Due to all these factors, the involvement and commitment of the stakeholders will guarantee effective delivery of the service.

2.9 Challenges in Events Management as Marketing Strategy

Marketing is essential when it comes to events. To hold an event, managers need to ensure that they achieve a specific goal. The goal of reaching an adequate or desired number of customers could achieve the results. This means that the Event Manager must utilise a variety of marketing strategies to attract a large number of visitors (Galpin, 2014). These methods include advertisement, promotion, display tricks, open communication and the media. The study should disclose several marketing methods that can be used to manage events effectively (Cummings and Worley, 2014).

For Branwell (1997), the minimal use of formal strategic planning can make decision-making difficult. Thus, a recent survey conducted by Wang and Jin (2019) studied events about the 4P of marketing, as shown in figure 5.

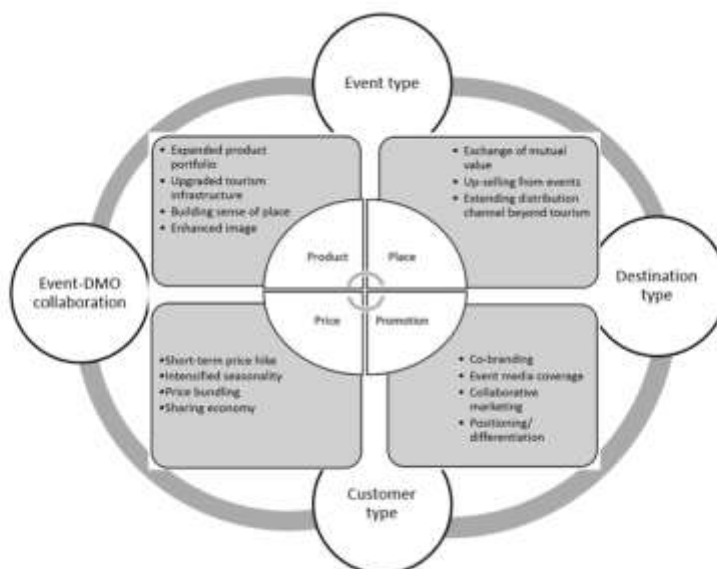


Figure 5: Event DMO – Destination Marketing Organization

Source: Wang and Jin (2019)

The proposal presented by Wang and Jin (2019) highlights the mutual relationship that exists between marketing strategies and event management. Besides, Getz (2012) argued that the exploitation of events for image creation, brand repository or marketing placement, in general, requires policy and strategy. The competitive advantage is being achieved by destinations with the knowledge and vision to integrate events with other local marketing efforts, including film development, familiarization tours, commercial missions and brands in the city or region.

Figure 6 shows the marketing strategies presented in (Getz et al., 2012) concerning Hallmark Events.

<p>Marketing mix: -Experiential elements: product, place, programming and people; - Facilitating elements: price, packaging, partnerships, and promotions/communications</p>	<p>Product is unique, quality experiences packaging for tourists is essential The destination is on permanent display Promotions/communications: Tie with image-making and branding; Strategic partnerships: Crucial process goal; keep the event fresh: Challenge with age</p>
<p>Implement quality control and constant-improvement system</p>	<p>-encompassing quality of management, personnel, programs, services, settings, communications -employ accepted standards for management systems (ISO 20121)</p>
<p>Build and sustain essential relationships: Committed staff, volunteers and sponsors</p>	<p>Host - community implement a permanent outreach and involvement Permanent relationships with the tourism and hospitality sectors</p>
<p>Strong consumer orientation</p>	<p>- Learning organization through research and evaluation - Constant improvement.</p>

Evaluation of Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -periodic marketing audits: Performance measures that need for each goal -Resident and consumer feedback are essential
-------------------------	---

Figure 6: Marketing Strategies to Hallmark Events
Source: Getz et al. (2012)

The proposal by Getz et al. (2012) presented in figure 6 and the proposal by Wang and Jin (2019) presented in figure 6 show a relationship between marketing strategies at events and how they are related. Managing the full marketing mix is essential for events; it is necessary maintaining permanent and close relationships with the tourism and hospitality (Getz et al., 2012)

Wang and Jin (2019) identified that there is a growing recognition that business events contribute significantly to tourism as a destination. A broad category, covering events such as tourist attractions, animators, image creators and catalysts for change and development. Events in this context are a 'business' sector that contributes to economic growth and prosperity for all. Alternatively, it can be like an export industry generating foreign revenue, attracting tourists and generating new income for a city, region or country. At the national level, event tourism must be 'ready for export', which means that events that play an economic development role must be attractive to international tourists and ready to buy from anywhere on the planet - in other words, a product to sell (Getz, 2018). However, Wang and Jing (2019) argue that the success of event-based destination marketing faces several challenges, which are insufficient empirical evidence to inform effective marketing planning and design.

However, a significant challenge for event organizers is in the traditional events that with the advancement of technologies and the revolutionary development of the Internet, which is now accessible to hundreds of millions of people, the growth of virtual event marketing is increasing, not just because of the lower costs of reaching participants and participants and communicating with them, it also because of other factors (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012). Still, for the authors, virtual marketing events eliminate the need for unproductive meeting time and are related as sustainable alternatives to real-life events. Also, these types of events can extend a company's reach to new global markets and to individuals who cannot or cannot participate in traditional physical events.

Even in virtual events, strategic marketing is necessary and may have a more significant impact for the realization of these events, but tourism may lose space in these types of events, as well as the expectation of promoting cities.

Events are increasingly winning over the business market, and innovation is essential for growth and development in both the marketing and event management areas, but how can we learn from the events?

That is when the post-event challenge comes in. It is a crucial step, which cannot be overlooked after the event. According to Bowdin et. Al (2012) defined that the post-event evaluation is mainly concerned with measuring the success of an event in terms of its objectives, collecting and analysing relevant data of the event, and also the surveys seek to obtain opinions.

Figure 7 shows the process of the event through to its Evaluation.

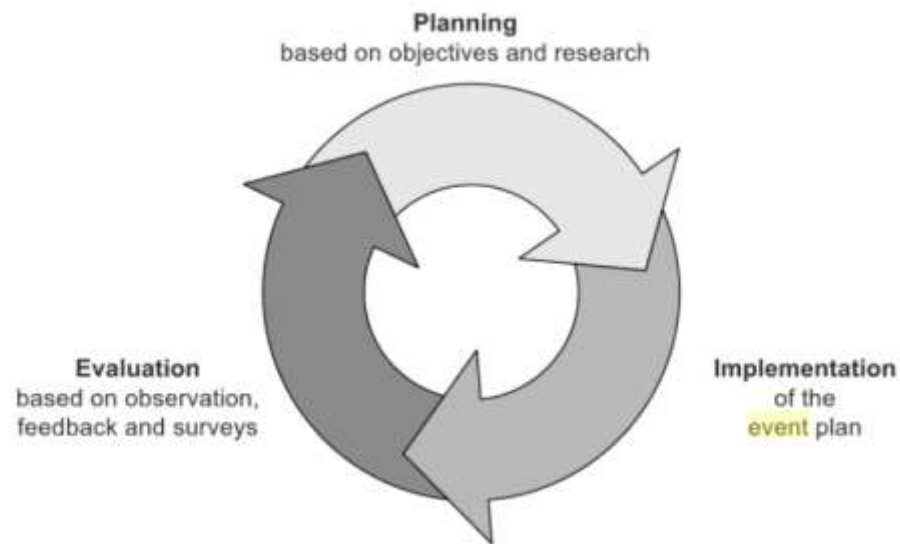


Figure 7: Evaluation and event management process
Source: Bowdin et al. (2012)

The process presented in figure 7 is a cycle between learning and action, where each "evaluation" it generates learning for improvement in an upcoming event. Thus, the evaluation is relevant for event management, as well as for marketing strategies.

In the literature, two basic types of evaluation are the first called "performance improvement", which can also be known as technical evaluation in what involves decision making and problem-solving; the second is called "impact assessment attributing change", which involves making analyses of the achievement of goals and claiming the results obtained (Getz, 2018).

The assessment focuses on measuring, evaluating and monitoring whether events have been able to achieve their stated intentions systematically. Measuring, evaluating and monitoring can be based on numerical or descriptive data or a combination of both, as will be discussed later (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012)

Getz (2012) argued that after the event, the use of the return survey, it is better to obtain more accurate data on the total expenses and an evaluation of the overall experience.

Depending on the focus of the event and the objective of the evaluation, the evaluation of the event can be based only on numerical approaches or only oriented and descriptive approaches (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012)

Experiences must be conceptualized and studied in terms of three interrelated dimensions:

1 - What people are doing or behaviour (the "conative" dimension)

2 - Your emotions, moods or attitudes (the "affective" dimension)

3 - Cognition (awareness, perception, understanding) (Getz, 2008)

It is possible to use qualitative or quantitative research to make an evaluation. In quantitative research, the questionnaire must have the necessary validity and reliability; it is essential to obtain data that address the general objective of the research with adequate confidence (Page and Connell, 2012). Quantitative approaches are primarily concerned with counting complex data sets, such as levels of presence, sources of information and event activities, to ensure a safe general conclusion and causal explanations about the event (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012). In quantitative data collection, the questionnaire administration method that is gaining popularity is the use of online survey panels from which a sample of respondents is selected to complete an online questionnaire (Page and Connell, 2012)

In qualitative research, one of the most used methods is in-depth interviews, participant observation and focus groups, with each method aiming to meet a specific type of data. For example, the use of detailed interviews seeks to collect data on life stories, perspectives, lived experiences and especially sensitive topics. Participant observation, on

the other hand, focuses on investigating the behaviour that occurs naturally in people's daily lives, when they are in natural habits or routines, and focus groups are appropriate in extracting data about a group's cultural norms, also to generate a broad overview of the problems of interest to the cultural groups represented (Page and Connell, 2012). Qualitative approaches focus on capturing opinions and attitudes on subjects such as the reason for participating in the event; the benefits sought the level of stakeholder satisfaction, attitudes, quality of the event and service offered at the event. Qualitative approaches tend to use open-ended questions to allow detailed answers (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012).

The relationships presented between strategic marketing and event management generate several challenges, and evaluation is vital for essential evaluation cycle and continuous improvement in events and impact on the external environment. The chain of event marketing success is the sum between satisfied participants + satisfied organizers + satisfied attendees = event marketing success (Ferdinand and Kitchin, 2012).

Measuring this level of satisfaction is not a guarantee of success, but rather leading instead to improvements that impact those involved and generate better results and event management practices to achieve success and generate satisfaction and revenue for everyone involved in event management and marketing strategy.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The word methodology involves a comprehensive course of action. According to Sim and Wright (2000), the methodological approach selected is determined by the research question. But other authors like Silverman (1993) argue that there is no right or wrong methodology; that it is more about identifying the most suitable methodological approach. Therefore, using an assessment of the overall research plan for this methodological implementation gives in line with current research assumptions. This section is aimed at explaining the research method used in gathering and analysing the data for this study. The methodological process involves; research method and design, sample size and techniques research instruments, data collection and research instruments, methods of data analysis, research ethics, procedure and timeline.

3.2 Research Method and Design

A research method is the methods and ways a researcher used to collect data. There are two methods commonly used that help answer the research question namely qualitative and quantitative. In some cases, a mixture of both methods is used to answer the research questions. The qualitative method involves the use of non-numeric means of collecting data for the analysis of the study examples are videos or words. While quantitative involves the use of numeric, statistical and graphical means to analyse data that was collected.

In carrying out this study, the quantitative method was adopted. The strategy used to collect data was the survey research method. This involves collecting data by carrying out a survey either through questionnaires or interviews. In the case of this study,

questionnaires were used for the survey and not interview because of the restriction with the physical interaction of people. Due to this reason, sharing questionnaire was the most appropriate choice. There is also a time constraint of when the study is to be finalised, also questionnaire was chosen instead of interview because the researcher does not have the necessary funds to embark on a detailed investigative interview and also because it suites the major purpose, aims and objective of the study.

The method of distribution of the questionnaires were done online via the use of survey monkey and shared to various social media channels. This method is appropriate for the study as it involves the collection of information from a vast population sample which makes it subjective as the researcher does not attempt to control or manipulate the population. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) stated that researchers always make assumptions and Crotty (1998) states that this involuntary action guides how a researcher would address a research question and analyse the results.

For a research work to gather the relevant data two research design are available, exploration research method and conclusive research method. Exploration research method involves the researcher reviewing relevant literature to get data while conclusive research method involves survey using a well-structured questionnaire to gather data. The questionnaire was used to form the bias of the study. The questionnaire is designed in such a way that the questions asked will not need personal assistance by the researcher before the respondents can fill it. All the questions stated in the research instrument are all closed-ended questions which did not give room for the respondents to write anything but restrict their response. This research population is made up of scholars, event managers, marketers, non-management staff who work in the event sector and also customers who attend events.

3.3 Sample Size and Techniques

The number of the population in the event sector is large so a sample is done to save cost and time. Random sampling and systematic technique were used for this study. This sampling technique was used because it gives every element an equal chance of being selected without bias. The sample size is a total of 206 respondents who filled the questionnaire.

3.4 Data Collection and Research Instruments

A more extended research period is essential for studying various studies and scientific journals in order to develop an appropriate research plan. Evaluation of these results, allows managers to gradually understand specific business strategies for knowledge, which ultimately helps to conduct research (Schermerhorn and Bachrach, 2017).

Methodological approaches are needed at the same time to improve the impact and objectives, although the need to collect previous work was related to the research plan (Kerzner, 2017). The source of data used was primary and secondary sources. For this study, the primary data questionnaire was administered and used to collect questions from respondents. The secondary data was gotten from books, articles journals and internet sources. The data collected from the questionnaire were analysed to test the hypothesis and solve the research question. Section A dealt with the respondent bio-data such as gender, age, qualification, marital status and residence. Section B dealt with most of the questions addressing the research question, objective and aim. It also comprised of a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

3.5 Data Analysis Method

This deals with how the data is to be analysed during the research. The technique used to analyse the hypotheses in a research are numerous but can be grouped into parametric and non-parametric test. Parametric test is got from the word parameter. It assumes that the population is distributed normally. Examples are t test, linear regression etc. While non parametric test is a little stringent and may not recognize differences and relationships. Examples are Mann Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis Test etc.

For this study Regression Analysis was used which is under parametric test. This technique was used instead of correlation analysis because the research question had nothing to do with the relationship between the variable but only effect of one variable on the other variable. Regression was used to analyse the degree of effect that the independent variable has on the dependent variable. It was used to accept or reject the various hypotheses stated in the research work. Quantitative data generated through the field work was analysed and processed through electronic means.

In the process of analysing data, information collected through administration of questionnaire to respondents was carefully analysed. The data collected as regards this research work will be analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS).

3.6 Research Ethics

A principal consideration in any research study is the need to conduct the research ethically, by letting the involved people know that they have to be part of the study and what the purpose of the research is. However, this does not apply in some cases of participant observation, as there are occasions when covert observations might be necessary, but this approach to data collection is seldom used and had no use on this occasion.

However, there are still some important ethical considerations to be considered. The research project required that all participants give their consent, and their participation was voluntary. Only the supervisors and the researcher have access to the data, and the anonymity of the participants will remain confidential, as even people in the relevant community will not recognize the identity of the participants.

3.7 Procedure

Initially, a literature review will be conducted to investigate previously addressed studies on events management and marketing strategies. After the questionnaire was created using an online platform channel called “Survey Monkey” then shared to various social media platforms such as LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook etc. Where respondents selected answers from the options provided by the researcher. The survey was closed after five (5) days. Also, I use the survey to identify what people that are participating in events, how is the experience during the event, and the post-event how they could leave the experience for the event managers to improve.

3.8. Timeline

The timeline for the research will follow the tasks that will involve week 1 to 28. Also, the project started to build on the third week of January of 2020.

4 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This aspect of the study will discuss analysis and interpretation of the data retrieved from the questionnaire. The data were presented using frequency tables, percentage and descriptive statistics, to show the result from testing the hypotheses. The data for this study was analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and the hypothesis was tested using regression analysis.

4.2 Presentation of Data

Table 4.2.1 Respondents

Questionnaire	Respondent	Percentage (%)
Filled and valid	181	87.9
Filled and not valid	25	12.1
Total distributed	206	100

From table 4.2.1 above a total of 206 questionnaires were distributed but only 181(87.9%) were filled and valid questionnaires and 25 (12.1%) were filled but invalid. This study records 87.9% response rate. This high response rate was achieved as a result of the simplicity of the questions asked.

Table 4.2.2 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach Alpha	Items
0.886	12

From table above, the research instrument is reliable as the Cronbach alpha value printed a score of 0.886. Therefore, the scale items were found to be reliable for the construct of this research study.

Table 4.2.3 Respondence according to residence

Country				
Ireland	135	74.6	74.6	74.6
Other countries in Europe	22	12.2	12.2	86.7
Outside Europe	10	5.5	5.5	92.3
UK	14	7.7	7.7	100.0
Total	181	100	100	

From the table above 135(74.6%) are from Ireland, 22(12.2%) are from other countries in Europe, 10(5.5%) are from outside Europe while 14(7.7%) come from UK. It is important to note that since the study has to do with respondents who are in Ireland alone which represents the 74.6% of total respondents in this study as seen above, all other respondents from UK, Europe and other countries will be dropped and Ireland will represent 100% response rate. So therefore, the analysis of this study will be done based on the 135 respondents and not the total filled and valid respondents of 181.

4.3 Demographic Data

Table 4.3 Frequency distribution of respondents by their social demographic characteristics.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	56	41.5	41.5	41.5
Female	79	58.5	58.5	100.0
Total	135	100	100	
Age				
18-24	61	45.2	45.2	45.2
25-34 years	35	25.9	25.9	71.1
35-44 years	20	14.8	14.8	85.9
45-54 years	13	9.6	9.6	95.6
55-64 years	5	3.7	3.7	99.3
65-74 years	1	.7	.7	100
75 years and above	0	0	0	
Total	135	100	100	
Marital Status				
Single never married	73	54.1	54.1	54.1
Single but cohabiting with a significant other	16	11.9	11.9	65.9
In a domestic partnership or civil union	5	3.7	3.7	69.9
Married	38	28.1	28.1	97.8
Separated	1	.7	.7	98.5
Divorced	2	1.5	1.5	100
Total	135	100	100	
Education				

Associate degree	1	.7	.7	.7
Bachelor degree	9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Graduate degree	15	11.1	11.1	18.5
High school degree or equivalent	11	8.1	8.1	26.7
Less than high school degree	56	41.5	41.5	68.1
Some college but no degree	43	31.9	31.9	100
Total	135	100	100	
Event attended in 24 months				
Business	13	9.6	9.6	9.6
Conference	24	17.8	17.8	27.4
Festival	28	20.7	20.7	48.1
Scholarship	5	3.7	3.7	51.9
Sport	12	8.9	8.9	60.7
Tradeshow	7	5.2	5.2	65.9
Wedding	27	20.0	20.0	85.9
Others	19	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	135	100	100	
How did you hear about the event				
Company newsletter	9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Direct email	14	10.4	10.4	17.0
Poster/Billboard	0	0	0	57.0
Social Media	54	40.0	40.0	61.5
University	6	4.4	4.4	84.4
Word of mouth	31	23.0	23.0	100.0
Others	21	15.6	15.6	
Total	135	100	100	
How often do you go to events				
1 to 3 times yearly	52	38.5	38.5	38.5
3 to 6 times yearly	41	30.4	30.4	68.9
Above 6 times yearly	42	31.1	31.1	100.0
Total	135	100	100	
What do you consider when you choose an event				
Drink and food	9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Event Program	57	42.2	42.2	48.9
Facilities	10	7.4	7.4	56.3
Location	26	19.3	19.3	75.6
Ticket Price	28	20.7	20.7	96.3
Others	5	3.7	3.7	100.0
Total	135	100	100	

Table 4.3 shows the demographic frequency of the study respondents. Under the gender section the table indicates that 56(41.5%) are male and 79(58.5%) are female. The female gender has the highest percentage which indicates most of the respondents for this study.

The table also shows the age distribution of the respondents. It shows that 61(45.2%) are 18-24 years which represents the most, followed by respondents between 25-34 years at 35(25.9%), 35-44 years 20(14.8%), 45-54 years 13(9.6%), 55-64 years 5(3.7%) and 65-74 years 1(0.7%) which represents the least. Most of the respondents are from 18-24 years and 25-34 years which indicates that the most of the people that attend events are young. The marital status for single never married represents 73(54.1%) which is the most followed by single but cohabiting with a significant other at 16(11.9%), then in a domestic partnership or civil union 5(3.7%), married people represents 38(28.1%), separated 1(0.7%) and divorced that represents 2(1.5%). From the distribution majority of the respondents are single never married.

The education section shows that associate degree represents 1(0.7%), bachelor degree represents 9(6.7%), graduate degree stands at 15(11.1%), high school degree or equivalent is 11(8.1%), less than high school degree 56(41.5%) and finally respondents with some college but no degree 43(31.9%). The table also has a section for how did you hear about the events with 9(6.7%) respondents getting their information from company newsletter, 14(10.4%) from direct email, none of the respondents chose poster/Billboard, 54(40.0%) from social Media, 6(4.4%) from the university, 31(23.0%) from word of mouth and 31(23.0%) others sources like blogs, newspaper and article represents 21(15.6%).

When respondents were asked how often they go to events most of the respondents answered 52(38.5%) which accounted for 1 to 3 times yearly, 41(30.4%) for 3 to 6 times yearly, 42(31.1%) for above 6 times yearly. When respondents were asked what do you consider when you choose an event 9(6.7%) of the respondents chose drink and food, 57(42.2%) choose the event program, 10(7.4%) choose the facilities at the events, 26(19.3%) choose the location of the events, 28(20.7%) choose the ticket price while

5(3.7%) choose others reasons like when a friend is attending and people in attendance for the event.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Responses Relating to Relevant Variables

The table below shows response to the study variables (question items) relating to strategic marketing and event management. Respondents indicated whether they “strongly agree”, “agree”, “Neither agree nor disagree”, “disagree”, or “strongly disagree” with the statements provided. Below are the tables showing the frequency and percentage distribution of responses along with their interpretations. The table 4.4.1 below indicate responses to questions relating to Price Strategy:

Table 4.4.1 Opinion of Respondent on Price Strategy

S/N	Price Strategy		Frequency	%
Q1	Prices for the events were really high	Strongly disagree	9	6.7
		Disagree	11	8.1
		Neither agree nor disagree	18	13.3
		Agree	38	28.1
		Strongly agree	59	43.7
		Total	135	100
Q2	Prices of an event determine if I go or not	Strongly disagree	10	7.4
		Disagree	3	2.2
		Neither agree nor disagree	15	11.1
		Agree	35	25.9
		Strongly agree	72	53.3
		Total	135	100
Q3	The events I go for are worth the price	Strongly disagree	13	9.6
		Disagree	23	17.0
		Neither agree nor disagree	20	14.8
		Agree	37	27.4
		Strongly agree	42	31.1
		Total	135	100

From table 4.4.1, the first question indicates that 9(6.7%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 11(8.1%) disagree, 18(13.3%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 38(28.1%) and 59(43.7%) respectively. Question 2, indicates that 10(7.4%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 3(2.2%) disagree, 15(11.1%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 35(25.9%) and 72(53.3%) respectively. From question 3, it indicates that 13(9.5%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 23(17.0%) disagree, 20(14.8%) neither agree nor disagree, while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 37(27.4%) and 42(31.1%) respectively.

The table 4.4.2 below indicate responses to questions relating to promotional strategy:

Table 4.4.2 Opinion of Respondent on Promotional Strategy

S/N	Promotional Strategy		Frequency	%
Q1	The event communication to the customers what to expect	Strongly disagree	12	8.9
		Disagree	18	13.3
		Undecided	28	20.7
		Agree	40	29.6
		Strongly agree	37	27.4
		Total	135	100
Q2	The strategic use of advertising improves the competitive advantage of the company	Strongly disagree	8	5.9
		Disagree	5	3.7
		Undecided	20	14.8
		Agree	48	35.6
		Strongly agree	54	40.0
		Total	135	100
Q3	The strategy used to promote an event is suitable for persuading the customers	Strongly disagree	8	5.9
		Disagree	10	7.4
		Undecided	26	19.3
		Agree	48	35.6
		Strongly agree	43	31.9
		Total	135	100

From table 4.4.1, the first question indicates that 12(8.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 18(13.3%) disagree, 28(20.7%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 40(29.6%) and

37(27.4%) respectively. Question 2, indicates that 8(5.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 5(3.7%) disagree, 20(14.8%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 48(35.6%) and 54(40.0%) respectively. From question 3, it indicates that 8(5.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 10(7.4%) disagree, 26(19.3%) neither agree nor disagree, while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 48(35.6%) and 43(31.9%) respectively.

The table 4.4.3 below indicate responses to questions relating to product strategy:

Table 4.4.3 Opinion of Respondent on Product Strategy

S/N	Product Strategy		Frequency	%
Q1	The products provided are unique among all events	Strongly disagree	19	14.1
		Disagree	37	27.4
		Undecided	45	33.3
		Agree	20	14.8
		Strongly agree	14	10.4
		Total	135	100
Q2	The products provided are made to fit customers' needs	Strongly disagree	8	5.9
		Disagree	1	0.7
		Undecided	13	9.6
		Agree	22	16.3
		Strongly agree	91	67.4
		Total	135	100
Q3	Every event has a distinct product that they render	Strongly disagree	12	8.9
		Disagree	15	11.1
		Undecided	24	17.8
		Agree	44	32.6
		Strongly agree	40	29.6
		Total	135	100

From table 4.4.1, the first question indicates that 19(14.1%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 37(27.4%) disagree, 45(33.3%) neither agree nor disagree which represents the majority while 20(14.8%) agree and 14(10.4%) strongly agree to the statement. Question 2, indicates that 8(5.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 1(0.7%) disagree, 13(9.6%) neither agree nor disagree, 22(16.3%) agree and while a majority 91(67.4%) strongly agree. From question 3, it indicates that 12(8.9%) of the respondents strongly disagree,

15(11.1%) disagree, 24(17.8%) neither agree nor disagree, while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 44(32.6%) and 40(29.6%) respectively.

The table 4.4.4 below indicate responses to questions relating to Event Management:
Table 4.4.4 Opinion of Respondent on Event Management

S/N	Event Management		Frequency	%
Q1	Efficient use of pricing strategy facilitates the event sales growth	Strongly disagree	10	7.4
		Disagree	19	14.1
		Undecided	20	14.8
		Agree	48	35.6
		Strongly agree	38	28.1
		Total	135	100
Q2	Customers continue to attend events from a specific organizer because of the strategy used in promoting the event	Strongly disagree	13	9.6
		Disagree	11	8.1
		Undecided	26	19.3
		Agree	43	31.9
		Strongly agree	42	31.1
		Total	135	100
Q3	Every event has a distinct product that they render	Strongly disagree	10	7.4
		Disagree	27	20.0
		Undecided	23	17.0
		Agree	41	30.4
		Strongly agree	34	25.2
		Total	135	100

From table 4.4.1, the first question indicates that 10(7.4%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 19(14.1%) disagree, 20(14.8%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 48(35.6%) and 38(28.1%) respectively. Question 2, indicates that 13(9.6%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 11(8.1%) disagree, 26(19.3%) neither agree nor disagree while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 43(31.9%) and 42(31.1%) respectively. From question 3, it indicates that 10(7.4%) of the respondents strongly disagree, 27(20.0%) disagree, 23(17.0%) neither agree nor disagree, while a majority either agree or strongly agree with the statement which represented 41(30.4%) and 34(25.2%) respectively.

4.5 Hypotheses Testing

All the hypothesis raised in this study were tested using regression analysis. The table below present the result of the regression analysis for each of the hypothesis.

H₀₁- Pricing strategy does not play a significant role in the success of event management.

The analysis indicate that the R square is 0.139 if expressed as percentage will indicate 13.9% which signifies that 13.9% variance in event management can be explained by pricing strategy. With a significance level (sig =.000) and F value of 21.468, this indicates that the P-value is ≤ 0.05 . Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, pricing strategy plays a significant role in the success of event management.

H₀₂- Product differentiation does not impact event management.

The analysis indicates that the R square is 0.418 if expressed as a percentage will indicate 41.8% which signifies that 41.8% variance in event management can be explained by product differentiation. With a significance level (sig =.000) and F value of 95.410, this indicates that the P-value is ≤ 0.05 . Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, product differentiation has an impact on event management.

H₀₃- Promotional strategy does not affect event management.

The analysis indicates that the R square is 0.252 if expressed as a percentage will indicate 25.2% which signifies that 25.2% variance in event management can be explained by promotional strategy. With a significance level (sig =.000) and F value of 44.777, this indicates that the P-value is ≤ 0.05 . Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, the promotional strategy affects event management.

Table 4.5.1 Hypothesis Summary

HYPOTHESES	TOOLS	F-Value	R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Df	P-Value	Decision
H ₀₁ - Pricing strategy does not play a significant role in the success of event management	Regression Analysis	21.468	.139	1.15337	1	.000	Rejected null hypothesis
H ₀₂ - Product differentiation does not impact event management	Regression Analysis	95.410	.418	.96794	1	.000	Rejected null hypothesis
H ₀₃ - Promotional strategy does not affect event management	Regression Analysis	44.777	.252	1.10106	1	.000	Rejected null hypothesis

5. DISCUSSION

The findings state that from the three marketing strategies looked at in this study (price, promotion, product) all of them lead to the success of an event. Although still based on the analysis, there are other factors to consider which ranges from what type of event is being held and what the audience considers necessary when choosing an event.

The findings from this study show that pricing strategy plays a significant role in the success of event management. As such the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate was accepted. This corroborates with most researchers as Muola (2017) stated that pricing plays a significant role in organizational performance because of completion. It

corroborates with Wangui et al., (2018) who stated in their findings that price has a positive effect on organizational growth. Although based on the frequency distribution of the respondents, the event program was an even greater factor than the price for the success of the event. The choice of event program over price could be as a result of the unique country factor of culture as it relates to events been held.

According to the findings of product differentiation impact on event management the findings corroborates with that of Anthony (2018) who mentioned in his study that there is a positive relationship between product differentiation and organizational performance. Also, product differentiation is a significant element of business performance and this is because it acts as a bridge connecting the significant impact of customer satisfaction with business performance as such the alternate hypothesis which states that product differentiation impact event management was accepted while the null was rejected.

From the study findings of what extent promotional strategy affect event management, it was discovered that promotional strategy affects event management. These findings corroborate with that of Dewi, Yunia and Dina (2018) which says that increasing the promotion given through promotional strategy like advertising, personal selling and sales promotion can increase consumer interest which in turn leads to satisfaction of that customer. Sagal (2015) agreed to the findings that advertisement creates brand loyalty and it also encourages consumers to purchase the product or service repeatedly which does not give competitors an edge. The findings from researchers like Gandhi and Hairuddin (2018) is also similar to this finding as their study indicate that the variable “promotion and product differentiation” partially and simultaneously have a positive effect on the purchasing decision of consumers.

6. CONCLUSION

The major aim of this research study is to determine the role of strategic marketing in successful event management. Chapter one of this study was about the introduction, background of the study, research aims and objectives, research questions, research hypotheses and limitation of the study. Chapter two extensively discussed the literature of the study, which includes various empirical research that was carried out. The third chapter contains the methodology, research method and design, sample size and techniques, data collection and research instruments, data analysis method, research ethics, procedure and timeline. Chapter four contains the presentation and analysis of data collected in the study through the questionnaire distribution and hypotheses testing. Chapter five talked about the discussion of findings.

Companies should set up a set of strategic marketing mix such as price, promotion, product and distribution in order to have better performance than their competitors because the role of the marketing mix as a strategy to better improve the company's performance is vital. Setting a less strategic means of marketing could lead to the event forfeiting of the profits and loss of customers to competitors because more ticket sales do not necessarily mean an increase in the profit margin of the event.

Based on the empirical and theoretical findings, this study answered three questions (1) What is the role of pricing strategy in the success of event management? (2) How does product differentiation impact event management? (3) To what extent does the promotional strategy effect event management? The study answered the first question by stating that pricing is an important aspect to the marketing mix and any organizations mix but not a necessary prerequisite for success in an event. It also stated that for any

organization to have an effective pricing strategy there are some internal and external factors which have to be considered.

The second question demonstrated that a unique product or services are what can keep an event successful and give it a competitive advantage. Therefore, from the result of the study, a company which is innovative with its products and services tend to have more success in their events. However, in addition to answering the second question, the hypothesis was confirmed which means that product strategy plays a role in the success of event management. Finally, analysis from the study revealed that question three was answered by the hypothesis findings confirming that the promotional strategy affects event management. The study's additional results suggest that promotional channels such as the usage of tv, radio, journals, and magazines foster the rise in the event. Successful promotional strategies lead to increasing visibility about the goods the event sells and to improving revenue by drawing buyers. However, when holding conferences consumers have multiple standards. Therefore, the event centres are confronted with a big obstacle to boost expected efficiency rather than their aspirations resulting in the satisfaction of the consumer.

6.1 Suggestion for Further Research

This research offers insight into marketing strategy and its role on the success of event management, other areas remain uncertain and need evaluation through future studies. Further study can be done on both public and privately owned event centres in the hospitality industry as well as various types of events to accurately identify the right marketing strategies for the diverse types of events. Also, a comparative study could be done to know which of these marketing strategies benefit event organizations more. Further study can focus on each of the marketing strategy mix price, promotion, products

and how they improve customer experience. To buttress on this extensive research can be done on how price affects event management as a whole or streamline it to how it affects just the growth of the business. Also, research can be carried out on how only the products delivered at the event which could be in form of event program or souvenirs shared could affect the audience preference about the choice of event to attend in the future. Further study can compare different marketing mix in various industries or event types to know which mix is of more benefit to the event manager. Also, the research could be done to know how an event is managed on the international level from country to a country whereby language, culture and gender are seen as a factor for the success of an event.

6.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributed to knowledge by providing empirical findings validating the role of marketing strategy in successful event management. This study also extended the body of knowledge by identifying that pricing strategy on its own cannot significantly influence the success of an event without other influencing factors been considered such as: what type of event is been held and what the audience considers necessary when choosing an event.

It also adds to the body of literature by empirically validating that events that use product/services offered will have a higher success rate than events that use price and promotion to entice customers. It also contributes to the body of knowledge by focussing on marketing strategy in event management as most studies in western countries focused on other industry such as retail, banking, manufacturing, telecommunication.

References

- Alrfou, A. and Trawneh, K., 2010. To what extent can a company achieve a competitive advantage through job development? *Accounting and Business Department, Tafila Technical University, Tafilah, Jordan*, 23(3), pp. 189–196.
- Anthony, A.A., 2018. Relationship between product differentiation strategies and organizational performance in Sameer Africa Kenya limited. *British Journal of Marketing Studies*, 6(3), pp. 60-72.
- Baker, T., Collier, D. and Jayaraman, V., 2017. A new pricing strategy evaluation model. *International Journal of Operational Research*, 29(3), pp. 295–316.
- Benn, S., Edwards, M. and Williams, T. 2014. *Organizational change for corporate sustainability*. Routledge.
- Bowdin, G., Allen, J., O’Toole, W., Harris, R. and McDonnell, I. 2006. Events management. Elsevier, second.
- Bowdin, G., Allen, J., O’Toole, W., Harris, R. and McDonnell, I. 2012. Events management. Routledge: London and New York, 3 ed.
- Bramwell, B. (1997). Strategic planning before and after a mega-event. *Tourism Management*, 18(3), pp. 167-176.
- Burke, W.W. 2017. *Organization change: Theory and practice*. Sage publications.
- Burke, W.W. and Noumair, D.A. 2015. *Organization Development (Paperback): A Process of Learning and Changing*. FT Press.
- Chen, Y. 2011. Managing mega-event strategy: The case of Root Rotterdam Planning International, 26(3).
- Cummings, T.G. and Worley, C.G. 2014. *Organization development and change*. Cengage learning.
- Damm, S. 2011. Event management: How to apply best practices to small scale events. Diplomica Verlag GmbH, Germany.
- Dolgui, A. and Proth, J.M., 2010. *Supply Chain Engineering: Useful Methods and Techniques*, Springer, Berlin.

- Enitilo, O., Ajayi, E.I. and Famuagun, F.Y., 2017. Influence of promotional activities on consumers' patronage of insurance business in Ado Ekiti Metropolis, Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 5(1), pp. 414-436.
- Eventbrite UK. 2020. *How To Create A Smart Event Pricing Strategy For Your Event - Eventbrite*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/blog/academy/winning-event-pricing-strategy/>> [Accessed 3 August 2020].
- Fenich, G.G., Scoott-Halsell, S., Ogbeide, G. and Hashimoto, K. 2014. What the millennial generation from around the world prefers in their meetings, conventions and events. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 15(3), pp. 236-241.
- Ferdinand, N. and Kitchin, P.J. 2012. *Event management: An International approach*. Sage Publications: London.
- Galpin, T.J. 2014. *The complete guide to mergers and acquisitions: Process tools to support M&A integration at every level*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Gassmann, O., Frankenberger, K. and Csik, M. 2014. *The business model navigator: 55 models that will revolutionise your business*. Pearson UK.
- Gets, D. 2012. *Event Studies: Theory, Research and Policy for planned events*. Routledge: London and New York, 2 ed.
- Getz, D. 2008. Event tourism: Definition, evolution and research. *Tourism Management*, 29, pp. 403-428.
- Getz, D. 2018. *Event Impact Assessment*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers.
- Getz, D., Svensson, B., Peterssen, R. and Gunnervall, A. 2012. Hallmark Events: Definition, goals and planning process. *International Journal of Event Management Research*, 7(1/2).
- Goldblatt, J. 1997. *Special Events: Best practices in modern event management*. Van Nostrand Reinhold: New York, USA.
- Huy, Q.N., Corley, K.G. and Kraatz, M.S. 2014. From support to mutiny: Shifting legitimacy judgments and emotional reactions impacting the implementation of radical change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57(6), pp.1650-1680.
- Kago, Z.W., Gichunge, E.M. and Baimwera, B., 2018. Relationship between competitive strategies and organizational performance of petroleum companies in Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 3(2), pp. 407-429.
- Kerzner, H. 2017. *Project management: a systems approach to planning, scheduling, and controlling*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kerzner, H. 2018. *Project management best practices: Achieving global excellence*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kerzner, H. 2019. *Using the project management maturity model: strategic planning for project management*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kotler, P. and Keller, K. L., 2012. *Framework for marketing management*. Pearson Education India.

- Kotler, P. and Keller, K., 2012. *Marketing Management*; 14th ed., Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Kumar, S. and Patra, S., 2017. Does promotion mix really help to enhance brand equity? *Indian Journal of Commerce & Management Studies*, 8(2), pp. 80-86.
- Lei, H. and Liping, O., 2012. Studies on time-lag effect of corporate Performance influenced by competitive strategy', *Journal of Cross-cultural communication*, 8(6), pp. 79- 84.
- Mair, J. and Weber, K. 2019. Event and festival research: a review and research directions. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 10(3), pp. 209-216.
- Nanda, V. 2016. *Quality management system handbook for product development companies*. CRC Press.
- Olson, E.M., Slater, S.F and Hult, T.M 2005. The performance implications of fit among business strategy, marketing organization structure and strategic behaviour. *Journal of Marketing*, 69, pp. 49-65.
- Onyago, J. J., 2017. Influence of cost leadership, differentiation and focus strategies on firm competitiveness: The case of BOC Kenya limited. United States international university Africa.
- Onyejiaku, C.C., Ghasi, N.C. and Okwor, H., 2018. Do promotional strategies affect sales growth of manufacturing firms in South East Nigeria? *European Journal of Management and Marketing Studies*, 3(1), pp. 43-60.
- Page, S.J., Connell, J. 2012. *The Routledge Handbook of Events*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Paswan, A.K, Blankson, C. and Guzman, F. 2011. Relationalism in marketing channels and marketing strategy. *European Journal of Marketing*, 45(3), pp. 311-333.
- Pereira, T.F. 2017. Lusoforma: the success of its competitive strategy. Nova school of Business and Economics.
- Piekkari, R. and Welch, C. 2006. Reflections on Using research methods in International Business. *LTA*, 4(6), pp. 565-574.
- Porter, M.E., 2008. The five competitive forces that shape strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(1), pp. 79–93.
- Ratchford, B. 2020. The history of academic research in marketing and its implications for the future. *Spanish Journal of Marketing*, 24(1), pp. 3-36.
- Ross, D.F. 2015. *Distribution Planning and control: managing in the era of supply chain management*. Springer.
- Ryan, W., Fenton, A., Ahmed, W. and Scarf, P. 2020. Recognizing events 4.0: the digital maturity of events. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 11(1), pp. 47-68.
- Sadd, D. and Musikavanhu, R. 2018. A comparison of event impacts: Zimbabwe and the UK. *Events Management*, 22(2), pp. 199-2012.

- Sagal, O. L., 2015. The impact of advertisement on sales: Case study in some selected telecommunication companies in Somalia. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7(36), pp. 49-57.
- Schermerhorn Jr, J.R. and Bachrach, D.G. 2017. *Exploring management*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Silverman, D. 2016. *Qualitative research*. Sage Publications: 4 ed: London.
- Slotweg, E. and Rowson, B. 2018. My generation: A review of marketing strategies on different age groups. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 8(2), pp. 85-92.
- Stanley, K., Fred, M. and Gregory, N. 2016. The effects of product differentiation strategy on corporate growth in selected microfinance institutions in selected microfinance institution in Kenya. *International Journal for Research in Business, Management and Accounting*, 2(6), pp. 13-28.
- Stanley, S., Olson, E. and Finnegan, C. 2011. A business strategy, marketing organization culture and performance. *Marketing Letter*, 22(3), pp. 227-242.
- Verzuh, E. 2015. *The fast-forward MBA in project management*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Virginia, N.G., 2017. Differentiation strategy and performance of large rice milling factories in Kirinyaga county, Kenya. Kenyatta University.
- Wale, P.S. and Boush, D.M. 2014. Why, how and to what effect do firms deviate from their intended marketing plans? Towards a taxonomy of post plan improvisations. *European Journal of Marketing*, 48(3/4), pp. 453-476.
- Wang, Y. and Jin, X. 2019. Event-based destination marketing: The role of mega-events. *Event Management*, 23(1) pp. 109-118.
- Wangondu, W.C., 2016. Marketing strategies and customer satisfaction: A case study of the institute of Executives Coaches-East Africa. United States international University-Africa.
- Xu, Y.H., Wong, I.A. and Tan, X.S. 2016. Exploring event bundling: the strategy and its impacts. *Tourism Management*, 52, pp. 455-467.
- Zakaria, A.N.I., Mahat, N.A., Kamaruddin, M., Mud, N.N.N. and Rahman, R.A., 2018. The effectiveness of promotion strategy influence consumer buying behaviour of Menaraoptomery. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(8), pp. 756-762.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am a Masters student of Marketing at National College of Ireland (NCI). As part of my curriculum, I am developing a study on the role of strategic marketing in Successful Event Management. All responses giving by you will be strictly kept confidential and used for academic purpose only.

Section A: Personal Details

Please tick () your choice from the alternative answers provided. Thank you

1. Age: a) below 20 () b) 21 – 30 () c) 31 – 40 () d) 41 – 50 ()
e) 51 and above ()
2. Gender: a) Female () b) Male () c) Others ()
3. Highest Academic qualification: High School () B.Sc. () M.Sc. ()
Ph.D. ()
4. Marital Status: a) Married () b) Single () c) Divorced () d) Others.....
5. Residence: a) Ireland () b) UK () c) Other countries in Europe ()
d) Outside Europe ()

Section B:

Please tick () your choice from the alternative answers provided. Thank you

6. Which type of event did you go for in the last 12 months?

- a) Business () b) Sports () c) Festivals () d) Scholars e) Wedding ()

7. How did you hear about the event?

- a) Word of mouth () b) Company newsletter () c) Direct email ()
d) University ()

8. How often do you go to events?

- a) 1 to 3 times yearly () b) 3 to 6 times yearly () c) above 6 times yearly ()

9. What do you consider necessary when you are choosing an event?

- a) Location () b) Event Program () c) Drinks and food () d) Ticket price ()
e) Facilities ()

Please tick for each of the following statements the extent to which you agree with the items against your choice: Strongly agree= SA, Agree= A, Undecided= U, Disagree= D or Strongly Disagree= SD.

a. Pricing strategy

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
i	prices for the events were really high					
ii	prices of an event determine if I go or not					
iii	the events I go for are worth the price					

b. Promotional strategy

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
i	The event communicates to the customers what to expect					
ii	The strategic use of advertising improves the competitive advantage of your company					
iii	The strategy used to promote an event is suitable for persuading the customers					

c. Product Differentiation

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
i	The products provided are unique among all events					
ii	The products provided are made to fit customers' needs					
iii	Every event has a distinct product that they render					

d. Event Management

	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD
--	-------	----	---	---	---	----

i	Efficient use of pricing strategy facilitates the event sales growth					
ii	Customers continue to attend events from a specific organizer because of the strategy used in promoting the event.					
iii	The event organisers take feedback from customers on regular basis so as to improve and differentiate its services					

APPENDIX 2

Hypothesis 1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate
1	.373	.139	.133	1.15337

a. Predictors: (Constant), Price

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.558	1	28.558	21.468	.000 ^b
	Residual	176.924	133	1.330		
	Total	205.481	134			

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Price

Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficient Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.956	.375		5.223	.000

	Price	.432	.093	.373	4.633	.000
--	-------	------	------	------	-------	------

a. Dependent Variable: Sales Growth

Hypothesis 2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate
1	.502	.252	.246	1.10106

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	54.285	1	54.285	44.777	.000 ^b
	Residual	161.241	133	1.212		
	Total	215.526	134			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product

Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficient Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.657	.429		1.529	.129
	Product	.777	.116	.502	6.692	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

Hypothesis 3

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate

1	.646	.418	.413	.96794
----------	-------------	-------------	-------------	---------------

a. Predicators: (Constant), Promotion

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	89.391	1	89.391	95.410	.000^b
	Residual	124.609	133	.937		
	Total	214.000	134			

a. Dependent Variable: Customer

b. Predicators: (Constant), Promotion

Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficient Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.409	.344		1.190	.236
	Promotion	.862	.088	.646	9.768	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty