Knowledge Management in Event Organisations

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The Events Management Theory and Methods Series

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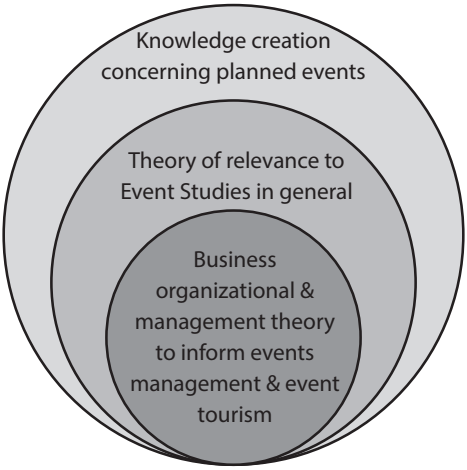
Introduction to the Events Management Theory and Methods Series

Event management as a field of study and professional practice has its textbooks with plenty of models and advice, a body of knowledge (EMBOK), competency standards (MBECS) and professional associations with their codes of conduct. But to what extent is it truly an applied management field? In other words, where is the management theory in event management, how is it being used, and what are the practical applications?

Event tourism is a related field, one that is defined by the roles events play in tourism and economic development. The primary consideration has always been economic, although increasingly events and managed event portfolios meet more diverse goals for cities and countries. While the economic aspects have been well developed, especially economic impact assessment and forecasting, the application of management theory to event tourism has not received adequate attention.

In this book series we launch a process of examining the extent to which mainstream theory is being employed to develop event-specific theory, and to influence the practice of event management and event tourism. This is a very big task, as there are numerous possible theories, models and concepts, and virtually unlimited advice available on the management of firms, small and family businesses, government agencies and not-for-profits. Inevitably, we will have to be selective.

The starting point is theory. Scientific theory must both explain a phenomenon, and be able to predict what will happen. Experiments are the dominant form of classical theory development. But for management, predictive capabilities are usually lacking; it might be wiser to speak of theory in development, or theory fragments. It is often the process of theory development that marks research in management, including the testing of hypotheses and the formulation of propositions. Models, frameworks, concepts and sets of propositions are all part of this development.



The diagram illustrates this approach. All knowledge creation has potential application to management, as does theory from any discipline or field. The critical factor for this series is how the theory and related methods can be applied. In the core of this diagram are management and business theories which are the most directly pertinent, and they are often derived from foundation disciplines.

All the books in this series will be relatively short, and similarly structured. They are designed to be used by teachers who need theoretical foundations and case studies for their classes, by students in need of reference works, by professionals wanting increased understanding alongside practical methods, and by agencies or associations that want their members and stakeholders to have access to a library of valuable resources. The nature of the series is that as it grows, components can be assembled by request. That is, users can order a book or collection of chapters to exactly suit their needs.

All the books will introduce the theory, show how it is being used in the events sector through a literature review, incorporate examples and case studies written by researchers and/or practitioners, and contain methods that can be used effectively in the real world.

Preface

Key objectives of the book

- Inform researchers, students and event managers on knowledge management and knowledge practices applied to events.
- Introduce knowledge management concepts, frameworks and models that can be adapted to a range of event organisations.
- Provide a textbook for event management students with study and discussion questions at the end of each chapter, as well as a useful resource and reference for event practitioners.
- Utilise case studies to explore theories and illustrate key points.
- Connect readers to the research literature through the provision of additional readings.

Organisation of the book

The first two chapters of this book provide an introduction to key terms and definitions, and then highlight specific knowledge management challenges for event organisations, such as the 'pulsating' nature of events and the lack of time and resources for knowledge management. Chapter 3 explores knowledge activities and knowledge management frameworks and models that can be applied to events, while Chapter 4 introduces the practice-based understanding of knowledge management and also explains how this can be used in an events context. Important structural and cultural elements of knowledge management are discussed in Chapter 5 and 6 respectively. The question of power and knowledge is explored further in Chapter 7, while Chapter 8 introduces Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge as an alternative approach to knowledge management. Lastly, Chapter 9 provides practical implications and recommendations for event organisers, as well as suggestions for future research on knowledge management in event organisations.

Stated at the beginning of each chapter are Learning Objectives, while Study and Discussion questions are presented at the end of each chapter. These are intended for students to apply some of the concepts and theories to their own event examples, and to reflect on their experiences

of working for or volunteering at events. They can also be used as exam or essay questions. Suggestions for additional readings are provided at the end of each chapter, where some of the key elements of knowledge management have previously been researched in an events context.

The Queensland Music Festival case study has been incorporated throughout some of the chapters of the book to present best practice examples of how to effectively and efficiently manage knowledge in a festival organisation.

About the author

Raphaela Stadler is a Senior Lecturer in Event Management at the University of Hertfordshire, U.K. Her PhD (Griffith University, Australia) investigated different relational knowledge management practices within a festival organisation in Australia, and she has published numerous journal articles and book chapters on knowledge management/transfer in festival organisations, knowledge management rituals, power and knowledge, as well as community empowerment and cultural development. More recently, Raphaela has been interested in events, festivals and questions of well-being and quality-of-life. In this context, she is currently researching event attendance and family quality-of-life, and the impact of event and tourism experiences upon families with children with autism and children with type 1 diabetes. She is also involved in research on arts participation and memory creation in order to combat loneliness and isolation amongst people over 70.