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Event Management Strategy of TBM Evolution Group

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis entitled “Event Management Strategy of TBM Evolution Group”. I duly marked out all quotations. The used literature and sources are stated in the attached list of references.

In Prague on

Signature

Student's name

Acknowledgement

I hereby wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to the supervisor of my thesis,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRM	Customers Relationship Management
EU	End User
LGP	Lead Generation Process
MB	Marketing Brief
R&D	Research & Development
SB	Sales Brief
SP	Solution Provider
SSP	Sponsor Solution Provider
ST	Sales Team

Introduction

The event industry develops promptly and reflects all customers' demands. Perhaps, the evolution of events imitates the progress of nations and country's economy. Overall, all changes in the world, political, social or other, impact indirectly on growth of that industry. Could you imagine having a company which organizes children birthdays during post Second War period in any European country? The answer would be definitely "no". Back in those times, almost every family was touched by war, poverty, and hunger. There was a demand for events which educate people and raise countries and their economies, which were destroyed by war. It is possible to assume that the development of the event industry mirrors the situation of a country and level of prosperity. In addition, the richness of a nation or a country may be defined by the number and sizes of events hosted by it. Daily, the number of events and the specialization of them extremely grow in prosperous countries and that pushes new players come to the arena and be involved in management of these activities. Therefore, the process of event creation and management does not follow certain written rules and is influenced by many factors or criteria and requires each time individual and exclusive approach.

Generally, all events require the process of organization and planning, not depending on the kind of event and the size. The term "event" has a broad meaning, but in the scope of this thesis, it is referring only to the business area and excludes natural phenomena and other situations, which do not require planned gathering of audience or public.

The primary objective of the empirical analysis in this thesis is to define problematic areas of the local based event company named TBM Evolution Group. Furthermore, it suggests solutions, which may improve the event management processes within this firm. Therefore, an overview of a company and its operations are presented as a case study and the research methods to be used are analysis and synthesis. The information collected for empirical part is solely primary data. In addition, the whole empirical part is described from the perspective of an intern, who was involved only in some certain projects and stages of the event management process of the company and includes observations of full employed colleagues and interviews with them. Another objective of the paper is to identify the processes of event management which are followed by TBM Group similarly to theoretical model on event

planning and creation. Generally, the goal of the thesis is to educate the reader about the event industry and event management on the global scale. The theoretical and empirical chapters attempt to disclose this topic.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The theoretical framework is presented in chapters one and two, which helps to understand theories about events and conferences. Chapter one familiarizes readers with the definitions of events, their classification, main players, etc. It is referred to different sources and authors, who are specialized in this topic. Chapter two explains the process of event management which is divided into event planning and implementation & follow-up stages. As the event planning phase is quite complex and consists of various activities, it involves three separate management processes presented in detail.

The next chapter is empirical and focuses solely on TBM Evolution Group and its operations. Firstly, there is an overview of the company, history and the general information about its activity and organizational structure. Once readers know the company and its business scope, the TBM Group's event management process is redefined from the ground up. Therefore, it will be possible for readers to compare which stages of event production are correlating with the theoretical framework. Deductive research approach is applied in this thesis because the case of the TBM Evolution Group and their events are given after the general information on event management process. The study of TBM strategy and policy will help to define weaknesses of the company, which going to be shared with top management and should not be neglected by them. The recommendations will be covering not only event management processes but also general organizational advancement. In the summary of the thesis, all suggestions for TBM are going to highlighted.

The empirical framework is planning to be drawn up solely from data of TBM Evolution Group in written and oral forms. In order to obtain verbal information, several meetings and interviews with marketing manager and top management are scheduled along with participation in marketing and sales briefings. The analysis of TBM event management process is done by researching the Innovative Tire Development Series, one of the most successful conferences organized by TBM and held every six months since 2015. Therefore, all written literature including past briefs, programs and brochures will be shared with the author.

The main limitation of the research is the inability to evaluate the financial management and planning of TBM Group. According to their policy, financial data cannot be disclosed, and only top management obtains data on profit and expense for each event. Nevertheless, as the part of financial management, it will be allowed to present all types of sponsorship that the company offers for their clients and the participation fees for different kind of attendees.

Most of information in the thesis were taken from TBM Evolution Group's internal documents and therefore, they are to be used only for education purposes within universities.

1 Introduction to Event Management

1.1 Definition and Classification of Events

The modern life is completely broken up by events of all kinds, and events have always played a vital role in human history through to the present day. Events might be seen as artefacts of human culture that lately switched into a growing and inspiring industry. Before the analysis of the business environment in which the event industry deeply operates, it is crucial to define the term ‘event’, different classifications of events and the origins of the event industry.

Definition of Events

There are many definitions of ‘event’ and they depend on the viewpoint of the person defining it. Various academics present their detailed definitions, but the most known, who developed those concepts and published many articles are Dr. Joe Jeff Goldblatt and Prof. Donald Getz. (Quinn, 2013) Commonly, event professionals do not consider natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms and earthquakes, as events, but they define to planned gatherings of people as events. The participants of those gatherings are various groups of people, including family, friends or work colleagues. It is not only about the people you know, but gatherings might involve an aggregation or venue with individuals unknown to each other and that is a case for live events. All gatherings are usually planned and have various purposes, as an example to entertain or to educate.

According to Donald Getz, the term ‘event’ is defined by a combination of four characteristics. To begin with, events are temporary as they possess a finite beginning and end. Managed events have a start time, while spontaneous events take place without precise planning. Typically, the successful delivery of a planned event requires to plan times and programs, but many events are not planned at all, which are informal with ‘ordinary’ people involved. There is a difference between permanent attractions and events, which is characterized by limited duration and event can last for several weeks, or a year. (Getz, 2007)

The following feature of events is the gathering of people. The number of attendees may vary significantly, and it might depend whether this event is free or requires the purchase of a ticket. Additionally, modern technologies have impact on gatherings, comparing to age-old practices. Currently, people have the possibility to gather without travelling because of

the ability to share information through media from widespread geographic locations. Such online meetings, known as web conferences, are valuable for many businesses due to the advantage of real-time and being recordable. The only limitation of online gathering is the absence of face-to-face interactions.

Events are represented by a set of rituals, symbols and artefacts which indicate meaning. When talking about a wedding event, a person keeps in mind various costumes, food and drink, speeches and behaviors that are also related to the meaning of the culture. Thus, the third characteristic is *events are often displaying rituals*. Finally, events are held in different locations, at different time and for different reasons, and even the same annual event may differ in its features. Whatever the event, it supposed to be memorable or special and has a predetermined life cycle with a planned start and end date, as it was mentioned before.

The prominent events management authors have their own investigations concerning defining an event, which some of them are presented below:

“An occurrence at a given place and time; a special set of circumstances; a noteworthy occurrence.” (Getz, 2007, p. 18)

“An occasion, a gathering of people at a certain place at a certain time for a specific reason.” (Kilkenny, 2011, p. 31)

“Those non routine occasions set apart from the normal activity of daily life of a group of people.” (Shone & Parry, 2004, p. 3)

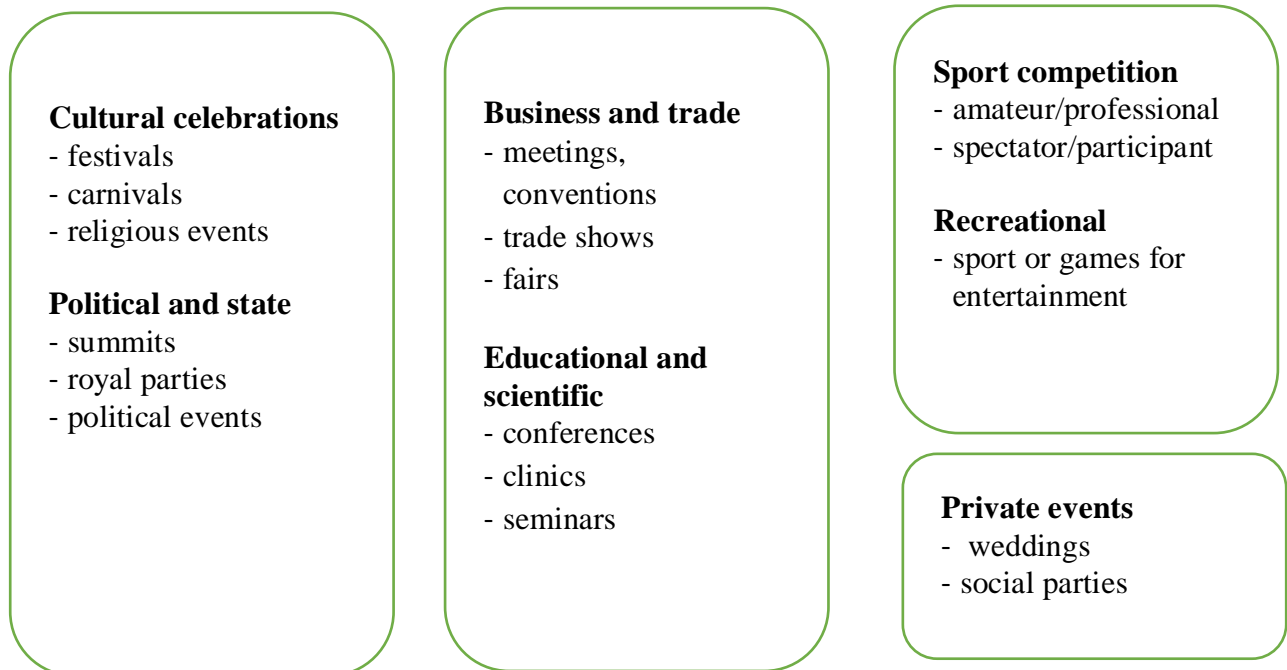
“A gathering of human beings, generally lasting from a few hours to a few days, designed to celebrate, honor, discuss, sell, teach about, encourage, observe, or influence human endeavors.” (Matthews, 2008, p. 2)

Classification and Categories of Events

The events can be classified in different ways, mainly based on the event objective components which are built of purpose, people and place. Furthermore, events may be categorized based on their size, form and content.

Primary, the aims and objectives should be considered in order to define the event type. The most used method of categorizing events is by type (Figure 1) and was presented by Getz, who introduced eight different types of events. (Getz, 2005, p. 7)

Figure 1. Typology of Planned Events



Source: Getz, 2007, p. 404

The various types have different purposes and programs – some are public celebration and other are for entertainment, competition, business and socializing. (Getz, 2007, p. 404)

Another classification was introduced by Shore and Parry, which states that the special event categorization depends on the concept and highlighted events like leisure, personal, cultural and organizational. (Shone & Parry, 2001, p. 4) Such events should be set apart from the routine life and provide experience of interacting with people.

For comparison, it is helpful to show a third version of event classification that can be broken down into five categories: religious, political, social, educational, and commercial. (Matthews, 2008). Since ancient time, religion continues to be one of the reasons for some special events. Due to historical religious events people preserve Christmas or Easter events, baptism and confirmation in the Christian religion, marriages among all religions, and funerals in all societies. Political events are related to demonstration of the power of the

ruler. In the past, those special events were military victory parades or gladiatorial combat in the Roman empire, whereas today politics is not so vivid in special events. Nevertheless, presidential inauguration ceremonies and coronations require significant planning and organization. Social events gather people with celebrations of common cultural and community ties, including graduations, reunions, cultural festivals, etc. Surprisingly, educational special events have undergone significant changes through time, starting as the means of educating the populace about their own history and instructing them how to follow the approved societal norms. Currently, the context of educational events is focused on the exchange or presentation of knowledge during industry-specific conferences and trade shows. Improved transportation and communication technology lead to easier movement of people and transportation, thus increasing demand for such kind of events. Lastly, the main reason for events is that recently they have become almost totally commercial. The reasons for handling commercial events are diverse, but it is all about selling the company products, in order to advance the image of the company, and to show and enhance the image of the sponsor.

Some events are created for a big audience to increase social media followings, whereas other events are for limited small audiences; certain events stay at people's memory for a long time, whereas others have little impact. A mega event requires several years of organizing committee work for successful planning strategy. Examples of such events are the Olympic Games or the FIFA World Cup.

Events might be also categorized by the size and impact. As stated by the following academic, there are four categories of events – local, major, hall-mark and mega. (Bowdin G. , Allen, Harris, McDonnell, & O'Toole, 2011)

Local events: small events that are held on the local surroundings regularly. The target group are residents and the object is to build and to strengthen the social relationship between residents through fun and entertainment programs. Typically, these events are attractive to local media and involve not a large attendance. Community meeting, BBQ parties, cleaning the park are common kind of local events.

Major events: opposite to local events, these events draw a huge attendance, media coverage, attract more visitors to the region and brings economic benefits. Taking into consideration the size of such events, it is expensive to organize but in the long-run a major event generates boosted visitors spend in local hotels, restaurants, shops, etc. Examples of major events are cultural festivals or an international business convention.

Hall-mark events: “...are those that possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination images become inextricably linked. Hall-mark events are, by definition, permanent ‘institutions’ in their communities or societies.” (Getz, Event Studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events, 2007, p. 24) These events become synonymous with the name of the place, as they are identified with a town, city or region. Melbourne Cup, the world’s leading horseracing event, is an example of hallmark event. This event relates to socio-cultural event and to a destination, thus Melbourne Cup and Melbourne are linked and cannot be separated. (Narayan & Smyth, 2003, pp. 1649-1657)

Mega-events: very large, have impact on the economy of the destination and supported by huge media activity. These events are not organized regularly, mainly once in a lifetime or once in the space of few scheduled years. They target the international tourism market and bring benefits to the economic situation of the country. ‘Mega-events can be described as event that can attract very large numbers of event visitors or have a large cost or physiological effect’. (Tassiopoulus, 2005, p. 12) FIFA World Cup, takes place every four years, is a competitive bid between many different countries and has only one winner. Such mega-event potentially generates significant economic gains, but unwise management of the organizing committee can lead to huge debts. (Cornelissen, 2007, pp. 241-259)

1.2. Conferences as a Special Type of Event

This section deeply examines the events which are called ‘conferences’, their purposes which are the core for the whole planning process and the conference attendees. By term ‘conference’ usually is considered a meeting of a group of people willing to discuss a certain topic. There are similar events, such as symposium, colloquia or convention, which are often mixed up with the conference. The term covers the general concept and conferences have

the distinctive characteristics in terms of size and purpose. For example, convention gathers representatives of several groups, and focused on the massive number of participants. The goal of the conference is to exchange information together with innovative ideas. (Evenues-Marketplace for Meeting and Event Space , 2019)

The Purposes of the Conference

The topics discussed at the conferences can be categorizes according to their purpose. There are defined four purposes of the conferences (Evenues-Marketplace for Meeting and Event Space , 2019):

- An academic conference: is dedicated for meeting of scientists or academicians in order to share the results of their research findings, or to deliver a workshop.
- A business conference: is focused on people coming from the same company or industry and for them it is relevant to argue new trend and opportunities related to their business.
- A trade conference: covers the biggest number of participants and a large scale, as it covers businessmen and the pubic, whose goal is to expand their network with vendors and establish new relationship. The given kind of conference includes workshops and white paper presentation.
- An unconference: is an opposite to traditional conference, which eliminates high costs, top-down organizational hierarchy and sponsored presentations. It avoids a single speaker, has an open mode discussion and all participants have the equal knowledge concerning the topic.

Types of Conferences

Additional classification of conferences is by type themselves. It is proposed to divide conferences as follows (Evenues-Marketplace for Meeting and Event Space , 2019) (Alston, 2019):

- Round table is focused on exchange of thoughts and opinions ensuring that all participants have an eye contact. The number of participants is defined by the available number of sitting places around the table;
- Seminar tends to increase participants' awareness of a particular topic and serves as an educational event, which spreads knowledge among attendees. Such kind of

events are popular in schools and universities, and the number of attendees ranges between five and ten. Mostly, the duration of seminars is one or two hours;

- Symposium lasts usually for one day and is full of presentations and lectures within that day. After each speech, it goes into short discussion of presented materials to the audience;
- Workshop helps attendees to improve practical experience, including demonstration and activities within an event. Additionally, the goal is to create concrete answers to current complications in discussed field.

The Conference Attendee

The list of the people who visit the conference is extensive and includes different titles. (Hurt, 2010)

Registrant: formally registered person for a conference, which is usually not for free.

Attendee: a person who participates in a meeting.

Participant: person that shares or takes part in a meeting.

Learner: someone who is acquiring knowledge, skills, values or preferences through experience or study.

Speaker: a person who gives an oral or poster presentation describing her/his project at a conference and is not considered as a participant.

Lecturer: a speaker who presents a topic to the attendees for learning purposes.

Moderator & Facilitator: individual(s) who lead participants for training purposes; sometimes as a consultant they get paid for their professional services.

Keynote Speaker: delivers the keynote speech to attract more people to attend the conference; he/she is mostly present at academic and business conferences. A successful conference highly depends on that person. Typically, the selected individual is well-known with a deep knowledge about the concerned field.

Plenary Speaker & Facilitator: person that stimulate input and discussion by attendees to come to conclusion for action.

1.3. Structure of Event Clients, Organizers and Suppliers

Today events touch all our lives, thus the scope and scale of the event industry is growing significantly, together with new innovations in event education and greater awareness of the event industry's impacts. For the non-profit sector, events are a source for fundraising, whereas the business sector is focused on product launches, meetings and conference

purposes. The event industry is an exciting and dynamic industry, created opportunities for management professionals in a wide range of settings and attracts people with varied experiences and qualifications.

“Event management is the application of project management to the creation and development of large scale events such as festivals, conferences, ceremonies, formal parties, concerts, or conventions”. (Ramsborg, Miller, Breiter, & Reed, 2008) Generally, event management is about organization and execution with the profitability, depending on the creativity.

Events have always played a significant role, and an event organizer was needed for creation and supervision. For example, in the mid-19th century, many countries held different fairs to present technological developments to the world during industrial revolution. In 1844, the French Industrial Exposition was organized to encourage progressive agricultural and technological improvements in France. Here lay the foundations for forthcoming international fairs and exhibitions. The Great Exhibition, held in London in 1851, gathered about 13,000 exhibitors from all around the world to celebrate the then industrial technology and design. (Shore & Parry, 2010, pp. 10-12)

Structure/ The Players

In a nutshell, the management of events, after getting an order, starts with the process known as pitching for an event. The event company or event manager is responsible for a project report, with the finances involved. This document is applicable for all kinds of events, whether it is for small events such as weddings or birthday parties, or for large one such as trade fairs and exhibitions, or for international concerts/performances.

Successful event management requires a certain set of qualities needed for all departments of specialization. They are as follows:

- Negotiating Skills;
- Creative Skills;
- Convincing Skills;
- Coordinating Skills;
- Planning Skills;

- Executing and implementing skills. (Chaturvedi, 2009, p. 2)

Implementation of all the above-mentioned skills are highly important because this is a people's industry, based solely on the communication at all levels and optimum level of execution. These skills provide a competitive edge to companies over their rivals, thus thousands of professionals working in this industry are paid generously.

As it was defined earlier, an event brings people (attendees) together, but also it can group many other individuals and organizations whose participation and interaction are obvious to ensure the success of the whole celebration or an event. It is possible to identify three groups involved:

- 1) Event clients
- 2) Event organizers
- 3) Event suppliers. (Dowson & Bassett, 2018, pp. 10-11)

Event clients: are the buyers of events and give an order to plan, organize and run the events to event organizers. They are private individuals, who need a professional guideline and expertise by event organizers mostly for weddings and elaborate parties. Usually, corporate companies also hire event organizers as they have a budget to employ them.

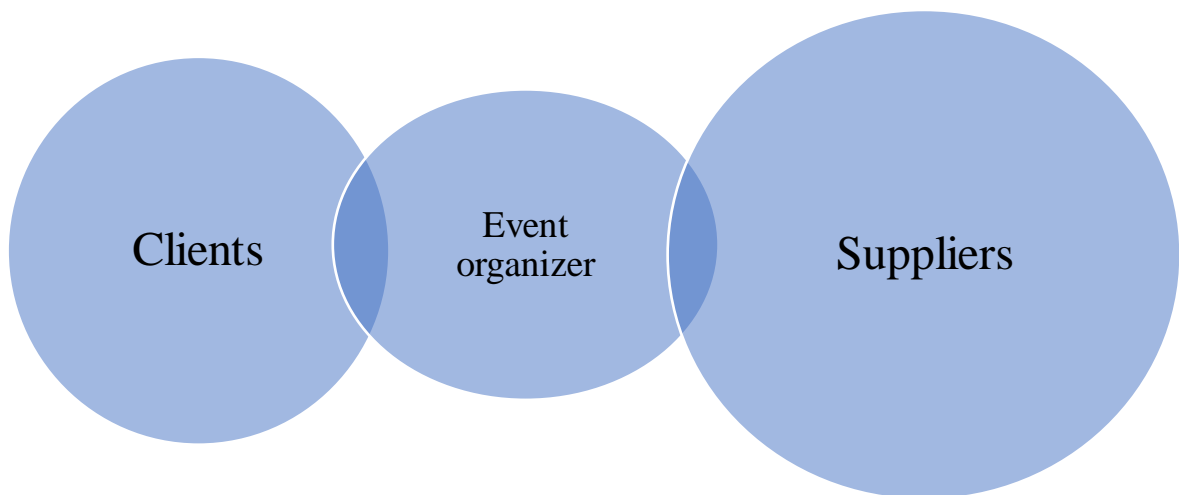
Event organizers: are professional individuals who are responsible for an order received from an event client. An event organizer is an intermediary between the event client and the event supplier, and his duties are to plan, organize and run an event. They might be tasked to run an event on behalf of their own organization, also being employed by an external client.

Event suppliers: are specialists whose goods and services needed by the professional event organizer for successful running of an event. The number of suppliers involved depends on the size of the event. Therefore, the larger the event, the greater is the need for specific goods and services; for example, the need for technical support by sound engineers or video operators. Appendix A discloses the checklist of possible event suppliers and supporting services, which helps to run a successful event. The equipment, facilities and services required are not included into this list, as they vary according to the type, place and industry

of event. Categories of that checklist are organizers, venue, content, staff, temporary structures/site, travel & accommodation, food & beverage, entertainment, audio visual. (Dowson & Bassett, 2018, pp. 13-14)

The following illustration (Figure 2) represents the linkage and size of three groups in the industry. In the middle is always pasted the facilitator between clients and suppliers and body responsible for the smooth running of the event, an event organizer.

Figure 2. Key Players in the Event Industry



Source: (Dowson & Bassett, 2018, pp. 10-11)

The event organizer circle size is the smallest because it is a company which is dealing with multiple clients and the circle representing the event's clients is larger, correspondently. The biggest circle represents the event's suppliers, who are involved accordingly to the preferences of clients and depending on the size of an event. (Dowson & Bassett, 2018)

At this point, it is rational to define the people and their job titles who have a hand in organizing an event. There are four following 'players' (Earl, 2019):

- 1) Event manager: main representative of an entity that holds overall responsibility for the event. To 'entity' is referred the owner of the events, for example a company, city, non-profit organization, or an individual. The following tasks needed to accomplish the event are delegated by the event manager to other specialists of related areas, for example to an event producer. Event manager job title is often present in big events, such as festivals and sporting events. (Matthews, 2008, p. 8)

The main responsibility of event manager is communication with the vendors and revise all tasks done by event coordinator and event producer. (Earl, 2019)

- 2) Event planner: alternatively used for 'event manager', but more refers to a person responsible for smaller and private events such as weddings, dinners, reunions, etc. Usually, this planning and running of the event is organized by one person independently, and not by the event company or organization. (Matthews, 2008)
- 3) Event coordinator: this term is used also alternatively to event manager and to event planner but refers more to an individual hired by a larger organization. His responsibility is to bring together all the event participants and to approve that they work toward the same goal, also is more in charge of single coordination duties and not creative part. (Matthews, 2008, p. 8) According to other literature, event coordinator does not have many years of experience and is involved in small tasks, which were delegated by manager or producer. (Earl, 2019)
- 4) Event producer: referred to coordination, execution and assists with creating the event and working with the technical side that includes design, scheduling, staging, sound, lights, entertainment and décor. Usually, event manager and event producer are separated job titles and have different responsibilities and in some cases, external producers are contracted by event managers. (Matthews, 2008, pp. 9-10) In addition, event producers are responsible for the logistics for the event. (Earl, 2019)

According to Dough Matthews, there is a set of the most desirable skills and personality traits for the event producer which help to build the prosperous career in that industry. This list is much wider than the one, proposed for all people involved in the event management. An event producer needs to have *organizational skills* for being concentrated on details, people, times and schedules, *creative ability* for conviction to use new ideas, *technical interest* for general supervision of this area, *financial expertise* for wise management of client budgets, *writing ability* for avoiding grammatical and stylistic mistakes, *speaking ability* in order to be clear and enthusiastic during presentations to clients and to production teams, *computer skills* for using the Microsoft Office, customers relationship management (CRM) software and computer aided design and drafting (CADD), *an ethical and moral grounding* for supporting good reputation, *personality traits* such as friendly attitude, flexibility, stress resistance, fair management style in order to deal with many personality styles. (Matthews, 2008, pp. 9-10)

People who are willing to become event producers are supposed to adapt to high stress, constant pressure, changing client requirements, and sometimes lower than expected income.

Moreover, there are some typical habits which event producers have much in common with each other.

- Focus: always to keep an event at the top of one's priority list.
- Anticipation: ability to visualize the whole event from beginning to the end and predict potential problems before they are faced. Thus, it is highly beneficial to be able to pay attention at all details and to have intuition.
- Single-minded purpose: to ensure that all involved parties, such as producer, venue staff and suppliers, understand the goals and purpose of the event delegated to the producer by event manager or client. Misleading interpretation of the event's goal might result in the wrong event organization.
- Ability to set the proper timeframes: producing events is a complex process and in order to complete each phase a certain amount of time should be dedicated. It is advised to complete each phase at once.
- Ability to block out interference: to get rid of disruptive actions during creative time and generally during event planning.
- Ability to address challenges: they are always appearing, but it is important to stay positive and pro-active. If something leads to the decrease of the quality of the event or the organizer's reputation, event producer should not hesitate to reject preposition.
- 'Show-must -go-on' mentality: the core is performing despite hardships. (Matthews, 2008, pp. 10-11)

2. Description of Event Management Process

For the successful execution of an event, it is important to follow certain steps of a management process. This chapter is dedicated to theoretical event management process, which highlights the order of actions taken during the whole process and also specifies what exactly is done at each stage of the event planning and realization. For better visualization, the reader can always refer to Appendix B, and recall the order of steps in that process.

The whole organization of an event starts with a desire to implement it. As it was mentioned before events are subdivided into private, leisure, cultural and corporate. Events might be organized by professionals (event organizers) as well as by volunteers and by an individual. The responsible group needs to choose the objective or the concept through the brainstorming process and discuss the suitable ideas that fit the objective of the event. All involved parties may form small groups and divide tasks and responsibilities for more detailed focus on interested issues and for a greater performance. The next step is that all groups are briefed with the agenda and features of the event and all ideas are combined and analyzed. This method allows to define the theme, expectations and standard of the event, and finally, to come up with the concept of the event. (Bowdin G. , Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2010, p. 247)

Before planning and producing the event, the objectives should be determined, as they might influence the planning and setting up of the event. For example, the objectives for a wine festival are to promote wine brands and encourage visitors' education on this topic. It is proposed to set objectives by following SMART model, according to Watt (Watt, 1998, pp. 10-11):

Specific to the event and parties are aware why the event has been organized;

Measurable and quantified in statistical terms concerning budget, number of resources and quantities of resources needed, the success and failure of the event;

Agreed by those involved on the common objective for successful implementation the program details;

Realistic to the resources available in terms of human, financial, physical resources, etc.;

Timed around the event schedule with the certain time frames.

Moreover, all events have their own mission statement describing the objective of the event and vision statement presenting possible organization's achievements with the help of the certain event. (Bowdin G. , Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2010, p. 205)

As soon the objective is outlined, the next step is gathering of the relevant information concerning the event itself. This process is divided into two separate researches: environmental search and info on resources. During the environmental search process, it is relevant to conduct a competitive analysis for identifying opportunities and problems, and based on the similar past events to determine demand and target market. Sometimes, the objectives of the event might pre-define the target audience, the potential attendees. The uniqueness of the event attracts more potential visitors. The second part of the information gathering process on resources and physical commodities is about finding the suitable venue for the event. The contents of the event is determined by the financial aspect, and having the knowledge on initial budgeting and prices, it is possible to make sure that all costs are covered. (Shore & Parry, 2010, pp. 91-94)

Before moving towards the planning process, the event analysis should be done, including six issues, defined by Shore and Parry. It starts with the agenda of the event together with the mission and vision statements for making sure that the objective is clear for everyone. Secondly, to define involved people who are responsible for the planning and execution and decide if consumers and sponsors should participate together with organizers in that process. Next issue is to decide on proper search of information and further decisions will be undertaken based on those researches. The following issues are discussed in details later in the planning process, such as main location, additional locations, the exact event time and date, time for event advertisements, date on tickets sale, etc. (Shore & Parry, 2010, p. 91)

It is highly recommended to prepare an event proposal, a document which can be made online or by Microsoft Excel, Google Drive, etc. including all relevant purposes, objectives, organizations, venues, time scale. It is useful for follow-ups, and within the whole event, it helps the team to have a general picture and clearness about the event and its management in the future. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 116) After that the process of event planning starts, which is based on the scale of the event, including details and wishes requested by clients.

2.1 Event Planning

According to Shone and Parry, the process is divided into three segments: financial management, operational/supply management and marketing management. (Shore & Parry, 2010, p. 92)

Financial management

It is one of the main recourses of event management. The unwise allocation of finance potentially leads to risks, which are related to safety control, legal issues, logistics, production schedule, etc. The financial plan should always be linked with event objectives and purposes. The task for professionals who have a fixed budget is not to raise money but to perform other organizational functions. The event organizer is responsible for money allocation on staff, insurance, logistics, marketing, venue, design etc. Moreover, the team should track all transactions for the shareholders and possible sponsors. Due to unforeseen costs during an event, there are possible negotiations between organizers and sponsors. (Bowdin G. , Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2010, pp. 295-296)

Financial planning is composed by budget, changes/income, cash flow, and sponsorship tools, which are discussed as follows:

Budget

The first step is to prepare a budget plan during finance planning stage for events. A budget plan estimates projected revenue and costs of organizing an event thanks to exact quotes gathered from all contractors and suppliers. This research is recalculated several times in order to be sure that expenses are correctly calculated and not overlooked, as money has to be allocated to financial resources like logistics, venues, staff, merchandise etc. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 81)

The proper budget plan is supposed to distinguish between fixed costs and variable costs. Fixed costs include venue hire, staffing, marketing or décor, etc. Variable expenses may fluctuate, depending on attendance or other factors; for instance, a meal per head or accommodation. (Boehme, 1999, p. 99)

Moreover, it is suggested to create a budget form, which consists of a list of revenues and costs. This process is quite demanding and challenging due to the process of information

collected and special techniques for tracking, but it also brings a benefit of gaining a financial control. It is advised, that the financial plan should not be too optimistic and expect a large profit. (Shone & Parry, 2004, p. 100)

Income

Financial management does not emphasize that all the events should be profit oriented. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 79) For example, events like product promotion, introduction of a new brand of jewelry or a demonstration do not generate profit at all.

The income statement, known also as P&L statement, is composed by an organization's revenue, expenditure and net profit. Typically, P&L statement is prepared after all transactions are done, but event industry requires to prepare it twice - before the event happens and afterwards. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 93)

Cash Flow

It is also one of the important components in financial management, as cash flow controls the capital. During event planning, capital is a factor which can prolong or complicate the planning phase. Therefore, a cash flow budget helps the event organizers to track back and re-allocate budget in required areas. All monthly expenses and projected income should be recorded in any form, such as a spreadsheet. Even if more funding is required, a well-managed cash flow might still attract further sponsorship. (Tassiopoulus, 2005, p. 160)

Sponsorship

The source of funding varies, and some may include sponsorship agencies, European Union, donations or voluntary bodies. (Watt, 1998, pp. 50-51) In event management, a sponsor is an individual, group or organization that supplies with different kind of resources in exchange of business opportunities. Sponsorship should be beneficial for both sides, an event and sponsors. (Shore & Parry, 2010, pp. 124-125) As sponsorship exists in many forms, in terms of supply and help, event organizers should understand the type of events and the relevant type of sponsorship, that is needed in the aspect of goods, services, techniques etc. (Ray, Walters, & Rashid, 2009, p. 129)

Many organizations define sponsorship as a public relations tool as they are an intermediate between the company and their target market, and that will help partly to fulfill their

objectives. Additionally, it might help to increase market share and the competitiveness of some products or services. (Ray, Walters, & Rashid, 2009, p. 124)

If event organizers decided to apply sponsorship to the planning process, it is important that the strategic vision of the event and the sponsoring company are well integrated. Thus, event managers must work hard and find an appropriate sponsor/sponsors. The financial support is one of the main business requirements to sustain the event, while sponsors are ready to provide financial aid when they see some potential growth of the company. Therefore, event managers should be very active and effective in attracting of the proper sponsors. (Shore & Parry, 2010, pp. 124-125)

The selection process of possible sponsors is based on gathered information about sponsors plus historical data about desired companies or organizations to participate, their preferences in terms of sponsoring, related to events which they have already sponsored. This research is mainly conducted through firms' websites, local or regional newspapers. When the sponsors are defined, the event manager leans the levels of sponsorship deals suggested in a sponsorship package. The most common form of budgeting is related to financial assistance from sponsors. (Ray, Walters, & Rashid, 2009, pp. 125-126)

Operational/Supply Management

Operational plan is the next stage after financial planning. Donald Getz defined this process as “*Operations* refers to all those systems that must be in place and the actions that have to be taken to produce the event.” (Getz, Event Studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events, 2007, p. 275) Event managers should dedicate the sufficient amount of time to plan an event rationally, thus time management is relevant. They evaluate their available resources and decide on their usage for desirable event execution. These resources include staffing, venue, logistics, services, equipment, security, production schedule etc. Available resources need to be well managed and avoid resources dependency.

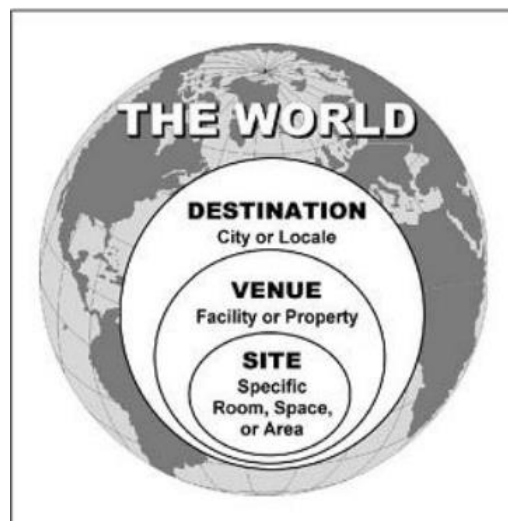
Staffing are handling different types of tasks. The number of personnel directly depends on the size of event. The staff planning phase consists of developing organization charts and developing job descriptions. The first process is related to understanding of the event team reporting relationships, and the second is about roles and responsibilities of people involved

into the event planning. Development of organization charts takes place three times: prior to the event, during the event and after the event, because the amount of tasks differs at all stages and the number of needed workforce fluctuates. Prior to the events, charts describe responsibilities of people for main functions; during the event, there are indicated emergency reporting relationships in the charts; after the event, charts are focused on key personnel for event evaluation, feedback collection, financing reporting etc. Normally, the list of key personnel is indicated for each phase together with a list of their tasks. (Der Wagen, 2001, pp. 159-160) The second element of staff planning - job descriptions, is about tasks, position titles, reporting relationships and duties. It is crucial to define needed skills, knowledge and experience for different positions for recruitment of right people. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 164)

Training of the staff involved in event planning is an integral part for event industry. They get knowledge about three elements: the objectives of the event, the venue and their specific duties. There are situations when one event is located at different venues, and a tour of the venue helps staff to familiarize with a place and get info on facilities, areas and departments. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 170)

Location-venue-site: the selection of these spaces depends on purpose and role of the event, as well as the number of attendees and safety of the venue. A good venue has influence on the general atmosphere. According to Silver, there is a site selection hierarchy (Figure 3), which is based on capability, affordability, and accessibility. (Silvers, 2006, pp. 64-65)

Figure 3. Silver's Hierarchy of Site Selection



Source: (Silvers, 2006, p. 64)

The process of venue-finding is a crucial point during event planning phase, and organizers face two options: they choose an already known venue by themselves or they have limited choices and it is a challenging task to find a venue.

Additionally, the event organizer has a list of requirements concerning the potential venue, such as:

- Availability;
- Convenience to reach;
- Rating;
- Style/decoration;
- Capacity.

Normally, a team collects several options and then they start to evaluate each one based on a set of criteria, namely location, safety, cost, capacity, facilities and staff. (Silvers, 2006, p. 66) According to Shore and Parry, they accounted to this list also the type of the audience. If event organizers have chosen the venue for the first time, it would be beneficial to pay an extra visit to this place and to get the first impression through the outlook of the venue itself and places such as toilets, entrances, corridors and car parks. (Shone & Parry, 2004, pp. 122-123)

Logistics: the main idea according to Donald Getz is “to move people, goods and equipment (even money and tickets) to the right place at the right time.” (Getz, 2007, p. 276) Logistical planning takes into consideration needs that have influence on the logistical process. (Ray, Walters, & Rashid, 2009, p. 203) Event organizers usually hire a logistical manager, whose responsibility is to manage the logistical planning process through a planned update and amendments of problems. The logistical planning process is integrated into the entire planning. The flow of equipment is also part of the logistical plan.

According to Getz, operation and logistics are sub-divided on: customer-oriented system including traffic, queuing, ticketing, information, essential services, crew management, comfort & safety; supplier oriented in terms of utilities, infrastructure, technical services and security system; and communication with deals for the reasons to handle equipment,

procedures, accreditation, hosting the media and scheduling. (Getz, 2012, p. 287) Unfortunately, it is impossible to predict problems, and thus, it is recommended to have alternative suppliers in case of serious problems, wrong orders, cancellation, delays, etc. (Shone & Parry, 2004, pp. 126-127)

According to Silvers, the process of selecting suppliers needs to take place in four steps: starts with determination of a selection criteria, then the preparation of procurement documents with included bids and proposals, the next step is the evaluation of the vendors based on their capabilities, competition and compliance, and finally the issuance of the contracts with the most suitable supplier. (Silvers, 2006, pp. 372-374)

Services: after the venue is defined, the next issue is to organize some essential services for attendees. Typically, events include catering and drinks services. For planning catering service, it is important to consider the number of visitors, budget and refreshment times. (Shone & Parry, 2004, p. 128) During the selection process, a catering contractor should provide menus and other costs related to the style service required, which depends on types of events. The type of food which is required and the speed of service should be negotiated in details between the event manager and a caterer in advance. A food safety plan is another important issue, as it prevents visitors from food poisoning and ensures the correct length of time taken for food to reach guests and visitors. (Der Wagen, 2001, pp. 154-155) Drink services are divided into two types: *all inclusive*, so visitors can get drinks for free or *cash*, has to pay for it. (Shone & Parry, 2004, p. 133)

Safety and security have impact on event operations and event logistics. (Getz, 2007, p. 293) Event organizers get information concerning the crowd, visitors and guests for formulation of security plan. The potential risk analyses are based on crowd emotions and crowd behavior. During event, it is important the presence of security staff, whose responsibility is to control the flow of people and to allow only right people to enter to certain areas at the event. The access of right people might be controlled through the existence of accreditation badges. Additionally, security staff has a right to reject access if a person does not correspond to the rules or looks dubious. At the same time, event managers before hiring security staff should check their licenses that they are trained and have required specialization. (Der Wagen, 2001, pp. 207-209)

The safety of the event organizers and related staff should be taken into consideration. It is difficult to predict accidents and injuries in the working environment; thus, all workers are obliged to have the compensation insurance, which covers all work-related issues. Generally, event organizers need to ensure that all participants, namely attendants, staff and visitors are protected from all possible types of threat. (Der Wagen, 2001, pp. 208-2012) Thus, risk management is highly important in the event industry, and event organizers should be focused on the issues related to risk management, such as environmental impact, marketing and PR, sponsorship, finances and return on investment. (Bladen, Kennel, Abson, & Wilde, 2012, p. 202)

Marketing Management

The event tends to be successful when the targeted objective of the event is met. As soon as the targeted number of attendees is fulfilled, the objective of the event is met. In order to attract a maximum number of guests, there are different marketing techniques, such as advertising, promotions, public and media relations used by event managers. (Shore & Parry, 2010, p. 101) The concept 'marketing' is defined differently for each industry, and for event management there is also a separate definition: "Marketing is that function of event management that can keep in touch with the event's participants and visitors (consumers), read their needs and motivations, develop products that meet these needs, and build a communication program which expresses the event's purpose and objectives". (Hall, 1997, p. 136)

The marketing planning process starts with a research on target market of the event through finding out what kind of demand is in the market. The promotional activities are the next stage, based on the outcome of selected target market segments. The event can be advertised with the help of various communication tools such as TV, radio, posters, city boards, social media, emails, etc. The mean of promotions is supposed to be chosen according to the target audience, and the message encoded by event organizers needs to be clear, catchy and giving exact short info about the event.

Events are considered as the exchange of resources such as time and emotional involvement for the experience received from event attendance. (Silvers, 2006, pp. 6-7) People are paying

for these resources, and ticketing should be done earlier as possible, for example through ticketing agencies or online booking.

It is proposed to split marketing management of events in three steps, such as analysis – to define market and target group, planning – to identify places, products and services according to target audience and control – to monitor the standards of the event. (Ray, Walters, & Rashid, 2009, p. 87) In addition, communication with attendees should be kept further after the event through the set of post event activities.

2.2 Implementation and Follow-up

After the marketing planning process, event managers have the adequate amount of time to check if everything is on place, all deadlines are met, all the staffers are driven by the event execution. During the whole planning period, meetings are useful and all ideas and discussed information should be written down, and further, distributed within event organizers.

When it comes to the implementation of the event, the event organizer thinks forehead about the printed timetable of the activities to the visitors. There are a lot of things that need to be done right before an event. It is suggested to create a check list or tasks, which helps not to miss any important details. (Der Wagen, 2001, p. 198)

The last part of event management process is evaluation, which takes place after the event. The most common type of evaluation are printed questionnaires and online assessment forms. The evaluation usually covers following aspects: achievement of the objectives, pre-event communication, the relevance of the subjects presented, skills of the presenters, ideas for the improvement and the overall impressions. Closed questions are a better way to get answers, as their analysis is independent on the interpretation of the statistical complier, in comparison to open questions. (Fisher, 1998, p. 112)

The feedback sessions give the possibility to guests to share their thoughts concerning the whole event, and for event organizers, it is a chance to understand what was done right and what was missed out, what should be added to such kind of event in order to satisfy attendees better. (Bowdin G. , Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2010, p. 387)

Based on the feedbacks, event managers prepare a post-event report, which includes the assessment of all components, such as budget, venue, catering & drinks, involvement in activities. The outcome of this report is the comparison of the event and visitors' expectations. (Rogers, 2008, p. 201) This is the final evaluation of the event, based on which an event organizer decides how to improve the following events.

3. TBM Evolution Group: Analysis of Event Management Process

Currently, the reader is aware of the topic ‘event management process’ and the stages of its implementation. However, presented material contains solely theoretical explanation. In order to extend the knowledge from practical side as well, this chapter serves as an empirical case study. The core of research is an analysis of a selected company from the event industry located in Prague, Czech Republic. Firstly, a reader will briefly get to know TBM Evolution Group, its history, scope of business and organizational structure. The second part of this chapter is focused on description of event management process implemented and used by company. As the result of this research, all gaps and weaknesses regarding TBM’s operations and management processes will be discovered. The goal of the final part of this chapter is to highlight detected problem areas and bring solutions and recommendations to top management.

Mostly all literature collected for this chapter is an internal data of TBM Evolution Group and information obtained during interviews with their employees. This tend to be the first written document containing an overview of the company and can be used only for educational purposes within universities and students.

3.1. Introduction to TBM Evolution Group, its History and Operations

TBM Evolution Group is a business event organizer, which is specialized in organizing exclusive events addressed to the most demanding topics of varied industries for a limited number of seats (up to thirty). Each event organized by experienced business professionals is focused on bringing innovation and latest information to the applicable industry. All tailor-made events are dedicated to networking, benchmarking and solutions for various topics. TBM crafts each event with the intention that the exchange of best practices and lessons will positively influence all participants and obtained information will be implemented towards their businesses.

The TBM’s goal is to create meaningful and silent events where all attendees can absorb practical information, valuable insights and useful contacts. The company is proud of being an organizer of over 40 business events in six different countries during 2018. Currently, TBM Evolution Group operates in nine major industries. High profile business-to-business meetings are covering most current and pressing needs of following sectors: automotive, banking, chemical, energy, IT, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, sports hospitality and tax.

The company's specialization constantly grows according to the demanded topics and attendees' feedbacks.

TBM Evolution Group was established in October 2012 in the capital of Czech Republic. Initially, the company started its cooperation with the oil and gas industry, as back in those times the price fluctuations and demands in that sector was on the peak of discussion. For many companies, the exchange of insights and best practices within that industry was crucial in order to stay "on top". There are some other crucial dates in the history of TBM evolution Group. In 2015, the team added a new industry to its portfolio. The success of the First Innovative Tire Development Forum allowed the company to reach a broader audience within this sector. This is the only industry which went into the profound specialization with around seven following topics related to tire manufacture. Semiannually, tire related topics are discussed in different European countries. It was suggested by TBM marketing manager to disclose deeply the first tire forum and discuss with readers all steps implemented during the event management process for this event. Therefore, in the second part of this chapter, the event management process will be analyzed on the example of the First Innovative Tire Development Forum in Berlin, Germany. Another vital date related to the TBM's events is May 2018. The company was organizing an event where TBM employees were obliged to attend as well. The implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in EU law influenced all companies on the way how personal data should be maintained and tracked in the databases. TBM had to revise their policy on data management and information of their attendees, as well as to adopt these changes to the event management process and lead generation process (LGP). Until now, that was the only event organized by a company covering a topic related to the TBM scope of business and moreover bringing a valuable knowledge to the way of running business in order to be compliant with GDPR. Despite of the success of this conference, it was organized once and only for permanent attendees, who were impacted the most by GDPR.

It is important to highlight locations chosen for all events organized by TBM. The company is operating exclusively within the European Union and once by a special order, a financial conference took place in the US. The most common countries for annual events are Austria, Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom. Usually, the country and the city for the event is selected accordingly to the industry. For example, all finance related

events take place in London or Frankfurt am Main, known as financial hubs, or all automotive and tire events are hold in Amsterdam or Berlin. The same selection rule is applicable to all events, but if event producers have doubts regarding the location, then the opinion on the location of potential participants is taken into consideration. There are many other pitfalls regarding TBM's event management process, which will be discussed in detail later in that chapter.

Coming back to the general information of the company, it might be interesting to explain the roots of TBM's name. The name of the company consists of the first letters of the company founders. All three are coming from different backgrounds and are responsible for different departments, but the only thing which unites them is that they are Macedonians, who met in Prague. TBM means: T- Tose, who is in charge of marketing team; B – Blagoj from production team and M- Mile is covering sales team. It was shared that the ownership is not divided equally between them. In addition, due to some organizational changes, not all three of them run business from Prague, but it will be explained later. The company has a simple and easy recognized logo, which is presented below (Figure 4). These two colors are used in all company's documentations and presentations since its foundation.

Figure 4. TBM Evolution Group Logo



Source: TBM internal data

The whole team of TBM Evolution Group is multinational and visitors can hear more than ten languages that are spoken in the office, despite the small size of the company. The number of fulltime employees ranges between 40 and 50 professionals plus up to ten interns

in the marketing department. The company consists of five departments in total. The organizational structure of departments is shown below (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Organizational Structure of TBM

Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•ca. 15 employees•Blagoj is the team lead, based in Prague
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•ca. 7 employees + temporary interns up to 10•Tosi is the team lead, based in Prague and 1/4 in Skopje
Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•ca. 20 employees•Mile is the team lead, based in Skopje since 2018
HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•3 employees, one of them in Skopje•+responsible for payroll
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•1 person in Prague and one in Skopje

Source: author

The whole event management process is coordinated by three departments, namely production, marketing and sales. Initially, TBM was located only in Prague, but in October 2018 the sales team moved to Skopje, Macedonia. The major reason was to cut down costs and to hire local inhabitants. One year later the CEOs agreed on relocating half of the marketing team to Skopje as well and to start their operations there from January 1, 2020. The company plans to keep the full production team in Prague and continues to lead two offices in two countries. In the Macedonian office, more than a half of the employees are Macedonian, however in Prague, there are only two Czech employees. This proves that TBM is a fully international company.

Important to notice is that the TBM Group gives an opportunity to students and fresh graduates to participate in their internship program at the marketing research team. The program lasts for a minimum of three months and an intern should work 20 hours per week at least. It is considered, this amount of time is enough in order to go through the whole process of marketing research and lead generation process for the received event project.

The internship program is only possible within the marketing team, in which students and interns are mostly responsible for the process of lead generation. As a reward for doing a good job, interns are entitled to get a bonus of 3% of the participation fee per each attendee registered via the intern's invitation email. This encourages interns to run a deep and qualitative research on potential participants. Apart from this, there is another internship package for international students which are currently enrolled in their studies outside of the Czech Republic. Students get approval for Erasmus scholarships by their home universities. In that case, an internship program is financed between three and six months by the Erasmus Grant, and it is a must to work full time, 40 hours per week. During their internship, students are fully integrated in the company's business and social life. TBM organizes team building events quarterly for the whole company and also there are activities to choose from each month for the marketing team and the interns. These events usually take place on Friday after work.

TBM has a good image among interns, thus, the company faces an overabundance of applications on a regular basis. In high seasons, when students have holidays or vacations, the Prague office is crowded with interns, and they need to share their desks. Students admire the atmosphere in the company and the way they are treated as the fulltime employees and an integral part of TBM family.

3.2 Analysis of Innovative Tire Development Series

The company with a seven year history constantly advances by being the first one which predicts hot trends and brings these issues to the ‘exclusive’ public audience. TBM Group finds its niche through going into the narrow subjects and by specializing only in the most discussed and pressing topics worldwide. This is possible thanks to the company’s flexibility and openness towards the continuous change in the business society and due to nonstop improvement of technologies. Therefore, if you are a part of the TBM Team, your goal is to think about tomorrow, despite the common view of most people ‘to live today’s day’. All TBM employees constantly keep in mind the quote by Peter Drucker: “The best way to predict future is to create it”. (Hawkins, 2019) It is crucial to bring the reader through all stages of the conference creation and the event itself and highlight vital decisions and steps undertaken by team. This chapter is dedicated to one of the most successful TBM projects and gives a detailed overview of the event management process for a new conference created from a scratch and further development of series. Innovative Tire Development Series are considered as one of the most well-known and successful projects of TBM, which led into a wide specialization of tire related topics within the European Union.

Event Management Process for Tire Forum 2015

Going back to the end of 2014 and the first half of 2015, the whole world had been talking about the political situation in the East European Countries, drop in oil prices, devaluation of Russian RUB and the extreme growth of Asian markets. Meanwhile, the TBM production team has decided to expand into the new segment which they did not take into consideration before. After a long study and deep research, the company approved that they will introduce further specialization additionally to their usual and core business conferences.

During the last quarter of 2014, the company approved that Tire Forum will take place in June 2015. As it was a first conference in a given area, the comprehensive planning and deep knowledge research were required. Thus, the whole project tended to be created from a scratch.

As the following step, TBM team launched an event management process for Innovative Tire Development Forum. The group of producers started to gather relevant data concerning tires and automotive industry, how global changes in different businesses might transform trends in tire performance, service and cost. The goal was to create objectives of the event

which later during the brainstorming, could help to define parameters of the forum. The event organizers agreed to bring the list of topics, on which they had to work for one month, prior to their first brainstorming. The result of their hard work has consisted of many vital concerns in tire industry. Among their findings were following objectives summarized:

1. Many enterprises focus on '*sustainable tires*', which have designs that improve fuel economy by reducing tire weight and rolling resistance.
2. *Intelligent tire technologies*, as the given industry rapidly recovered after the crisis and sales have been increased, the space for development was needed.
3. *Tire labelling regulations* for passenger car and light truck tires in EU started in November 2012. Even two years after new regulations were introduced, due to the lack of information, many EU members did not implement labelling as it should be done. At that time, the lack of such knowledge could lead to a competitive disadvantage for European producers due to inequality in regulatory enforcement.
4. *The movement towards ecological economics* lead tire producers to follow new regulations (labelling, noise requirements) that are forcing them to change their usual manufacturing process. For instance, in order to reduce CO₂ emissions, producers have to switch to new materials, so they have to buy and use other materials than used before. Therefore, research and development departments of tire manufacture companies need to spend additional time and resources on producing tires which are safe and balanced in its performances and at the same time comply with new regulations.
5. Tire producers were directly *impacted by the decrease of oil prices*, as it made the purchase of production materials more available, which boosted technical innovation and pushed necessary development in the industry.

All proposed ideas were covering the broad topics, which did not correspond to the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreeable, Realistic and Time specific) characteristics. Organizers were obliged to be very specific and ensure that all stakeholders of the forum know why the event has been organized. Thus, the new research was conducted in order to deliver the detailed concerns to each of above mentioned 'general' topics. Back in 2014, the first challenge related to the tire industry was the increasing demand for passenger and commercial vehicles in developing countries. The prompt growth of China and India's automotive industries affected the number of overseas investors that the largest world

players were interested in setting up their global tire manufacturing centers in those countries. For example, the Italian tire giant Pirelli had invested around \$200 million in China, the world's largest vehicle market between 2012 and 2014. (Fangfang, 2013) The message out of this was to forecast market size in the next three years (2015-2018) and at which rate it will grow. The second issue was related to the green tire development, as Research & Development (R&D) teams had to come up with a solution on how to balance the performances of the tire in order to produce a safe tire. Additionally, if the successful growth of South Eastern market is real through intense investment, then how can the European market benefit from this. Moreover, how to understand how new regulations and legislation should be implemented immediately and how they can help stakeholders to spread the knowledge on those issues. Finally, the mature tire industry with over 110 years old history and stable production methods was supposed to undergo through dramatic changes and improvements.

All industry challenges which were examined during the second round of the objects selection, were considered as vital for the first Tire Development event. With no previous experience in the tire industry, TBM Group decided to implement the forum as an introduction session. The plan was to follow with the next Tire Forum based on the feedback and requests of attendees collected after the first tire event. Thus, all objectives were combined, despite that it would be possible to hold additional separate forums on each objective.

After a detailed investigation of the question why such kind of event should be held and why this event is relevant now, the team switched to the first stage of information gathering. This phase involved environmental screening, such as a competitive analysis, demand and the target market. Usually, organizers proceed with the same data for demand and target audience which was used in the past or for annual events. In case of the Innovative Tire Development Forum, no secondary data was available. The production team searched for similar conferences and lists of participants. Their task was to contact attendees, ask their opinion on the TBM's tire event and obtain a feedback on what can be improved. For TBM, competitive analysis means to come up with better topics and to listen to competitor's participants.

Based on topics which were chosen for the upcoming tire conference, TBM team went into the general screening of possible interested parties. Overall, the list of the main target audience was full of companies related to the automobile industry, particularly tire and automotive companies, and material producers. For this conference the relevant participants of tire companies were the one involved in research and development, product development, technical innovation, quality and safety departments. Meanwhile, representatives of the automobile sector could be the one dealing with tire development, R&D for tires and tire purchase. The third group, material producers, covers too broad area and it was decided to focus only on oil, rubber and steel manufactures. In particular, to invite marketing, business development and R&D departments which could enjoy being in the role of participants during the conference but also have other functions during the event, which will be discussed later in that chapter.

At this stage it was important to decide on the locations of participants' employment and their daily job routine. It is all about finding a right person with a right job title and right responsibilities. The first Tire Development Forum was mostly focused on the investigation of ideas and solutions for the topic, which was specifically relevant only within European Union. Thus, a highly qualified engineer at the Tire R&D department employed in Germany but being responsible for AMER region (The Americas, being North, Central and South America) would not be a perfect match. Despite his motivation and high interest in the given topic, a person will not be deeply involved in the discussions of empirical cases because EU labelling standards, as a core of the Tire Forum, are irrelevant for AMER countries. Moreover, obtained knowledge will not be intensively applied by participant and his AMER team and it will lead to the knowledge loss.

Short Reminder: TBM events are limited to a maximum of thirty (in some rare cases fifty) attendees for encouraging interaction and networking.

Thus, it is not about the number, or how some people like to say 'quantity', but primarily, the goal is 'quality' and being ensured that new contacts, inspiration and practical insights will be shared with colleagues and implemented into their work. At this step the target audience was defined with a certain restrictions and exceptions, and the leads generation process was activated after the whole planning, during the organization and preparation stage.

After the first part of information gathering which was based on environmental search combining a competitive analysis, demand and the target market, the production team had started the information gathering process on resources and physical commodities of the event. TBM Group had to decide on the location based on the reachability, availability and financial ability. Thus, at this stage the company also predicted the initial budgeting with all costs. The outcome of the information gathering was a draft plan, which required a further investigation and development.

The TBM's draft plan included six different issues. It started with an inspirational goal of the event, which was described in one sentence: "*...there is bright future for a redesigned, technologically diversified automotive industry that is better tuned to the new societal driving aspirations and increasing demand for high tech tires.*" (TBM Evolution Group, 2015) The mission of the event was to educate tire manufactures, automotive companies and material producers how to produce safe tire and the vision was to ensure that attendees will be compliant with labelling and will follow environmental policies after the event. The draft of the event agenda was created as well, which is usually modified during the planning process by sales team. The TBM organizers agreed that many details which are usually included in the draft plan tend to be modified. Thus, the full agenda, price, venue, sales and other things are also discussed during production and execution processes. Internally within a company, these specifics are called 'how, when and where'.

Tire Forum Production (Operational) Planning

The first tire forum required a more than usual investigation on the operational planning process as well and on staff, venue, logistics, technical equipment, security, etc. Probably, the only problem that the TBM group faces constantly, is the location of the event. The company gets used to choose the location and venue relying on attendees' feedback and it works great for annual events. However, the first event requires rigid planning and more time spent on research. TBM has many partner hotels with a long-term relationship and trust. This type of cooperation allows TBM group to delegate hotels to take over the substantial part of operational resources. Overall, on the hotel's side are staff members, equipment, security and the rest is logistics, such as food, beverages, etc. Important to note is, that the hotel serves as a supplier of the venue and for TBM events it is the ability to use a hotel's conference room for a two day event. Coming back to the issue of searching for locations, the team focused mainly on the country selection to choose the most appropriate for the tire

forum. TBM cooperates with around ten countries and more than thirty hotels in different cities, providing the high-class service and insuring the fascinating atmosphere during two days of conference.

Another research conducted by TBM for the selection of destination was focused on the number of tire manufactures within the EU. Even though, this market is dominated by Asian players, there are many companies producing local and American brands in Europe. The most suitable locations were England, Germany and the Netherlands. The issue of a possible Brexit made the option to run an event in England unattractive and questioned if the EU labelling standards will be applied to England in the future. The numerous amount of tire manufactures are placed in Germany, including famed Continental AG, which is the Top Four tire producer in the world. (Petersen, 2015) The graph below helps visually to analyze the distribution of tire manufacturers worldwide.

Figure 6. Tires Manufactures Worldwide



Source: Peterson, 2015

TBM Group has usually three cities where conferences take place in Germany, namely Berlin, Frankfurt and Bonn. For the first forum, the company decided to go for Berlin so that attendees could enjoy their time in the capital of Germany and would be able to reach most famous sightseeing attractions after travelling a short distance from Hyperion Hotel Berlin.

It is a 5-star hotel where the event took place in the huge conference room. By choosing this hotel, TMB group ensures that all customers will be satisfied with the comfort and safety for two days of event during their business trip.

Market research is connected to the production planning process, as the TBM group had to book the proper conference room relying on the budgeting, and it depends on the amount of staff required, food, etc. The extraction of potential attendees for the tire forum will be explained at the marketing planning section.

Tire Forum Financial Planning

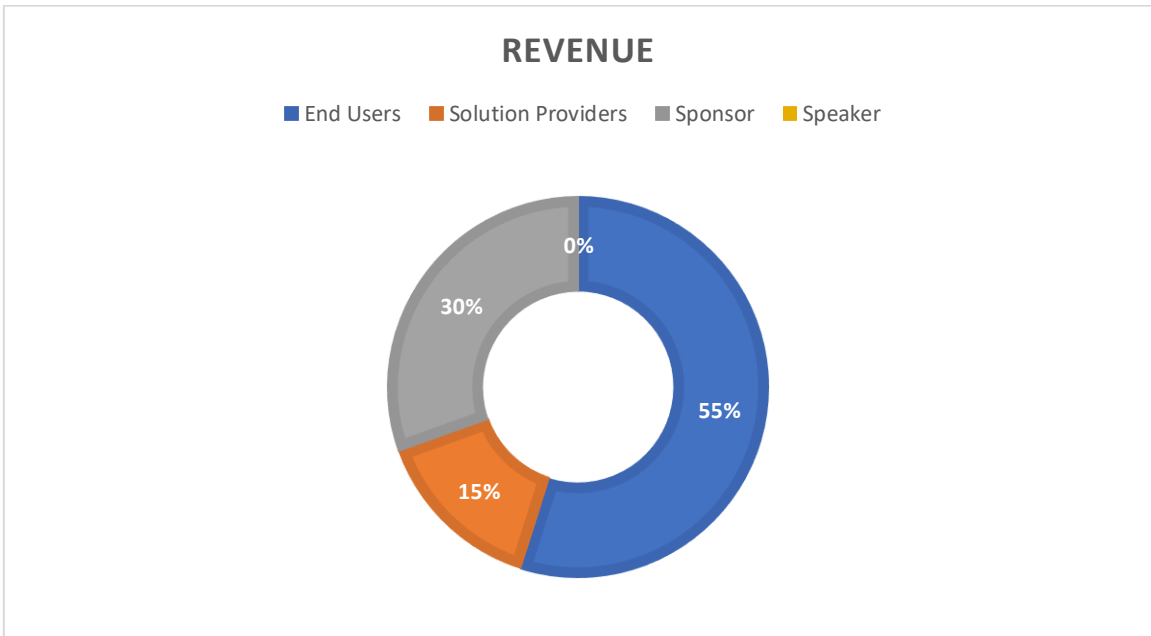
The founder and one of CEOs of TBM Group, Tose Krstev, confirmed that the finance allocation for the first event is the most difficult and unpredictable task, and expectation does not correspond to reality very often. As the estimates of costs and revenue of the event are only spread between the top management, no one can even investigate the real figures. Moreover, the board of directors are the only one, who are responsible for budgeting and for financial decisions taken during crisis situations. But the success of the First Innovative Tire Forum in 2015, which led to the diversification of the industry events, can only indicate that this forum was payed off and made a great revenue with bonus payments to involved organizers.

For the first tire forum it was important to sell a proper amount of sponsorship packages. It is not just about offering sponsors all possible benefits, but to explain properly all packages and let them choose the needed one. In addition, TBM stated, that sponsors wanted to be secure about potential growth of the company due to participation at the tire forum. The success of financial support provided by sponsorship depended on the right market research and it is also part of the marketing planning section.

Obviously, having access to the number of participants and knowing their payments, it is possible to estimate approximately the revenue of the Tire Forum in 2015. The participation fees per end user and solution provider for all kinds of events (including Tire Forums) are 2499 Euro and 2999 Euro respectively. Speakers are not charged and get a benefit in a form of a free pass for one additional entry and they benefit by receiving the following tickets with a discount. Sponsor's fees are presented with packages description in Appendix C and in the end of this financial planning section. In the First Tire Forum, the number of end users

accounted for 18 people, plus four solution providers and three speakers. The event was sponsored by Applus Adiada, a company which provides design and homologation services for the automotive industry worldwide. They had booked ‘Gold’ sponsorship package. The second sponsor was AEROX, known for an odour control system that is fitted outside the process gas duct and it reserved ‘Bronze’ package. The pie chart below describes the rough proportion of investments contributed by all attendees of the First Innovative Tire Development Forum in 2015. Unfortunately, the company does not track anymore data on the number of entries obtained with discount through speakers. Due to confidentiality, there is no legal permission to highlight or estimate costs, and thus, no net revenue should be predicted.

Figure 7. Gross Sales in percentage for First Tire Forum (2015)



Source: TBM internal data

Sponsorship Packages at TBM

TBM Evolution Group is heavily involved in the sponsorship tool that connects them closely with needed target markets. It is common to name sponsors within these events as *sponsor solution providers (SSP)*. There are various benefits which TBM offers to the users of this service. The sponsor solution providers get assistance and are supported the whole time by TBM. Sponsorship packages are active within three stages: before the conference, during the conference and post conference.

Before the event, the sponsor's logo will be placed at TBM's webpage and on the front page of the program brochure. In addition, SSP gets a chance of being a leader in the sector, as no other companies with similar products will be sponsors at the same event. If a solution provider has a preferential list of potential clients for doing business with, TBM accepts a wish list with up to fifty names maximum. Sponsors also receive two complimentary tickets for their organization. Depending on the package type, there are discounts on the following complimentary passes. By bringing to the event desired clients, sponsors benchmark themselves against their major competitors.

During the event, solution providers are giving a presentation of 45 min at the conference covering an exclusive topic and bringing the business solution to the audience. The options of Chairmanship, which means to be the 'main face' of the event by overseeing panel discussions and the Panel Participant are available as well at different types of packages. The option of material distributions for the audience has a specific set and rules. The delegate handout for participants needs to include up to six pages of A4 information. The advertisement (1/2 page) is published in the conference agenda, which is distributed during the event. The important note for sponsors that they must send an ad in accordance with the timelines and format required by Event Manager. SSPs also have a prime space in the conference lounge in order to place an exhibition stand. All sponsors will be announced at the opening ceremony and corporate banners (200cm*80cm) will be displayed in the conference room.

At the post conference activity, all solution providers receive the confidential delegate list with names, job titles and contacts. In addition, sponsors will receive the event summary and feedback of the delegates, and this option is only reserved exclusively for sponsor solution providers.

For detailed information regarding all types of sponsorship packages please follow Appendix C, which is an internal data of TBM group and serves as material for their potential sponsors.

Tire Forum Marketing Planning

The next stage of event management process starts with the marketing briefing, as a production team sends a brief to a marketing team. This document includes general info about the event, why this event is important, aims and objective, a list of relevant job titles and a list of speakers, a first draft agenda as well as geographical and industries coverage. This document includes the summary of all the info gathered and all the research done by the production team during two/three months before a marketing briefing. On the next day after a brief received to the team's inbox, production and marketing teams have a meeting regarding this document and go through it in detail. Here, the marketing department starts to be involved and works on lead generation process.

The success of the first Innovative Tire Forum was achieved because of the 'right' target audience. TBM group is specialized on the market search by using a unique method of leads generation. It is relevant to go into details at this stage.

As it was mentioned before, students and interns are responsible for the market research. If it is the first forum and a search of the potential attendees is started from a scratch, the full-time TBM employees are also involved in that process. On the daily basis, full-time employees are cooperating with participants for annual events, who attended an event before, as well with one who were on the lists but did not register for last conferences.

Keeping in mind, that the goal of the company is to involve a limited number of relevant participants in the conferences and is not to attract as many as possible attendees, the event organizer TBM Group is not using most of the marketing techniques. The number of participants should not be less than fifteen people and does not exceed more than thirty visitors. Surprisingly, advertising, promotions, public and media relations are not used even for a new forum that covers a new topic or specialization. The aim stays the same - to create a list of attendees 'manually' and assure that TBM Group kept in touch personally with each potential participant and discussed all concerns and preferences regarding the upcoming forum. There are several reasons, why the company is not up to relying on marketing techniques. The main explanation is the willingness of a company to have a direct communication with interested parties. What is meant by 'direct communication' in this case? It is simply about communication via phone or skype, and email or post for paper

work. As all conferences are designed for a small number of attendees, it is unnecessary to know their expectations and desires. During calls between potential customers and TBM, together they go shortly through the draft agenda prepared by production team, agree on the most suitable way of payment for a participant and cover other organizational inquiries. This technique helps TBM group to adjudicate the agenda of an event accordingly and fulfill visions of participants on an event. The second reason, why marketing activities are absent, is the cost saving and to secure that a participant's fee is still affordable and covers strictly justified expenses. However, the CEO of TBM stressed out that in the nearest future he wants to place advertisement on LinkedIn. (TBM Evolution Group, 2015)

Additionally, TBM group prepares post event activities, such as feedback session. The most attention is devoted to feedback session regarding new forums, which points on the successful and adverse aspects of the whole event. The feedback collected after the Innovative Tire Forum 2015 helped the company to introduce new topics and specialization for the next tire conferences.

Here is the right time to share the final audience, sponsors and panel speakers together with the modified agenda of the event. The last part of this section will explain how the participants search was done and will describe the special approach to the lead generation process (LGP) for the tire forum.

Lead Generation Process (LGP)

After the marketing briefing, the marketing team had four weeks in order to prepare a list of companies, email generation file and several search formulas.

The research for LGP starts with the company search, as production team has defined the location coverage (European region for tire forum) and industries with which marketing team must work. Google search was based on the given industry buzz words, such as tire testing, environmentally friendly, tire performance (breaking performance, wet grip), development, technical innovation, etc. The combination of key search words, which were used during company research stage are presented in the figure below. The examples of search phrases were "*List of tire production companies in EU*"; "*Highest revenue technical innovation companies in Europe*". The search is done through a specific formula, created for each event separately. The example of it for tire forum is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. TBM's Search Stage

Search field	Buzz words for Tire Forum	Type	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top list • Top 50 • Revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tire Production • Fuel Consumption • Rolling Resistance • New materials • Tire Performance • Legislation... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies • Industries • Firms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe • EU

Source: TBM Evolution Group internal data

There were two interns dedicated to this project and their responsibility was to create a mutual excel file with names of companies. As the usual part of the company search, all firms were classified according to country, size and industry. The size of company has three categories: S- small (less than 1000 employees), M-medium (1000-5000 employees) and L-large (more than 5000 employees). The final list of companies for the First Tire Forum accounted for around 120 companies within Europe.

In the next step 'job titles search' on LinkedIn there was only one intern involved, who prepared the Boolean formula. For the given search three different formulas were created. The first one was solely focused on employees related to legislation, rules on ecofriendly production and sustainability in tire industry. The goal of the remaining two formulas was to find the main group of attendees with the background at R&D and tire development departments. Referring to the size of the firm ('L', 'M' or 'S'), the proper formula was used during a Boolean search. The job titles for large companies went into the specialization and search was focused on job titles such as "Leading Engineer of Technology" or Research Engineer – vehicle Efficiency". The maximum amount of leads per company is 150 people and it was applied to such companies as Michelin, Land Rover, Jaguar, Fiat, etc. It was crucial to use seniority level in order to decrease the number which has exceeded 150 leads. Talking about small companies, the search was focused on general job titles and included

CEO, R&D Manager, Marketing Manager, etc. The last important thing which should be always taken into consideration was to use field “CURRENT” Job in the search. This is the major mistake done by interns and students.

The intern created a project called ‘Tire_Anna_1’ at inRecruiter, an advanced version for profile search, and saved there all relevant profiles which were extracted from LinkedIn. TBM Evolution group uses an access to LinkedIn Recruiter, which adjusts to TBM usage behavior and brings more relevant candidates for the event. This tool has numerous features helping to create a connection path. (Venkatraman, 2014) The next task is to transfer data collected to excel file. In order to transfer data, TBM uses another tool, which allows different manipulation with text and is called TextMechanic. The major benefit of this process is the repetitive action, which requires the same formula to be inserted every time when you transfer data and no technical knowledge is needed. The priority was to start with the transfer of data for big companies such as Apollo Tires, Pirelli Tire SPA, Aeros, etc. After adding all contacts into the excel sheet, there were more than eight thousand rows containing names with the respective job titles and locations.

The mail identification and mail verification stages brought expected difficulties to find domains of some companies. However, keeping in mind, there was no GDPR implemented at that time, the access to data was sufficiently easier and more open. The email identification process is about research on company’s domains and formats and is done through Google by checking sources containing email addresses of a needed company. If it was not possible to search for domain by using reliable sources, such as documents, excel files, conferences, associations, legal documents, etc., then an employee uses the ‘rocketreach’ webpage. It is not the most reliable source; however, it is the only option which allows to continue with the mail identification. For small companies, the relevant emails are usually found directly at their webpages. During the email verification process, all variations of email addresses are collected and sent to special websites. TBM group uses *mailtester.com*, which works with single entry only and allows to check unlimited amounts of emails. Another tool used is *Quickmailverification.com*, but it has a limit of 2000 emails per day for the whole marketing department. The results of the email verification give following colors:

1. green – means valid and defined, so an email can be sent later to a potential participant;

2. red -invalid and does not exist, and must be deleted from the list;
3. yellow – accept all (no data on it), requires an additional check through another advanced tool, which is done by a project lead
4. blue – unknown, as service did not proceed with it at that moment.

Talking about First Tire Forum, the list with detected emails accounted for roughly six thousand people after the mail verification, which are prepared for sending invitations.

After this data is collected and four weeks after marketing brief passed, the next stage is sales brief meeting and it means that the event takes place in two - three months. The aim of this brief is to create campaign email templates and to ensure that sales team is familiar with the topics and industry. The outcome of this meeting in the end of February 2015 regarding tire event was that the marketing team prepared invitation templates addressed to the end users, sponsors and solution providers and team continued a deeper research. Meanwhile the sales team also joined and had to conduct a search via phone. It was rather difficult to switch to a totally new topic for the sales team, as most of employees were not in touch with these topics before. They had to spend an extra time on self-study about tire industry.

The task of an intern was to send an excel file with new verified emails to the head of the marketing team every Monday and another excel file with 'accept all' emails for an extra check to the appointed lead of the project. Additionally, a search of solution providers and sponsors was conducted mutually by an intern and a project lead. This process is identical to end-users' search, but it requires some modifications in Boolean formulas. After one month of intense work under this search, an intern covered all medium and large European countries. At the follow-up re-brief a decision was made to expand geographical coverage and select Asian companies, which are planning to have and maintain close ties with the European market. Thus, on the lists have appeared many unknown names and for example such companies as Birla Tires (India), Kenda Rubber (Taiwan), etc. One month before the tire event (beginning of May 2015) the search by the marketing team was completed and they focused only on email communication and spread of invitations.

At the same time, the sales team worked on the same conference, searched for the same target, but the difference was in the way of communication and to get additional information.

The project lead conducts his own search and covers potential attendees via phone. The goal was to attract a person, to get his opinion on topics, recommendation, on what might be changed and in case that person is not interested or not the right one, to obtain contact details of relevant people. Going back to operational planning, the production team has the similar duties to collect information, but they are in touch with people who have already participated in related events with the goal to get their suggestions. This step is crucial for the production team that is drawing a draft agenda, which is then later modified by the sales team.

For the tire event, employees responsible for sales were mainly focused on looking for sponsors and solution providers. Their duty was to find people, who were involved before in tire conferences and relying on their experience ask for suggestions and invite to join the First Tire Conference. Due to communication with attendees, teams had to meet for re-briefs and to bring contentious improvements to the agenda. On the example of Tire Forum, the reader learns how the agenda presented by the production team is modified within the event management process by the sales team.

Agenda

One of the core tasks of the production team is to develop a draft agenda for all conferences. Later, when the sales team is also being involved into the event planning, they are bringing relevant changes into it and modify it accordingly.

The initial plan was to open the first day of the forum with the introduction to the industry trends, regional development and General Market Investment, focusing on South-East European (SEE) Tire Market and mistakes in trading with SEE countries and China. The following topics supposed to be specialized mostly on fuel economy, fuel consumption and new technologies rubber, providing effective solutions by different automotive manufactures.

Communication with potential attendees suggested to reshape the agenda of the first forum day. The general idea stayed the same – to cover trends in the tire market and to present sustainable innovative materials and technologies. Participants were concerned that they are not aware of the sustainability in this segment at all and requested to have a short introduction into this topic. Thus, before going to the core of this forum focused on sustainable and innovative materials and technologies”, TBM Group left a space for ‘sustainability’ topic.

Visitors had a chance to learn about corporate CSR reports, relationship of cooperation between automotive and tire segments, Original Equipment (OE) car requirements for drivers, public demand and legislation. The knowledge of these essential things made a smooth move to the core topics. During the next six hours, attendees were involved in the following discussions:

- ‘Keep on rolling: the steel core of the industry’ by Stijn Vancompernelle, Director Global Marketing and Business Development Rubber Reinforcement at Bekaert. He presented new opportunities to develop greener and longer lasting tires and talked about correlation across the supply chain.
- Panel Discussion: Fuel consumption and Breaking Performance & Fuel economy: key performances of the tire-challenges and development by the representative of FIAT. The expert of the Intelligent Tires covered two broad topics with the focus on the sustainability.
- Fuel consumption and wet grip: was dedicated to the sponsor who promoted his products and its results in rolling resistance, which tend to balance between fuel consumption and wet grip. This time slot was booked by manufacturer of specialty oil products.
- Rubber Technologies: gave an overview on raw material prices, the structure of a tire and the supply of end of life tire introduced by Manufacturer of High-Performance Synthetic Rubber. The sponsor presented his products and provided competitive analysis.
- Panel Discussion: EU Project LORRY, which focuses on reduction of trucks carbon footprint by an Innovative Low Rolling-Resistance Tire Concept. That was the last topic of the first day, discussed by Senior Representative of European Commission.

During the whole day in-between short breaks, attendees and speakers met face-to-face and exchanged their business cards with a mission to learn the professional background of each person they met.

For the second day of the conference topics related to EU regulations and Global Legislations were raised. The opening topic was Russian Tire Market Analysis, which was requested by participants in advance. European tire manufactures who visited this forum desired to examine whether it was worth to enter Russian market. The CEO of Russian

Automotive Market Research, Mrs. Tatiana Arabadzi, presented a market analysis, assessment of Russian import and export and compared Russian manufactures and foreign tire manufactures leading on the Russian market. After the break, the conference was focused extremely on the EU and the first topic was Market Surveillance in EU. The speaker explained that in the most highly regulated area for tire production marketing, EU rules are disregarded by ten percent of imported tires, and this undermined equality in regulatory enforcement and leads to a competitive disadvantage for European producers. There was a high interest in this topic and the following speakers added knowledge about the environmental policies and ineffective labelling. The most valuable information was provided by Goodyear Innovation Center, the leader in tire industry, who explained how they deal with legislations that comes out of Brussels and how they implement labelling legislation. The Global Innovation Manager, Mr. Jan Racke, shared the life situations which Goodyear commonly faces, and which are not highlighted externally and in the media. Additionally, Jan Racke opened the panel discussion for topic “Relationship of cooperation between automotive and tire”, as the continuation of his previous speech and developing other suggestions on how to deal with ineffective labelling on behalf of the participants. Another valuable knowledge on ineffective labelling and the related proposed solutions were introduced by the senior representative of Volvo Cars.

On the same day, many attendees waited for a next topic ‘Environmental policies’ by the head of Environment, Health & Safety Alessandro Cascini at Bridgestone Europe. Before the conference, all participants were asked regarding their preferences and suggestions about a draft agenda. Important to notice, all forty-three registered participants agreed to keep this topic without any changes. This presentation had been elaborated on the importance of the ecological side of the product, it had further discussed the environmental policies, its implementation and environmentally friendly materials. After the official end of the conference at five pm, participants had the last chance to meet important people and discuss topics in which they were interested and to share their contact details.

The above presented agenda proves that TBM Evolution Group always takes into consideration their participants wishes, suggestions and requests. These issues were discussed twice: during the initial communication when the invitation is sent and when the

participant confirms his attendance. The agenda for the First Tire Forum was moderately modified along to the attendees list during the lead generation process.

Coming back to the overall event planning process, during two-three months before the event, the main task of the marketing and sales teams is to continue with the lead generation process and to send invitations to the relevant one. In addition, there is a special formula which calculates the dates when reminders should be sent out again to potential attendees. For interns, it is a non-stop work on lead generation process. The interested people in the event, which were discovered by interns, are being in contact with the project lead from the marketing department. However, the CEO is also involved in communication, if the participant has concerns or questions regarding the financial part. The whole search and invitation process is being closed one week before the event. During the last week, all signed participants receive the final version of the agenda. From the intern's side, the project is closed, and they are taking over the next upcoming conference. Fulltime employees at marketing and sales departments get the privilege of attending some conferences time to time, if they have reached certain targets established by top management or if sponsor of the event is willing to invite them. The CEO Tose Krstev claims: "It is beneficial to experience such events as it helps to realize which 'product - LGP' was created by their work". (TBM Evolution Group, 2015) Unfortunately, most of the past events were not attended by these employees due to tight schedule and/or lack of finance. It is obligatory for the project lead from production team to be present at the event on which the employee was working on. The project lead serves there as a supervisor of the two days conference and is responsible for all inquiries arise within this time frame. Upon the availability of the CEOs, one of them is also attending an event and he is taking over the questions which are out of the project lead competencies.

Evaluation of Event at TBM

The next stage of the event management process is the closing of the conference and post-event activities, in which is only production team involved and it takes place one week after the event. The first task is to ensure that all attendees have received and have access to all electronical materials presented during the forum. Another core duty is to collect feedback from all attendees. It is done exclusively via phone or face to face communication. TBM Group considers this way of communication as the most valuable, as the production team

discuss again with attendees their opinions, expectations and suggestions for the next conference. All these points are taken into consideration and proceeded further.

Innovative Tire Development Series are one of the conferences, which are the most specialized into different topics. Every time, the production team adjusts an event and agenda itself according to feedback session and recommendations. Therefore, one month after *First Tire Development Forum 2015* in Berlin, a production team started to work on *Innovative Agricultural and Industrial Tire Development* planned for December 2015. The whole event management process stays the same as it was described for First Forum and includes the same stages of the research. In addition, during the search parts are also used materials created for the previous event. There is always a probability that some people from the lists of first conference might be interested in the following events. Thus, they are considered as relevant and taken into consideration.

The specialization of the given area brought the following topics:

- Annual Passenger Tire Development Forum in Berlin (May 2016);
- Innovative TBR Tire development Forum in Amsterdam (May 2016);
- Material development for Lightweight Vehicle in Frankfurt (September 2016);
- Innovative Curing and Tire Building Forum in Amsterdam (June 2017);
- Annual Innovative Mixing Room Forum in Amsterdam (November 2017);
- Innovative Tire Production Forum in Amsterdam (December 2018)
- Other annual tire events.

In 2019, TBM Group organized three conferences related to the Tire industry. In May, two annual forums, namely “4th Annual Innovative Truck and Bus Tire Development Forum” and “4th Annual Innovative All-Season and winter Tire Development Forum”, took place in Amsterdam. Company is always willing to expand to further specializations of Tire Development topics. However, the attendee’s satisfaction and positive feedback push the production team to create annual events and update their agenda.

In September, the company introduced a new topic called “Innovative Curing and Tire Building Forum”, learning how tire production plants are changing and how to follow up. The feedback session afterwards suggested to follow-up with this topic and to focus on

learning about efficiency and processes or sustainable reduction of waste. It is scheduled to come back to this topic in the 3rd quarter next year.

Currently, there are two annual tire forums planned for January 2020, and starting from November, marketing and sales teams are involved in the lead generation process. Despite of the core tasks of employees, they are always motivated to improve and simplify the processes. The next section aims to present a topic proposal for Tire Conference developed by interns and as the follow-up, the updates in the LGP investigated by interns too.

3.3 Suggestions on Optimization of Processes

TBM Evolution Groups seeks continuous improvements in all fields which effect productivity and achievements of the company. Apart event projects, employees are encouraged to work on processes which tend to simplify and automatize their daily duties. If someone is appointed to some automatization project, the workload for event projects is decreased and an employee works only on one-two conferences at the same time. There is always a space of improvements from the side of full-time employees, as well from interns duties.

The aim of the following section is to present the suggestions for TBM employees which are potentially to be under the top management revision in the future. Important to notice, all recommendations highlighted in this chapter are developed from the perspective of interns and regular employees and are voluntarily projects and do not have any due dates for implementation and no certain targets to be achieved.

Interns Projects

Yearly, the number of students applying for internship program at TBM Evolution Group sufficiently grows and the number of offers increases correspondently. In 2018, there were eight internship places available at the same time in the office, and this year (2019) TBM can offer up to ten spots. However, in high seasons such as summer period, inters are supposed to share their desks and fix working hours accordingly. It was suggested by German interns to create a timetable, in which interns add their working hours for the upcoming week on Thursdays and Fridays.

As the company is moving forward automatization, the following recommendation is suggested – to create a shared calendar in Outlook, that everyone can track when the inters are in office. The advantage of the shared calendar is that buddies of interns can plan their day more accurate by knowing when they can devote their time to students and have job shadowing or meetings with them. The example of calendar and how interns could mark their time slots in the calendar are highlighted in Appendix D.

The onboarding process for new interns will go through some changes starting on January 2020 and is being now on revision and opened for all investigations. Currently, the first day is focused on short introduction to the company, such as two hours presentation, office tour

and giving materials for self-learning at home. On the second day of onboarding interns are learning about event projects and on the third day they get an approved project in which they will be involved. After collecting interns' comments and opinions, they get often the topic or the industry which is not the most attractive for them. The student is very deeply involved in LGP, if the topic is familiar and the person is willing to learn more. There was a situation, where an intern was not successful in finding potential attendees and not doing the proper research for the “Electrification & Battery Development for Non-Road Applications” event. Therefore, she was offered to switch to “Data Governance & Compliance for Financial Institutions” project, and an intern managed LGP extremely good, as she had some background in legal and compliance sectors.

The recommendation for CEOs is to plan as soon as possible which project an intern will take over. The list of possible topics might be sent to the candidate together with an offer letter and an intern will confirm a chosen topic at ‘offer accepted’ stage. Starting from the onboarding day interns are aware of their projects and industries for their internship, which are preferred by students themselves.

Talking about intern's duties, as it was mentioned before, their responsibility is LGP. However, an additional help is always admired and if their knowledge is transferred to the fellows, it is a great benefit for TBM stakeholders. It is suggested to create a shared drive, where interns can upload one-pagers with relevant information.

Currently, there are some files which are stored at buddies' computers, but shared drive tends to make an access to documents easier and faster. There will be no need of asking all employees who has a certain file, as they will be stored at one place. Additionally, this is a good place to store materials for all passed conferences and to give accesses to folders which are crucial for involved employees.

The future of TBM group depends on all stakeholders and their satisfaction. Daily, the company considers the opinion of its major stakeholders' group – customers or participants of the events. It tries to adjust everything according to their recommendations and desires. Therefore, it might appear a feeling that another important stakeholder, called employees, are avoided and have less attention from the top management side. The balance between all stakeholders should be considered for the perspective company's health and growth. It is suggested to run feedback sessions for interns as well. The goal is not only to collect their

opinion, what they liked and disliked regarding their internship at TBM, but also to catch their suggestions for the next interns' generations and for overall processes improvements. These sessions might be done in the form of a face to face meeting during the last week of the internship. In addition to that, CEOs could issue certificates of internship program stating the duration, number of hours done and the topic of the event in which interns were involved. Such certificate serves as an official confirmation of participation in internship and could be attached to students' resumes. For regular employees, it may be launched one to one meeting (1to1) quarterly with their managers to discuss all questions and concerns. Many corporations suggest using this technique, which allows employees to discuss many relevant issues.

Automatization of Lead Generation Process (LGP)

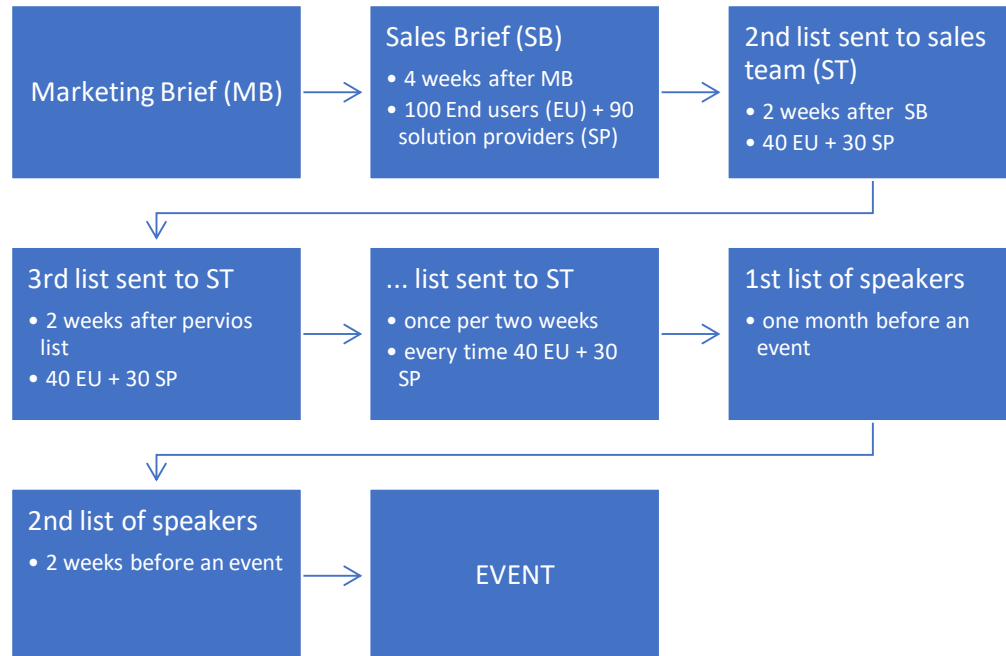
Besides general improvements in company's life, it is possible to develop the process of event management. At first glance, the whole process with the creation of an event, production, marketing and sales parts are perfectly organized and no interruptions required. But after observing the event management process for several conferences, there are some similar discrepancies found. Going back to LGP, the lists with potential participants are created by both marketing and sales departments. The lack of communication leads to duplicated candidates, which are mostly reached by sales team via phone. The marketing team suffers a lot due to this overlapping of attendees in both lists, as they lose their potential bonus from each person which was in their list but was registered through sales team. There are quite often such cases with interns, which leads to their disappointment with the process. In addition, the internship program is unpaid with the possibility to get the bonus of 3% of the participation fee per candidate reached via email. For example, if a solution provider was registered via email and has paid a fee of 2999 Euro, a responsible researcher receives a bonus of 90 Euro. Unfortunately, there is no approved data on the average number of duplicated candidates for each conference, covering also not reached people.

The next suggestion regarding a change of LGP tends to avoid an overlapping of candidates and recommends a new reward system. To begin with, the participants' search will be more effective if only one team is deeply involved and develops an excel file with the names of potential attendees. The marketing team could bring to the sales briefing a list of 100 companies covering end users and 90 companies for solution providers, but the number of

candidates is irrelevant. For the next two weeks, the sales team works with the received lists, adds an additional search on phone contacts and tries to reach them via phone. Each following two weeks, the marketing team delivers a list of 40 end users and 30 solution providers, while the sales team repeats the same actions with new lists upcoming. Both teams would work with the lists created by marketing team, excluding the overlapping and the competition 'who will reach a candidate first'. Starting from one month before the event, the same rules could apply for lists with potential speakers for events. The sales people would not conduct anymore their own research on attendees.

In addition, a new system of rewards within marketing team might be introduced accordingly. It would be applicable in combination with a proposed updated LGP. Even if an attendee was registered via sales team, an intern or the one who created a list from the marketing team will be able to get a bonus of 1,5% of the participation fee. It will be possible to get 37 Euro for end user and 45 Euro for solution provider. The bonus stays the same for a participant reached via email by the marketing team.

Figure 9. Proposed Lead Generation Process (LGP)



Source: author

It is suggested to apply the above proposed modification of LGP only to one event in order to check its functionality and if any other changes are needed. Moreover, the number of companies, which is required to be shared with sales team might be waived and top management of TBM is free to settle their desired targets. However, they should keep in mind, that the workload of the sales team will sufficiently increase, and it will be challenging to cover all candidates from the lists.

Conclusion

The success of the event organizer depends on the right event management process used by the company. The process of planning and implementation are the main components of the event management process. All event organizer companies follow their own structure of event planning stage.

This thesis highlighted a theoretical framework with all related terminologies. Controversially to the theoretical part, the event management process was discussed in the empirical part of this thesis. TBM Evolution Group, located in Prague and Skopje, was chosen for the analysis of their internal event management process. It was suggested to analyze this company because of a chance to learn its operations and all processes from the perspective of an intern. Despite the fact, that interns are only involved in marketing planning and management, they still get an insight glimpse into all the company's processes and are properly trained in order to be a backup for any team.

By comparing the theoretical and empirical event management processes, one of the thesis objectives was achieved. The main objective of the whole thesis was to define problematic areas of TBM Evolution Group. In addition, to provide them with suggestions on how their processes and operations might be improved. In order to run such deep analysis for TBM, the goal was to collect as much information as possible regarding their company, which cannot be found in the Internet or as printed materials. Several interviews with employees and CEOs were organized, participation in sales and marketing briefs and the overall involvement in company's business and social life.

The brief list of recommendations for TBM regarding the internship program is presented below:

1. to create a calendar with working hours for interns;
2. to discuss a desired project by intern during an interview stage;
3. to obtain a feedback from all interns at the end of their stage;
4. to issue a certificate of the internship completion;
5. to create a shared drive/ cloud for all documents that can be freely shared internally;

In addition, it is suggested to have one to one meetings up to one hour with managers for all employees, where all concerns can be discussed. It can be implemented on a quarterly basis during working hours.

Talking about the whole event management process of TBM, it is recommended to revise lead generation process within marketing and sales teams. The goal of both teams is to reach right profiles, which leads to the overlapping of participants in both lists. Mostly, duplicated candidates are contacted by the sales team via phone. Therefore, the power of both teams needs to be reunified and go in the same direction. It is suggested that the lists created by the marketing team will be shared with the sales team. This will create a pool of candidates, that the marketing team will try to reach by email invitations and the sales team via phone. This kind of method increases chances to contact potential attendees. In addition, the commission system will be adjusted accordingly.

All above mentioned recommendations and suggestions will be discussed with top management, and their opinion and feedback on these proposals will be received as well.

The initial limitation of the research was a limited access to financial data of TBM. However, there were other limitations discovered during the information collection. TBM does not have documents related to their operations, processes and general information about the company. All information about TBM was collected manually, relaying on data provided by employees and CEOs. As not all employees are working at TBM since 2012, there is knowledge loss regarding the planning and implementation stages of first conferences. In order to restore such information, CEOs were contacted more frequently. Nevertheless, there are still some missing parts on some event planning steps.

Luckily, the gathered information is approved by top management and will be used as guides for next generation interns, which can assist them in learning the processes of TBM Evolution Group.

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Appendix Appendix A

CHECKLIST: Event Suppliers and Support Services

Source: Adopted from Dowson & Bassett 2018, 14

ORGANIZERS

- ☐ Professional event organizers
- ☐ Event management companies
- ☐ Event production companies
- ☐ Party and event planners

VANUE

- ☐ Venue hire
- ☐ Room hire
- ☐ Equipment hire
- ☐ Outside catering
- ☐ Toilets and public facilities
- ☐ Car parking
- ☐ Security

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES/SITE

- ☐ Starting company
- ☐ Portable accommodation supplier
- ☐ Roadway/walkway supplier
- ☐ Fencing/barrier supplier
- ☐ Site vehicle supplier
- ☐ Toilets and public facilities
- ☐ Waste management
- ☐ Traffic management
- ☐ Crowd management
- ☐ Health and Safety
- ☐ CCTV
- ☐ Telecoms
- ☐ Wi-Fi

TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

- ☐ Travel agencies
- ☐ Transport companies
- ☐ Hotel booking agencies
- ☐ Destination marketing organizations (DMOs)
- ☐ Local tourism bodies

CONTENT

- ☐ Theming companies
- ☐ Guest speakers
- ☐ Workshop facilities
- ☐ Artists and performer

STAFF

- ☐ Security
- ☐ Stewards
- ☐ Volunteers
- ☐ Agency staff
- ☐ Bar staff
- ☐ Uniform provides

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- ☐ Bars
- ☐ Food concessions
- ☐ Specialist hospitality
- ☐ Mobile catering

ENTERTAINMENT

- ☐ Local attractions
- ☐ Tour guides
- ☐ Ticketing agencies
- ☐ Photographers and video makers
- ☐ Music and entertainment
- ☐ Costume hire services
- ☐ Florists

AUDIO VISUAL

- ☐ Lighting companies
- ☐ Sound companies
- ☐ Multimedia companies
- ☐ Live streaming companies
- ☐ Pyrotechnics operators

Appendix B

Stages of Event Planning Process



Source: Adopted from Shone & Parry 2010, 92

Appendix C

Sponsorship Packages

FEATURES AND BENEFITS	PLATINUM SPONSOR	GOLD SPONSOR	SILVER SPONSOR	BRONZE SPONSOR	OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION SPONSOR
	20.000 €	15.000 €	12.000 €	10.000 €	8.000 €
Website and Company Profile Promotion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exclusivity	✓				
Clientele Wish List	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary Passes	2	2	2	2	2
Complimentary Passes for clients you wish to invite to the conference	2	20% discount	20% discount	20% discount	20% discount
Recognition in Brochure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Speaking Slot	1	1	1	1	
Chairmanship	✓				
Panel Participant	1	1			
Corporate Materials Display	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exhibition Stand	✓	✓	✓		
Active Exposure and Branding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delegate List	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Opening Night Reception					✓

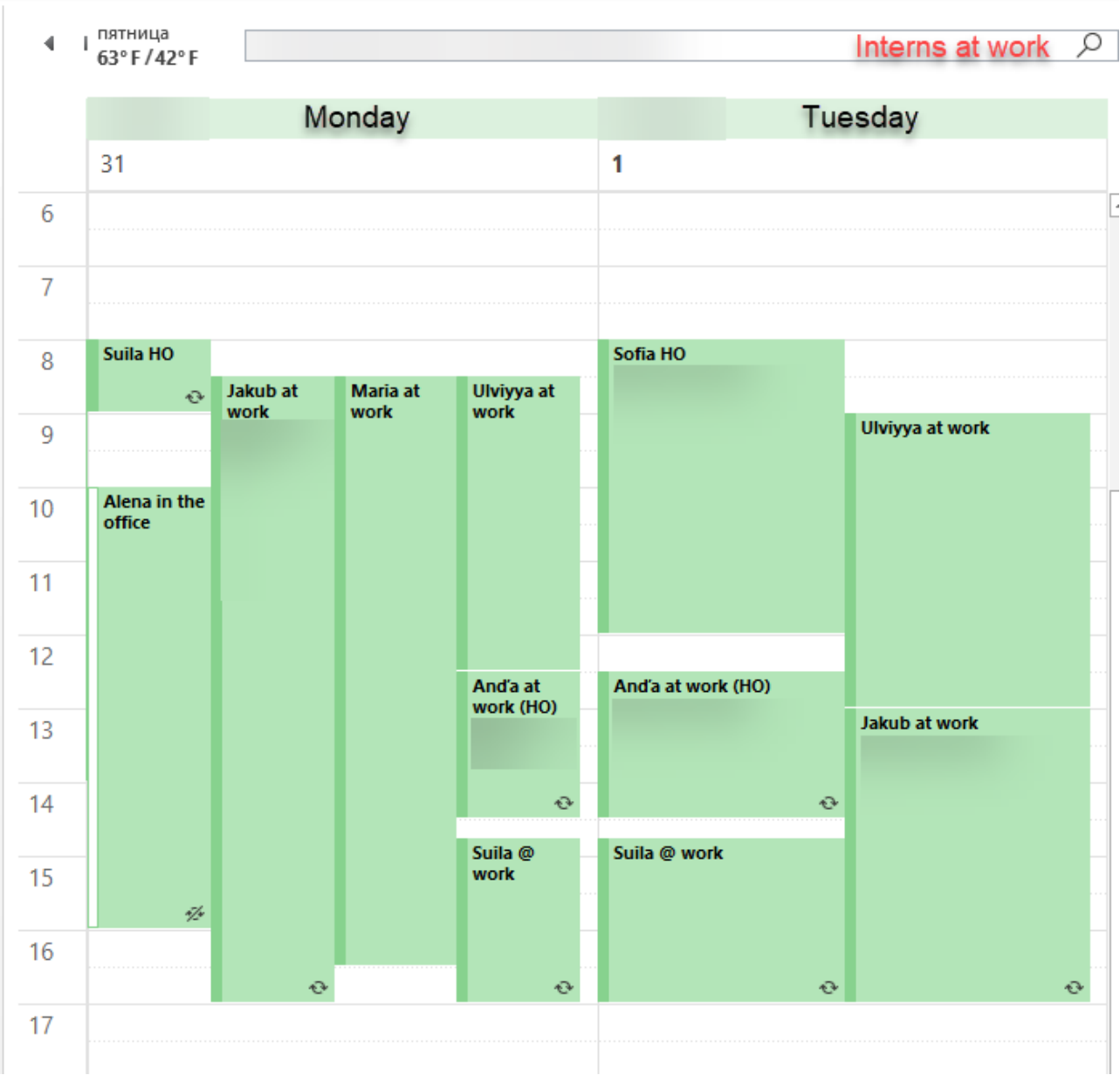
For sponsorship opportunities please contact:
 Luka Jovanovic
 Tel: +420 212 24 24 00
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Source: TBM internal data

Appendix D

Shared Calendar in Outlook for Tracking Working Hours



Source: author