

ABSTRACT

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Organising the Marketing of Events – Interaction between Actors in a Political Market Square

This thesis comprises five papers discussing two case studies – the mega-event World Championships in Athletics 1995 in Göteborg and the regional festival Storsjöyran in Östersund, Sweden. The study adopts an organisational-theoretical perspective and focus on both intra- and interorganisational aspects of the marketing work. The purpose is to develop understanding of the structure and the processes of the organising of the marketing of events, and how renewal of an event is performed.

An overview of the literature of marketing events is presented. The literature, however, has a normative and practical orientation – it views the environment as relatively stable and predictable and people as rational and decision-oriented. Instead a theoretical frame of reference was developed, which contains theories on temporary organisations and project networks based on descriptive case studies (e.g. Lundin & Söderholm, 1995; Hellgren & Stjernberg, 1995).

The result of the study shows that the rationality of the intraorganisational marketing work was action-oriented and emergent rather than decision-oriented and planned. When time is limited, and the environment is complex and changing, action is prioritised over planning. Actors adapted to a changing market and at the same time performed creative renewal of the event in order to produce an attractive event product. Thus, the marketing work was both reactive and proactive. Processes of renewal included various ways of encouraging the emergence of new ideas and creative solutions, such as brain storming, imitation of similar products and influences from the environment. Two processes of renewal were identified – institutionalised and emergent. An important emergent renewal process identified was improvisation.

As an idea, the event creates an imaginary space where actors project their imaginations on how the event can fulfil their interests. This space equals the political market square (PSQ) – a metaphor used in this study to understand the interorganisational marketing of an event. The PSQ adopts a *pluralistic* frame of reference, i.e. it places emphasis on the diversity of group interests, regards conflict as an inherent characteristic of organisational affairs and regards power as a crucial variable through which conflicts are resolved (Morgan, 1986). The Political Market Square metaphor illustrates the more or less limited *access* to participating in the marketing of an event and the *interaction* processes based on conflict and consensus, which, in turn, lead to turbulent or stable *change dynamics*.

Key words: events, festivals, project networks, political market square, political processes, renewal processes.