

RECENT TRENDS IN THE SPECIAL EVENTS MANAGEMENT

A. N. Golenko

*Belarusian State University, Minsk;
alintnok@gmail.com; scientific supervisor – A. F. Drozd, Ph.D*

The main aim of the survey is to give a general overview of the recent trends in special events management. This survey's data indicates the importance of the leading event trends in terms of event marketing and perspectives on definitions of event success. For event planners who want to be the innovators of the special events industry, it's important to take a close look at each of the these trends and see which ones they can implement in the event.

Key words: special events management; special events; trends in the special events industry; drones; crowdshaping an event; wearable technologies; pre-paid smart cards; virtual reality; social media; livestreaming.

Special events management is an exciting, growing industry. It is one of the world's largest employers, and it has major positive economic impact on the economy of any country. Every event has an organization behind it: managing activities, organizing funding, administering staff and voluntary personnel, undertaking marketing and public relations, organizing security, printing leaflets and tickets, hiring performers, arranging decorations, sorting out parking and many other activities. The way in which an organization deals with events is known as **event management** [1].

The special events management profession have emerged over the past decade within the discipline of public relations when specialists became necessary to manage the activities (special events) that creative organizations use to obtain publicity and to build corporate images. The number, diversity and popularity of events have also grown throughout this period. As the number of events increase, there is a growing realization about the continuing need to develop event management professionals who are able to create, organize, and manage events [2, p. 43].

Event management is an ever-changing industry, and keeping on top of new trends and technologies needs to be a top priority. Event attendees, corporate or otherwise, have higher expectations of event planners than they did ten years ago. These are the recent event management trends, which will make any event more enjoyable and memorable:

1. *Drones.* Drones give event planners and attendees the ability to record and stream the action from new heights and perspectives. They are not only perfect for broadcasting an event, but they also provide additional security. Large events require the kind of intense security measures that drones uniquely provide.

2. *Crowdshaping* events in real time. Crowdshaping is one of the big event management trends that will transform the industry for years to come. This technology gives event managers the ability to change variables such as music genre, venue temperature, and music volume on the spot based on the mood of guests through the use of smartphones and wearable technologies, which collect this data in real time. Crowdshaping was a proven success in 2014 when it debuted at Pepsi's «Bioreactive Concert». The organizers of this concert used an interactive wristband to measure the movement of the crowds to find out what music got them moving, the temperature of guests to determine whether the thermostat had to come down, and whether volume levels were too loud for guests [3].

3. *Pre-paid smart cards*. These cards provide rapid entry, and can reduce lines at vendor stands, and simplify merchandise transactions. With pre-loaded funds or a linked bank account, there's no need for cash to change hands. Festival attendees can make in-event purchases with the tap of the smart card, which generates more sales. Research shows that smart card owners spend upward of 40 % more when they are not opening their purses and wallets to pay for food and merchandise [4].

4. *Virtual reality*. Virtual reality (VR) technology is an attraction which event organizers should take advantage of, and incorporate it into their event agendas. Virtual reality is a simulation of a real-life environment, focusing on stimulating the vision and hearing. It can be used for marketing and promotions like virtual tours, or product demos. One of the most powerful uses of VR is letting people, both speakers, and attendees, to break the barriers of time and distance. This technology provide an ability to allow virtual speakers to take the stage, create virtual meeting places and let attendees actively participate in discussions. VR technology will be an event essential in the not too distant future. This technology that is sure to guarantee attendee satisfaction and enjoyment. Companies like Facebook, Samsung, Coca-Cola, and Google have all already invested in, and incorporated VR technologies into their events and seen huge improvements in attendee engagement [5].

5. *Social media*. Social media has definitely had a tangible impact on marketing awareness and revenue. Social media has grown to be a major component in driving attendance at festivals and consumer events. Attendees can find one another quickly, and build communities around common interests and passions before, during, and after the show. Successful events use social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to generate excitement, encourage conversation and sharing, and build a following that can be promoted to year after year [4].

Eventbrite (Eventbrite is the world's largest event technology platform) calculated the actual value of social media sharing in terms of awareness and

ticket sales. Across all types of festivals and consumer events, Eventbrite found that:

- Facebook shares were worth about \$4.15 in future ticket sales, on average.
- Twitter drives nearly 28 event page views, or almost 2 times the number of views than Facebook and \$2.18 per tweeted share [4].

6. *Livestreaming*. Livestreaming expands your audience beyond event capacity. It encourages attendees and staff to share your livestream with friends who couldn't attend. Attendees can invite people to join Facebook Live events and tweet links to their followers. The latest trend in livestreaming is crowdsourcing. Technology like Periscope and Facebook Live helps attendees broadcast their personal experiences easily. Define an event hashtag and encourage attendees who broadcast their experience to use it, so you can measure the results [4].

The latest trends have also touched our country. I would be proud to provide an example of perfect implementation of Event Technology Trends in Belarus this year. Future LIVE in Minsk. Future LIVE is an exhibition where thanks to the modern technologies such as art installation and 3D mapping, interactive visual display, virtual and augmented reality visitors can see magical creatures and alien plants. Attendees will be able to undertake an intergalactic journey and get familiar with unusual art objects.

To sum up, trends are helping event professionals to organize and produce the best and most memorable event with the optimal value to spend. Understanding the trends in the events industry is key to anticipating the opportunities and challenges in the global market.

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