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Photo by: Helen Black
29.08.2008, Connect Festival, Scotland

How European International Niche-Music Festivals Reach and Attract Their Audience

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Sincerely,

Kiril Aleksiev

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Foreword

The year was 2008 and it was a particularly hot summer day in Bulgaria. A group of singers, players of instruments and disc jockeys who had decided to manage themselves and to build together a career in the world of reggae music came up with a funny name for their future organization and it was “The Zionlionz Soundsystem.” The name came from the mythology of reggae music and more precisely from the lyrics of the famous song “Iron Lion Zion” written and composed by the late great poet, singer and revolutionary Robert Nesta Marley. The 8 members of this so called *Soundsystem* (another term borrowed from the Jamaican music industry) had worked together for the past four years informally, in good faith, and as Caves (2000) would say only through verbal contracts and through the shaking of hands. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian lions were gaining slowly their momentum and eventually started to receive requests to organize random party nights at different types of venues and various disco clubs in the city of Sofia – capital of Bulgaria. In fact in that same summer day, the crew was waiting for a confirmation of their next performance –a student party to be held at the building of the Biology faculty of Sofia University. The boys had just sent their poster to the venue owners and were waiting for that final call in order to kick off the online promotion. The phone rang. After having a less than a minute talk - the show was canceled. “The Zonlionz” could not believe their ears, and furthermore they could not fully comprehend what exactly had happened as the call was way too short and lacked any satisfactory explanation for this sudden cancellation. They had to call again and to request more feedback. Then the real astonishment came. It turned out that it was all about the outlook of poster they had sent earlier. The text and the images included on it were also part of the problem. “It is a propaganda...” the venue owner said, “we cannot let that event happen in our premises and that is final.” To our regret the actual image is not available to be included in the paper here, but to put it in words it was a simple poster saying “The Zionlionz Soundsystem proudly presents: The History Of Riddim.” The text was printed on a sandstone background and the words “History Of Riddim” (where *riddim* is a slang word for rhythm) were mounted on the front side of an image of a medieval shield. In the corners of the poster were placed randomly other medieval ornaments like

crests and candlesticks. Beneath the central image of the shield were listed the names of the DJs that were going to select the music for the night and they were namely: Dj Zion, Dj Groovy, Dj Phoenix and Dj Dancing Angel. Well, no one intended to get the message misinterpreted like that but apparently the owners of the venue took it a bit too serious. They further explained that this was probably a Zionist gathering under disguise – they thought so when they looked at the names of the selectors and also at the candlestick images, which they associated with the Menorah (the nine branched candlesticks which the Jewish community uses for the holiday of Hanukkah), however it was not that particular candlestick image. On the other hand, the owners said that the word *Phoenix* was also associated with Nazi symbolism and therefore they concluded that there was something inappropriate about that party and they could not figure out which group exactly organized this –Zionists or Nazis. “It is a secret gathering of some sort, or whatever it is we will not let it happen and you better be happy we did not call the police on you...” these were the last words of the owner before he hung up the phone and so the saga ended. It was really a mind boggling experience and at first the group of friends took it with disappointment, but later on it turned out to be the best laughing stock they had for the rest of the summer.

With this short opening anecdote I want to start up the discussion about the production and promotion of different niche-cultural events and also to emphasize on the importance of the correct signaling and communication with the different stakeholders in such events. The usage of images, texts and symbols of any kind is a powerful tool that could attract and influence on individuals, yet it could also be misinterpreted and sometimes lead people to wrongful associations. The interest of the current thesis is focused on the central question of *“How European international niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience?”*

1. The phenomenon researched in this thesis

The phenomenon researched in the current thesis is, in the broadest sense, the organization and the offering of international musical festivals as forms of special events¹ in a cultural economics/ cultural tourism context. However, to make it more specific, the interest and focus of the current research does not fall on all types of international music festival events, but especially on European festivals, which furthermore offer a specialized musical program associated with a niche²-type of culture or an artifact. Further introductions of the conceptual terminology and academic theory used throughout the paper are presented by the end of this chapter and thorough elaborations could be read in the following Chapter 2.

2. Motives

Two are the main motives to delve in the proposed research study. The initial interest to explore the supply side of musical festivals comes from a private individual perspective, from my own background as an amateur music festival organizer³. Our cultural organization continues struggling hard, especially in meeting the ends between attendance rates and financial incomes. As discussed in the classes of Arjo Klamer (1999),

¹ See Donald Getz (1989) who coined the term “special events” and further developed a scale for their rank and magnitude. More on the special events theory is discussed in the Theoretical Framework of this thesis found in Chapter 2.

² As explained in the online edition of *Pocket Fowler's Modern English Usage Dictionary*: “In the business jargon, *niche* (always pronounced neesh, of course) means ‘a special section of the market’ to which the marketing effort for goods or services may be specifically directed, and in this use the word has developed a range of attributive uses (i.e. before another noun) such as *niche market*, *niche product*, and *niche player* (a firm which exploits a niche).” *Reference Online through EUR account*: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t30.e2618> [13 December 2010].

³ Since 2004, alongside a group of friends, I have engaged in entrepreneurial cultural activities to set up and promote to recognition the first Bulgarian festival dedicated to reggae music. This year, the event is having its 8th annual edition and it is also included in the sample of this current study. Detailed profiles of the festivals have been presented in Chapter 4 of this paper.

the organizational culture of our company is a prime example of what Cameron and Quinn (1999) label as an adhocracy⁴ - extremely creative and productive organizational set up, yet chaotic in structure, always balancing at the brink of dysfunction. Therefore, a research like the current one is seen as a progressive step towards becoming less chaotic and more consistent with the international good practices of other counterpart niche-festival organizations.

On the other hand, my second motive is academic in nature and stems from my readings as a master student specializing in the field of Cultural Economics & Cultural Entrepreneurship. Main inspiration comes from the works of prominent cultural economists like William Baumol (1971), Bruno Frey (1986, 1998, 2003), David Throsby (2001) and Ruth Towse (2010), who all mention that festivals and cultural tourism are closely related concepts and certainly amongst the subjects of interest of the cultural economics discipline. However, as Towse (2010) formulates it best, research in the direction of festival economics is not voluminous enough to be featured in a textbook of its own. The research on festivals is rather “scattered” across publications in various economic and non-economic domains (Towse, 2010:513). A large number of questions still remain unanswered on both the supply and the demand side of festivals economics and therefore the current investigation has the ambitious intention to produce some useful insights for both the academic field of cultural economics and the professional arena of festival production.

3. The Research Question

The central question of this thesis is: *“How European international niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience?”* and it has been posed in an interview to the members of organizing committees/ founders of five international niche-music festivals across Europe. The research question starts with the word *how*, and for one to understand how something

⁴ See Cameron and Quinn (1999) who propose a tool to diagnose organizational cultures with the help of The Competing Values Theory where adhocracy is one of the four possible types of organizational culture. Research on cultural values has been conducted independently in the fields of sociology, psychology, management and recently it appeared in the cultural economics discipline – see Klamer (1999).

is done, one has to seek the knowledge from a skilled informant or an expert source that could provide quality information and specifics. As Bryman (2008) advises, how-questions are most efficiently answered with the help of qualitative methods and interviewing. Therefore, the researcher has designed the strategy and methodology of the current research following the prescriptions of conducting qualitative social research using personal interviewing guided by a predominantly economic theoretical framework with some relevant imports from the events management and marketing literature.

4. Research objectives

The objectives of the research are to compare existing and functioning European niche-festivals in terms of their audience attraction practices. Furthermore, the study at hand attempts to connect the qualitatively observed reality with certain economic and marketing theories and tries to see to what extent observations and theory are congruent and adequate in explaining the researched phenomenon. Several are the points of theoretical departure for the current study and they are thoroughly examined in the following Chapter 2, however the brief mentioning of the concepts is due to the purpose of this introductory chapter.

One suggestion for further research in the supply side of festival production comes from Ruth Towse (2010:534) who says: “One of the main questions for cultural economics is whether there is a general theory of spatial location that can be invoked in explaining the location of cultural facilities”. Following Towse’s suggestion and inspired by the classes of Professor C.B.G Langeveld, the author will try to apply the reasoning of economic geographer Walter Christaller (1966) with his Central Place Theory. Furthermore, in today’s Digital Era, another parallel will be proposed particularly between niche-festivals supply dynamics and Chris Anderson’s (2006) theory about the “Long Tail”, or the descending but still asymptotic end of the demand curve where supposedly all the niche audiences reside. Another interesting theoretical application to be addressed is Sherwin Rosen’s (1981) Superstar Theory as a possible explanation to audience attraction. How relevant is the logic of the superstar mechanism applied to artists featured in niche-festivals is to be tested. As mentioned earlier, the researcher is interested in how niche audience is being attracted, or in other words, what strategies are being used by the suppliers. Therefore imported logic from the fields of events management and strategic marketing will also be discussed and

implemented in the theoretical framework of the thesis, including the seminal reasoning of Donald Getz (1989, 1997) on special events as well as some of the expertise of Australian writers Johnny Allen (2002), William O'Toole, Ian McDonnell and Robert Harris who have compiled and issued in several editions a special textbook dedicated to festival production. Also relevant to the subject is the work of Joe Goldblatt (2002) who is a prominent Certified Special Events Professional (CESP) and also an author of a textbook on special events.

5. Aim and relevancy

The aim of this master thesis is to present what is the current situation in the world of European niche-festivals, as well as to shed more light over the emerging patterns of audience attraction strategies amongst niche-music festivals. Through the qualitative data inputs (staff interviews) given by professionals in the field, this research aims to be helpful to cultural economists and festival suppliers in better understanding and comprehending the dynamics of attracting the audience of specialized festivals as well as probing the explanatory power of several economic theories. As a part of a ground-breaking process in the field of festival economics, this thesis aims to contribute to the whole body of knowledge rather than to generalize its findings, therefore the author will avoid giving any firm conclusions outside the context and environmental scope of the current research project. As Bryman (2008:373) advises, for the purpose of social research with a qualitative design, concepts will not be taken as definitive, but more as “sensitizing” - giving a general sense of what is referred to.

The author's belief is that his study will prove relevant, as the literature dedicated to the economics of festivals is rather limited, and the little that already exists is mainly focused on the demand side of the festivals' market. There are almost no studies that investigate the reasoning and actions taken by suppliers of festival events and in that sense this study is more or less a pioneering one. The developed economic models and theoretical frameworks in festival economics are rather poor and this in itself is a challenging circumstance for the current research, yet it opens a whole new research field to embark upon, providing the researcher with more interpretative freedom and vast grounds for inductive reasoning.

6. Structure of the thesis

Reading further on, the audience of this work can expect to witness a qualitative comparative investigation conducted by the researcher who narrates and presents the final conclusions based on the information gathered from several specifically chosen case studies. The structure of this research is outlined in 5 main chapters and they appear in the following order: In the next Chapter 2, the theoretical points of departure have been introduced. Then, Chapter 3 explains the methods and instruments that have been used to conduct the research. In the same chapter important limitations of the study connected with the method have been recognized and considered. Chapter 4 (the data presentation and interpretation) is dedicated to the case studies that have been qualitatively analyzed and compared, hence in that chapter the reader can find detailed introductions to the sample cases included in this study, also the reader will be exposed to the reasoning and interpretations of the author who attempts to connect the data with the used method and the proposed economic and marketing theories. Chapter 5 formulates the main conclusions of the research and gives answer to the main research question of the thesis. It also provides an evaluation of the appropriateness of the theory and the methods being used. Further along the concluding pages of the last chapter, suggestions for additional research have been proposed. All the relevant lists and related graphs and tables appear in appendices and are to be found at the very end of the paper.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background and Framework

Introduction

In this chapter the theoretical points of departure for the current thesis are introduced. The aim of this chapter is to situate festivals and especially niche-music festivals in different theoretical contexts including cultural and standard economics and where applicable to draw useful concepts from the marketing and management literature. The chapter is organized as a literature review of the different theoretical domains that are relevant to the topic of the thesis and in the end builds the theoretical frame for the subsequent methodological data collection tool which is explained in details in the following Chapter 3. The cultural economics perspective on festivals is the first and main starting point.

1. Festivals in the context of Cultural Economics

As Ruth Towse (2010) explains in her recent and very detailed textbook about the Cultural Economics discipline, festivals and their economics were one of the earliest topics in the discourse, yet the research work remains rather scattered across journals and never received enough attention in order to appear independently in textbooks. For instance, the Edinburgh International Festival was researched by Vaughan (1980), later on Frey (1986) analyzed the Salzburg Festival and O'Hagan (1992) focused his study on the Wexford Opera Festival (Towse, 2010:513). Towse's own contribution to the subject is also valuable in its own right as she tries to unify the scattered pieces of literature and to delineate certain theoretical guidelines and possible departure points for further research in the topic of festival economics. As Towse (2010) states when festivals are regarded as an economic topic, research efforts are due in both the demand and the supply side of festival production. Vaughan (1980) for example looked at the Edinburgh Festival and studied the economic impact of the event in terms of benefits to the local community derived from the visitor's festival related expenditures. His data collection was mixed and included surveys, interviews and local business account reports, as well as information from the local authorities and the festival itself. On the demand side of festivals the work of Vaughan (1980) shows how festival activities actually create positive externalities, or in Towse's

terminology ‘positive spillovers’ for local businesses and communities. Research done in the direction of economic impacts can provide support for the argument of considering festival events as a vital part of both cultural and urban development policies (Towse, 2010). It could be argued that Frey (1986) provides some initial supply side analysis as he explores the turnovers of the Salzburg festival and determines some important characteristics of the festival production in terms of its ticket pricing, staff salaries and festival management behavior, but on the whole the paper’s reasoning is aimed more at the governmental cultural policies and laws which provide too much “guarantees” for festival managers and usually come out of the public purse. Frey (1986:33) criticizes the function of the supply side and particularly the managerial behavior of the Salzburg Festspiele directorate (consisting of a president and three other directors). Frey’s argument is that due to the heavy subsidization from the government (guaranteed by federal law) organizers of festivals feel too much in control and begin to operate with the funds in an “uneconomic way” by tendentiously paying “above-equilibrium” artist fees and staff salaries. This kind of managerial behavior, Frey argues create inefficiencies and even waste especially when high demand figures are present (Frey, 1986:40). In a later study Frey (2003) suggests that festivals can even overcome the Baumol’s cost disease of the performing arts by clever programming and strategic artist hiring in off-season times when wages are lower than usual. However, Frey’s (2003) reasoning on the supply side of festivals is not convincing enough as empirical data does not fully support his claim and as Towse (2010:518) notes it is only applicable for couple of festivals in Europe while the majority of events across the world continue to face serious economic struggle. The current research aims to further explore the supply side of festivals and to test certain economic theories that have not been discussed in the context of music festivals so far as well as to focus more on the strategic managerial behavior of organizers when it comes to maximizing visitor attendance and incomes. The later part invites for realizing the role of other relevant fields of study such as cultural tourism and event management theory in the process of festival offering.

2. Festivals in the context of events management

While cultural economists have paid a rather limited attention to festival economics and the dynamics of festival production, it seems that events management experts, urban geographers and urban economists have delved far deeper into the subject. In the event management literature festivals and their production fall into a bigger domain of events that is labeled 'special events'. The later term was coined by geographer and tourism professor Donald Getz (1989, 1997) who further defined the product characteristics of special events and split them into several sub-categories. According to their size and scale of impacts (such as: attendance, media coverage, infrastructure, costs and benefits) special events were categorized in sub-types such as: *local*, *major*, *hallmark*, and *mega-events* (Allen et al, 2002:12). As a whole special events can include a diverse array of happenings with different purposes including: national days and celebrations, cultural performances, trade promotions, sporting fixtures and many others, hence distinctions between categories are often very blurred (Allen et. al, 2002). However Getz (1997:6) provides some definitions and measurement criteria for special events depending on their context and size. Two are the main perspectives that Don Getz (1997:4) explains when defining the meaning of special events. First, from the point of view of the visitor: "A special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience." Second, Getz (1997:4) adopts the perspective of the organizer/founder of the event and his definition states: "A special event is a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programs or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body." Furthermore Getz (1997) develops some criteria for the distinction between types of special events. In order for an event to be classified as a mega-event for example, its attendance rate should exceed 1 million visits and the capital costs should be at least around \$500 million. Events with such reputation are usually termed as a "must-see events" and usually bring to the host community extremely high levels of media attention, prestige, huge economic impacts and increased levels tourism in the region. Hallmark-events on the other hand are the ones that are associated with the spirit of a town, ethos or a region and usually become synonymous with the name of the place (Allen et.al, 2002). A classical example of a hallmark-event is the one of the Edinburgh International Festival in Scotland that was mentioned earlier. Getz (1997:5) argues that hallmark-events are the ones that have the

ability to provide a competitive advantage for their host-communities. However most cultural events fall into the category of major-events which are not so huge and overwhelming, yet are able to deliver a significant amounts of media interest, visitor attendance and economic benefits (Allen et. al, 2002). Niche-music festivals which are the topic of the current thesis would probably fall in this last category of major-events, however this should not be taken for a constant and the possibility of change and transition of niche-music cultural events between the proposed categories should not be ruled out. As Goldblatt (2002:15) explains in the event management profession, change is the only constant and furthermore all special events ultimately aim to develop, grow and increase their impact on all social, political and economic frontiers of our life.

3. The different type of impacts of festivals

As stated above special events have a wide spectrum of impacts on society, culture, politics and economics. Therefore a brief discussion on the different types of niche-music festivals and their impacts from the perspectives of economics and management is due.

- a. **Social and cultural impact of festivals:** It is said that all type of special events have a social and cultural dimension to them and exercise a direct influence on the participants and the host-communities (Getz, 1997). Usually the experiences are connected with sharing entertainment and celebrations, boosting of pride and status validation and so on. Allen et al. (2002) hints that most of these social and cultural impacts can be and should be reflected in the mission statements of the event itself. For example a part of the mission statement of the Bulgarian reggae festival “The Big Big Summer Reggae” states: “The aim of the festival is to popularize the Caribbean music and culture amongst Bulgarian youth and to bring musical pleasure to all music lovers in the country. Bringing international and world-famous reggae artists to Bulgaria is amongst our top priorities.”For the period of eight years this event went beyond the bounds of music and with the help of authentic Jamaican reggae artists who visited and performed it could be argued that the event now caters not only for the musical pleasure of the audience but also facilitates a strong Jamaican-Bulgarian cultural exchange that slowly gains awareness in both countries. However it has to be acknowledged that festivals can bring also unintended negative effects on society when it comes to bad community control and poor crowd behavior management (Getz,

1997). Consequences can vary from substance abuses, to criminal activities and can easily jeopardize the image and the agenda of the festival and disturb the public perception of the event (Allen et al., 2002:28). Event managers have to be alert and to be prepared with strategies to successfully tackle bad crowd behavior and always not to forget that the host-community interests need to be prioritized and sought for with great care (Getz, 1997).

- b. **Physical and environmental impacts of festivals:** Large festivals and especially the ones that have turned into hallmark-events also can in both directions draw benefits or leave trace from/on the physical environment of the host community and region. As Hall (1989) points out festivals can sell and market their event using the intrinsic properties of the destination turning it into an aesthetic pleasure for the visitor. For instance the Slovakian reggae festival “Uprising”(see Case Study #2 in Chapter 4) deliberately has chosen to locate itself next to a lake and to advertise the physical properties of this natural water pool called “Golden Sands” and the leisure opportunities it brings for the visitor: “The advantage of Golden Sands is that it is a natural pool that offers not only rental boats and water bicycles but also an opportunity to have an adrenaline holiday with water skiing and water lifts” (Uprising Reggae Festival Slovakia Website, 2011). As Allen et al. (2002:30) point out the provision of such physical infrastructures often comes at a costly price to the festival budget but in return it brings positive image and increases the incentives of the host-community to like and accept the event. However, again adequate crowd movement and pollution (waste) control are key factors to prevent negative impacts to the environment. Good ways to resolve issues of physical character is to communicate with local authorities and to adopt and promote their best practices such as recycling policies, educational and practical waste control and health safety programs. Cooperation with politicians and local government is essential as they are an important part of the festival management equation (Allen et al., 2002:33).
- c. **Political impacts of festivals:** The ancient roman politicians were the first to have an eye for the ability of events (particularly the power of Circus) to keep their population happy and themselves in power (Allen et al., 2002:33). The festivals included in the

current research are mostly independently staged by non-government organizations and the magnitude of these festivals is smaller than the one of major, hallmark and mega-events but as mentioned before. Although these festivals remain niche and highly local they all hold the potential of growth and just like their big brothers are made of the same attractive mix of social and economic benefits that eventually become a platform for politicians everywhere around the world. For instance in the present study the “Khamoro International Roma Festival” (see Case Study #4 in Chapter 4) has the potential to be not only a celebration of local Roma culture and music but also an effective political tribune for the advocacy of Roma rights and social rehabilitation in the region.

- d. **Touristic and economic impacts of festivals:** As mentioned above, governments are more and more prone to use festivals and other types of special events as boosters for the local service-based economy. Allen et al. (2002) explains how the expenditures of visitors spread over travel, accommodation, restaurants, shopping and other related services. One particular sector that encompasses most of the later services and really gains economic growth from cultural events and festivals is the tourism sector. The symbiosis between events and tourism has given birth to a new industry named “event tourism” that Getz (1997) defines as:

“The systematic, planning, development and marketing of events as tourist attractions, catalysts for other developments, image builders, and animators of attractions and destination areas; ... A market segment consisting of those people who travel to attend events, or who can be motivated to attend events while away from home.”

Cultural economists also recognize the symbiosis between tourism and events yet they call it from their own perspective with a slightly different name – “cultural tourism”. David Throsby (2001:128) argues that whether international or local all tourism has a cultural side to it. Motives of events’ visitors to travel may vary from simple curiosity to sophisticated leisure pursuits, but undeniably all their event-related experiences are located in a cultural context and “are replete with cultural messages which may or may not be comprehended or appreciated.” Throsby (2001) comments

tourism in the context of the cultural industries but points out that tourism is not a cultural industry in its own right, rather it is more like a “user of the products of other industries in the cultural sector – the performing arts, museums and galleries, heritage sites and so on”(Throsby, 2001:129). In the words of Throsby (2001) cultural tourism is a niche-market in itself and the typical experience products that are marketed within include visits to cultural festivals or other sites based around a cultural theme. Towse (2010:529) however expresses the idea that cultural tourism, from economic point of view is to some extent different from ordinary tourism and the difference is mainly expressed in the amount of expenditures that cultural tourists make. Towse (2010) argues that cultural tourists are likely to have higher levels of education and therefore to be generally richer than the average tourist. It is well known to cultural tourism organizers that tourism brings economic growth but like all of the above mentioned impacts, cultural entrepreneurs should keep in mind the negative ramifications of tourism and do everything possible to keep them to a minimum. Throsby’s (2001) suggestion is also that one should use the concepts of sustainability borrowed from environmental economics in order to prevent damages to cultural sites, to evade congestion of facilities and areas and to stop the inappropriate hotel development in culturally sensitive regions. A proper pre-event assessment of the possible external cost of cultural tourism can create a win-win outcome with positive effect on both cultural values and economic profit (Throsby, 2001:130, Towse, 2010:532).

4. Festivals in the context of Superstar Theory

The theory of superstar economies has been put forward back in 1981 by economist Sherwin Rosen who argued that mainly in the art sector there is a small segment of individuals (artists/performers) who are considered, or prove to be slightly more able and qualified than others and exactly this small segment of top-quality artists are producing larger outcomes and also earning much bigger incomes than the rest of the market players. This personal advantage coming from innate abilities of individuals is hard to be captured by a precise and measurable economic factor, as Rosen explains but nevertheless it has its definite place in the proposed models as “quality” or “talent.” Except talent other important factors that interplay a role in the superstar effect are technology and the internal and external effects of economies/diseconomies of scale (Rosen, 1981:849). The theory of

Rosen spawned big interest amongst scholars who further tried to apply his models of superstar economies in other professional fields (see Adler 1985, Frank and Cook, 1995). Frey (1998) further connected the superstar theory to the supply and demand dynamics of the art market and particularly to art institutions. His take is focused on museums and to their collections and his analysis concludes that we can safely talk about the existence of “superstar museums” and “superstar exhibitions” which could be successfully placed in the superstar framework that Rosen initially devised for individuals. For the art sector Frey (1998:116) elaborates how the principle works for both the demand and the supply side of the equation.

On the demand side, Frey (1998) argues that consumers of art are most often *unwilling to substitute* higher for lower talent even if it comes for a much cheaper price. This unwillingness comes from two reasons, as Frey (1998) argues, one is economic and the other is psychological. The former comes from the current reduced costs of gathering information and making comparisons on an international scale that were neither so cheap nor so plausible several decades ago. Indeed, nowadays in such a media dominated world where we have Radio, TV, and Print and of course the Internet, opinions and personal experience are virtually costless to share amongst a large masses of international audiences. Frey (1998) argues that now that the frame of reference have shifted completely and raised the bar for local talents who although very talented are easily being compared to the best in the genre and therefore their potential ratings and chances for discovery suffer. The later argument is also connected with the second psychological reason that Frey (1998) talks about when explaining the unwillingness of art consumers to substitute more quality for less even for a cheaper price. Frey (1998:117) says it is a *cognitive* process where individuals tend to memorize no more than two or three of the best rated names in any specific artistic genre. Frey argues that media channels like Radio and TV, that provide general and in a way *superficial knowledge* have a significant role to play in this limited recognition of only few names that have been promoted on heavy rotation. Also, Caves (2000:178) refers to this phenomenon in creative goods consumption as *informational cascades* that might lead to herd behavior of the audience. Also another widely supported argument specific to the demand of experience and art products that can contribute to the cognitive formation of the superstar status is that the pleasure from consuming the art product is extended through

the possibility of sharing and discussing the experience it with other people and especially with friends and acquaintances (Adler, 1985, Klamer, 1999, Frey 1998). One can imagine that now in the Digital Era, people do it even more as they are enabled by accessible and user-friendly technology.

Technology also enhances the supply abilities of artists and producers of cultural goods mainly by letting them exploit the benefits of economies of scale in production and distribution channels (Frey, 1998). The big share of the benefit, as Rosen (1981) argues will definitely go to the top-rated artists, who no matter of their slight comparative advantage in quality are able to extend their markets and thus experience a huge boost in incomes. Frey (1998) also argues that live attendance at a performance has become a negligible factor for formatting the superstar status as now we have real-time attendance opportunities via Internet, TV and Radio.

Following the examples of Frey (1998) and also Towse (1991) and Mossetto (1992) of generalizing the superstar principle beyond individuals and labor markets thus applying it to institutions such as museums and also to cities, the following thesis paper considers the application of the superstar principle to festivals, and furthermore to specialized niche-music-festivals. Frey (1998:120) discusses the superstar status of museums and their special exhibitions in three levels - strategic orientation, organization and human resource. Similarly in the current thesis we will try to transfer Frey's ideas about superstardom to festival organizations and the management of their special events. In order for festivals to become superstar festivals, according to Frey's logic about museums, the managers should change the orientation of their events thus providing "total experience" for its audience including not only the artistic program but also an amalgamation of other related services that would be strategically targeted in order to complete the visitors' total experience. In other word, the visitor should play a central role in the festival management strategies and other functions like cultural heritage preservation and traditions revival should become less central. According to Frey (1998) the later important functions are not be seen as cut down or diminished, and on the contrary when visitors crowds boost the overall income of the event, the managers might invest more money in the better fulfillment of the goals of cultural preservation and tradition revival (Frey, 1998:120). On the organizational level Frey (1998) suggests that central bureaucracy as a type of organizational culture is not so flexible

and adequate if superstar status is wanted. The festival management will be better off if it is more *process oriented* and there is a clear division of tasks, having independent “process owners” who take care of the different activities included in the total experience packages and also look to minimize the spillover between the different work groups on the event (Frey, 1998:121). On the human resource level, if to be applied to festivals, Frey (1998:124) advice would be that there is a huge benefit in being flexible with the human resource policies (especially if the organizers are private and not government related). There should be also a fine balance in staff composition utilizing both the labor of paid staff and volunteers.

5. Festivals in the context of Long Tail Theory

Another theory that also lays its foundation on new technology and the power of digital markets is the “Long Tail” proposed first in 2004 in a non-economic publication by Chris Anderson (2004) who is a physics graduate and now editor in-chief of the “Wired” Magazine. Later on he developed the theory in a self titled book where he basically hypothesized that in the new Digital Era, tastes and preferences of consumers are no longer farmable by the limited product offerings of brick-and-mortar stores. People will be able to soothe their needs online and so niche-products will finally be able to see their rise in consumption. Sales patterns will slowly start to move down towards the narrow end of the demand curve and suppliers will be able to cater for all the special consumers who reside somewhere in the long asymptotic niches of the market. As these niches are virtually never ending, Anderson (2006) argues that more profit will be available to capture for the suppliers who specialize in online virtual trade and who are now able to match even the most capricious tastes as there are no more physical shelf constraints and modern distribution schemes allow for narrow-targeting of products. The theory of Anderson (2006) is more or less opposite to the logic of the superstar theory discussed above. Just as well as superstardom can be massively promoted by the online communication networks where sharing is the order of the day, so it is now costless and easy for niche-consumers with special interests to connect and to be connected inside the digital market and suit their needs successfully. This later argument is also suggested in the work of Elberse and Oberholzer-Gee (2008) who contribute to the debate by exploring the change in sales patterns of movies retailers that went for digital distribution of their creative products.

Findings of the study show that there is indeed a rise (in fact a quadruple one) in the sales of niche-titles that were gathering dust before. The increase of niche-product demand comes also from the minimization of search costs and the ability of the Internet to counteract to the consciously dispersed asymmetric information about products on the market. Brynjolfsson, Hu and Simester (2007) hypothesize that especially on the Internet we soon might see the end of the Pareto Principle (or the 80/20 rule, where the market usually is dominated by a smaller segment of service providers who generate the larger proportion of sales) which will give way to the economies of the Long Tail. Their study is based on data given by multi-channel retail firm that also uses Internet and their finding show that there is a shift towards purchases of obscure items and mainly online.

As festival are in a way experience goods that cherish the gathering and the joint physical sharing of live art in different forms, it is hard to fully translate the Long Tail theory to the retail reality of these events, yet there are certain insights to be borrowed in the sense of technological empowerment that could be applicable to the strategies of reaching and attracting niche-consumers for the special events that the festival managers organize. For example managers might use the benefits of the Internet and the cheap online distribution of information in order to enhance the visibility and awareness of their event for the consumers. Direct marketing of tickets and package deals should be available for online ordering at virtual retail locations in order to experience the effects of the Long Tail by cutting the search costs for obtaining tickets to their visitors. Because transportation costs are inevitable in the case of consuming festival events as products, managers can make an effort to at least reduce them, as Towse (2010) suggests, by collaborating with tourist agencies and including a visitation to their event at a discounted price in the tour operators' holiday package deals. Another brave and bold exploitation of the Long Tail effect could be the full digitalization and online broadcast of the festivals program to be purchased and observed in real time by virtual attendees over the Internet. By eliminating all physical barriers connected with the acquiring of tickets, travelling to the location and other related logistics the consumption of the product becomes immediately available to a wider audience, and although neglecting the live gathering experience of visitors, more potential niche-consumers are being targeted and reached and thus some additional profit from virtual audiences will surely be captured.

6. Festivals in the context of Central Place Theory

The theory of central places was developed by German geographer Walter Christaller (1933) and it came as momentous part of the economic retail-location theory (Brown, 1995). The initial idea of Christaller was to find logic behind the formation and the distribution patterns of villages, towns and cities across the world. Christaller concluded that there is an economic relationship between inhabited places and their outskirt lands. The original model predicted that with the increasing of transportation costs, the demand for any given good will decline with the increase of distance from the good's supply source. Eventually when distance become too big, demand drops to zero, and that is what Christaller named *range* of the good (Brown, 1995:61). The geographer came up with the term "central place" for the distribution centers where the surrounding population was able to acquire all the goods and services it needed. The two main economic assumptions that Christaller proposed in his theory was that a) people will always purchase the goods that are closest to them and b) whenever there is a demand for a good it will appear in a close proximity to the population, and when interest drops towards the good drops – so does its availability. The geographer also argued that there is a *threshold*, or a minimum level of demanding inhabitants that is needed around a certain central place in order for it to stay alive, active and prosperous.

In connection to the congregation of people, Christaller also described the existence of two types of goods that generally desired by the masses– low-order goods and high-order goods, where the former are the everyday goods that people need permanently (i.e. food, clothes, medicine etc.) and the later are the goods that are more specialized and rarely purchased (i.e. cars, jewels, appliances, etc.). Furthermore, Christaller devised geometrical patterns of ordering and connecting the central places, and also he categorized them by size in five categories according to their population: Hamlet (small rural communities), Village, Town, City and Regional Capital.

Brown (1995) gives an overall look of the development of the theory which has sparked a great deal of interest and has been revisited by different scholars in different moments in time. Also Brown (1995:60) gives some sort of quality characterization of the theory by calling it a positivist take on urban geography that is deductively derived and it is normative in ethos, meaning it is based on simplified assumptions and not on empirical

observations and therefore its predictions for retail location ought to occur, but in reality they not necessarily do.

In the current study we try to transpose the logic of the central place theory and to apply it to the nature of festivals. It could be argued that the festivals might be affected from the central place theory in two ways, depending on the point of view: first to look at festivals as consumers, one might envision them as high-order goods and second, from the view point of the supplier: making sure that festivals are being treated as central-places themselves. If we agree that festivals are a type of high-order good, then the central place theory would suggest that people will make efforts to consume it rarely, yet will be prepared to travel long distances in order to acquire it. This model fits the festival audience attraction patterns as well as explains why festivals are usually organized only once a year. On the other hand if we accept to look at festivals as being central places for the particular audience/population then availability of high and low order goods and services is essential for the audience attraction.

Another interesting point to look at is the so called “tourist cycle” that was also a later contribution of Christaller shortly before his death. The idea of the tourist cycle is also applicable to festivals as it is related to locations and particularly to unspoiled areas that were at first discovered by a selected few (mainly by artists) and then as the models predicts, they have become interest for the popular taste (the tourist masses). However this process of location development eventually *denudes* the original attraction of the place, so it gradually starts falling from favor and eventually the location ends up into a state of decline (Brown, 1995:67).

7. The Theoretical Framework and the Interviews

The theoretical framework explained in details above has been embedded in the supportive short questionnaire tool (see Appendix A) comprising 25 questions that were used as guidelines during the qualitative method if telephone/Skype interviewing with festival events’ managers. In this section we will elaborate on the different groups of questions and their relationship with the theories described above (see Table1 “Theoretical Framework”).

Economic Theory	Questions in the interview guidelines
Superstar Theory (Rosen, 1981; Frey, 1998)	#5a,#7,#10 #11,#19,#20, and#22
Long Tail Theory (Anderson, 2004)	#7, #9, #11, and #12
Central Place Theory (Cristaller,1933)	#14, #15, #16 and #24

Table 1: Theoretical Framework

Starting up with the superstar theory the questionnaire includes a straight forward question (#22) that asks the festival owners and managers if they agree to the existence of superstars in the domain of their special festival event and furthermore asks them to give a precise attitude measurement represented on a 5-point Likert scale towards the importance of superstar artists to be included in their festival program. In general, scaled ratings were encouraged for almost every type of question in the interview in order to facilitate the comparative process amongst the case studies in the sample. There are other additional questions - #5a, #7, #10, #11, #19 and #20 which also indirectly control for the presence of superstar status formation in the festival event as prescribed and translated from Frey's (1998) analysis on museums. Question #5a, #7 and # 19 asks the owners of festivals about the goals and orientation of their festival, the later #19 also testing whether there is strategic orientation towards the visitors. Question about the media usage and the information dissemination is inquired through question #11 and also other relevant information regarding superstars and their featuring in the events has been extracted from the free conversation around open ended questions.

The Long Tail theory comes as an alternative to the superstar and the questionnaire has several questions that are designed in a way to see whether or not the events' managers are aware that they are serving a niche-market and if so are they making the effort to cut the search costs of their niche-products and thus to better reach and connect with their supposed audience. Questions #7 and #9 reveal the awareness of managers about the characteristic their audience. Then the next essential information needed here is whether the festival has online presence and visibility in Internet and therefore we investigate if there is a website dedicated to the festival, then if there is the possibility of online purchasing of tickets and then if further efforts to cut search and transportation costs are

done (questions #11 and #12). Also we look at the online websites in order to see if parts or the whole program are digitalized and available for online consumptions through subscriptions and broadcasts.

In order to keep the balance after presenting a theory that rejects physical locations, we have to consider a next theory that deals exactly with the importance of locations and this is Walter Christaller's Central Place Theory developed in 1933. The theory has been criticized a lot about its inability to encompass the changes of retail location developments and also because it is too positivist in nature and favors neoclassic economics. However the work has been seminal and has sparked a voluminous amount of researches that followed up the original work. In the current data extraction tool we have designed questions #14, #15, #16 and #24 in order to test whether location of the festivals has been thought through and strategically planned. The last question inquiries about the benefits received by third-party locations that are positioned around the festival location in order to understand whether the festival itself is treated as a central-place or not.

Conclusion

In the following chapter we have presented the theoretical foundation of the current thesis project and have situated its subject niche-music festivals in the different theoretical contexts. We have started with the cultural economics perspective and also have imported a bit of terminology from the event management literature. We have then discussed the different types of impacts that special events like music festivals have on our social reality. Also inspired by the cultural economists and their works we have further expanded the possible dynamics of festival production by inviting ideas from other standard economics theories like the Superstar Theory, The Long Tail Theory and finally the Central Place Theory. All these theoretical points were used to build a theoretical framework which was embedded in the data collection tool's guidelines. The way of conduct of this qualitative research and the actual data collection techniques are presented thoroughly in the following chapter 3, where the study's Methods and its' limitations are also explained in greater detail.

Chapter 3: Method

1. Introduction to the Thesis Methodology: Qualitative Case Study Comparisons

As introduced in Chapter 1 the study at hand focuses on five case studies of niche-music festival and uses a qualitative comparative approach where cross-sectional data has been extracted from guided semi-structured phone interviews given by representatives of the selected festivals' managerial staff and/or where possible, answers were given directly by the festival founders. The research topic of this thesis requires specific and strategic information in order to be able to conceive an answer to the question of how niche-type festival audiences are being attracted. Such strategic information rarely appears free in the public domain and secondary data is rather scarce. Therefore the qualitative method was preferred than others and the study at hand was designed to directly inquire the supply side of niche-music festivals. The researcher has done a thorough online investigation of web sites and online documents and has collected all available public information on the basis of which preliminary festival profiles were devised. The original sample selection was done through the Internet and targeted 12 number of festivals from which 5 have responded positively and managerial staff identified itself as willing to take part in the research. The author has engaged in personal contact with the owners/organizers of the events and has further arranged semi-structured (focused) interviews that were done over the telephone (or using the online communication services of the Skype™ software). The records were later transcribed and analyzed through the theoretical framework explained in the previous chapter. Detailed explanation of the steps and procedure in the current method appear later in this chapter, but before that some further reasoning on the nature of qualitative research is due.

2. Why Qualitative Research

As Bryman (2008:366) summarizes it best, the qualitative research is noteworthy for at least three of its methodological peculiarities. First it adopts an *inductive view* of the world and is useful to scientists and academia by enabling all researchers to create new pieces of theory in the fields where theory has been underdeveloped or even completely absent.

Secondly, research done in a qualitative manner takes an *epistemological stand* or in other words it stresses the importance of making interpretations of the world and calls more for understanding of the actions of participants in our world rather than imposing natural scientific models as explanations for their actions. Thirdly, qualitative research advocates the *ontological point of view*, where reality is seen as nothing more than a social construct, a result that emerges from interpersonal interactions and discussions, and not from phenomena that are just “out there”. Furthermore, Bryman (2008:367) points out that there is some sort of problematic tendency amongst scholars to keep defining the nature of qualitative analysis “in terms of the ways it differs from quantitative research” and this tendency brings up tension amongst researchers. The author of the thesis also feels uneasy if he has to define his chosen approach in terms of what it is not and prefers to advocate it for its unique merits and distinctiveness. The author has chosen to side with the traditional naturalist⁵ point of view towards qualitative research and to discard as superficial the often stated criticism that the qualitative approach lacks structured data and furthermore numbers are in most cases completely absent. In fact, the position of the author is just on the contrary and he sees qualitative research as being a richer methodology than the pure quantitative one. As Bryman (2008:369) confirms it, qualitative studies often subsume different research methodologies including structured data and documents. Further in contrast to most researchers who tend to overwrite the qualitative approach solely with *grounded-theory* approach (where qualitative analysis is used to explicitly develop new theories from scratch), the author of the current study believes that qualitative research could also be relevant form of analysis even where some theories have already been put in place.

3. Qualitative methods and theoretical concepts

Another reflection about the growing “maturity” of the qualitative strategy is made by Silverman (1993) who amongst other qualitative researchers advocates the idea that qualitative approach deserves more and more interest as a method because it could be used for testing theories as well (Bryman, 2008:373). Such views about the nature of qualitative

⁵ See Gubrium and Holstein (1997) who suggest four main traditions behind qualitative reasoning and the first one is Naturalism: “seeks to understand reality in its own terms; ‘as it really is’; provides rich descriptions of people and interaction in natural setting”

research highly correspond with the ideas of the author of the current project. The aims of the thesis are not only to develop a missing piece of theory in the supply side of festival production but also to test the relevancy of several economic theories that are already in place but have never been applied to the cultural field of festivals, therefore the qualitative design of the study is seen as a perfect fit. Furthermore, Blumer (1954) advocates the ability of qualitative research to retain the “nuances” of theoretical concepts and not to restrict and delimit theories through numerical factors and indicators – a tendency that is often observed in quantitative studies. Blumer (1954) further depicts the “definitive” views of quantitative research towards theories and concepts as “straitjackets to the social world” (Bryman, 2008:373). Following the recommendations of Blumer (1954:7), the researcher of the current study agrees and recognizes that the theoretical concepts used as a foundation of this study are not definitive but “sensitizing concepts” – ones that provide “a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances” (Bryman:2008:373). Theoretical foundations of this study were presented broadly in Chapter 2 and were further revised and narrowed when devising the data gathering tool which is explained below.

3.1. The Data Gathering Tool: Focused Interviewing

Following the reasoning of Bryman (2008:196) about gathering information in qualitative social research, the researcher has decided that the most appropriate data collecting tool is the personal interview where data is being elicited out from knowledgeable respondents. Bryman (2008: 192) also makes clear that interviewing as a tool is not bound only to qualitative research but is a common tool in quantitative studies also. However in quantitative works the appropriate interviewing method follows a strict structure and therefore it is referred to as structured or *standardized interview* where most of the questions are with fixed choices and already pre-coded (Bryman, 2008: 194). The current study however departs from the standardized interview format and opts for another type that is closer to the unstructured and semi-structured type of interview called the *focused interview* (Bryman, 2008:196) This term was first devised by Merton et al. (1956) and it is used to describe an interview format where the interviewer asks predominantly open-end questions to the respondent about an event or a situation that is relevant to them and of interest to the researcher (Bryman, 2008:196). The focused interview format seems to fit the purpose of the current research best, as the aim of the researcher is to inquire festival producers

about their personal context /situation and about their organizational activities connected with their specialized festival events in and further more to do it in an open-ended discussion manner. However, for the sake of comparability and the later facilitation of data processing, certain questions in the current interview tool are pre-coded and presented to the respondents as closed (fixed-choice) questions. The interviewer has recorded the whole session of the interview and furthermore has written down all answers in a form of a pre-coded interview schedule file (see Appendix A). All open-ended questions were treated as guided conversations, where occasionally the interviewer prompted with additional “probing” questions in order to stay on topic (Bryman, 2008:206). The records were later scrutinized and carefully transcribed to document files and managed and analyzed later in chapter 4 but before we get to that a detailed description of the used type of questions is in order.

3.2. Type of questions asked in the focused interview:

The complete schedule with all the questions of the focused interview is attached to the bottom of this thesis (see Appendix A) and it includes a total of 25 questions from which 6 are open ended and 19 closed ones.

3.2.1. **Fixed-choice questions:** All the fixed-choice questions and also the scaled questions (Likert scales) were devised to assist the researcher in several ways: on the one hand closed questions were used to catalyze the actual time of conduct thus speeding up the whole process of data gathering. Having pre-coded answers ready for the respondents to choose from made the resulting data less ambiguous for interpretation thus subjectivity and researcher’s bias were counteracted to a certain extend. On the other hand structured questions, and especially the scaled ones, enable the researcher to address the same set of questions to all participants thus maintaining consistency throughout the data mining process. Having consistent answers which were backed up by scaled measurements of the variation of managerial attitudes allowed for the better comparability of data in the later process of interpretation and theoretical analysis.

3.2.2. **Open-ended questions:** The open-ended questions were posed in a conversational manner and were designed to get out personal story/opinion of the

respondent by inviting him/her to share details of their own event context. The interviewer used “probe” phrases and supportive sub-questions where needed in order to maintain the focus of the respondent, thus guiding him to stay on topic (Bryman, 2008:206). All open end questions were recorded digitally during the interview session and transcribed to text files later on.

As explained earlier the participants sampled for the study are international and their headquarters are geographically dispersed across the European continent. This later circumstance presented a minor obstacle to the process of direct cross-sectional data mining and the researcher decided to tackle and overcome it by using the assistance of analog and digital communication technology where possible. The exact approaches of posing the above mentioned questions and the conducting the interviews over distance are described below.

3.3. The Method of Conduct: Telephony / Voice over IP software (Skype™)

As Bryman (2008:197) points out the most typical conduct of qualitative interviewing is done in person or face-to-face, where the interviewer is sitting opposite from the interviewee and asks the later all the questions included in the schedule for the research interview. However, Bryman (2008:197) also acknowledges that there are many variations from this archetypical form of interviewing including group interviews (with one or more interviewers/interviewees) as well as computer-assisted interviews and also interviews done by the telephone. The current study also departs from the classical face-to-face approach of conducting interviews and utilizes the telephone interviewing approach with additional computer assistance, where possible. As it was mentioned earlier, the main reason to choose this type of interview conduct comes from the geographical dispersion of the chosen study sample, where the participants come from several different countries in Europe (see Appendix B). Furthermore, the researcher is restricted by time deadlines and budget constraints. It is practically impossible for the author to facilitate personal face-to-face meetings with the respondents and therefore as prescribed in Bryman (2008:197) the best possible way to deal with such circumstances is to conduct the interviews over the

telephone (or an using some of today's available alternatives - computer based communication programs like Skype™).

Concerning the researcher's best interest, the Skype interviewing is the preferred option for conducting the interview and its main advantage is that by being transmitted via the Internet it is virtually costless due to the public availability of the so called Voice over IP technology (VoIP). Further advantages and limitations of these data mining methods are discussed separately below.

- 3.4. **Telephone:** Bryman (2008:198) points out further advantages of telephone interviewing such as for example the possibility for a third party to exercise a better control over the interviewers' manner of wording and phrasing the questions without interfering with the interviewee. The lack of visual contact is also a way to avoid respondents' bias in answering due to personal differences such as race, religion or ethnicity that may sometimes (yet unintentionally) come in the way and present an obstacle to the smooth flow of communication. It is also important to acknowledge some limitations of the telephone method of interviewing (Bryman, 2008:198): responses might be poor if interviewees for example suffer from hearing problems or if the telephone signal is breaking up or dropping down; usually telephone interviews are not lengthy enough and a typical telephone discussions does not last more than 30-45 minutes; sometimes the lack of visual connection between respondents and interviewer might obstruct the correct navigation of the discussion as body language and facial expressions of participants are missing.
- 3.5. **Skype™:** As mentioned earlier in the new Digital Era that we are living in, more and more computer-based technology is readily available and free of charge to assist researchers in their pursuits of data. The main advantage of the Skype™ software is that it simulates a telephone like connection between participants, but it is operating on the network of the Internet and therefore the service itself is free of charge and does not bring any additional costs except the ones for gaining access to Internet. The new telecommunication technology of this kind is also more and more converging with other technologies and now it is possible to have conference calls over the Internet with additional broadcast of video and transfer of helpful files and images. Looking to minimize the costs of the research as much as possible the

researcher was predominantly insisting for the usage of this particular method. Furthermore the usage of Skype™ enabled the researcher to transfer the schedule of the interview and to present it to the respondents while interviewing them at the same time. These beneficial characteristics of the new communication technology seem to successfully overcome most of the research limitations imposed by analogous telephony. However there are limitations to this approach as well: for example there could be a lack of Internet coverage at the time and place of the interviewee; furthermore, participants are not to be expected to be fully accustomed to the software or they might simply be unwilling to use it. In the presence of the later cases there is not much to be done by the researcher except for going back to the traditional analog telephony approach.

Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

Introduction

The following chapter will present the main qualitative data gathered and analyzed in this master thesis research dedicated to answer the central question of “How international niche-music festivals attract their audiences. Along the chapter the researcher presents the story of five different musical festivals that are niche for the international festival industry and also for the host communities they reside in. Through textual, descriptive information the author introduces the reader to all together four different, yet all musically represented, types of cultures, namely: reggae-, salsa-, Roma- , and last but not least bagpipe-culture. The chapter information is organized in the following order: before each and every case study included in the sample of the thesis the niche-culture that this case represents is being shortly introduced, then the actual festival is presented thoroughly including its demographics and program specifics. Every case study presentation is accompanied by a qualitative analytical section which scrutinizes the related phone interviews with managerial staff and connects the answers given to the researcher by the respondents with the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. Most of the specifics of the festivals are presented under the section *Festival Demographics* independently for every single case. The data has been inferred from the official websites of the events, and where information was not publicly available, then further prompting questions about demographics and festival’s facts were addressed to the respondents in the course of the interview. Additional boxes contain the relevant numbers and graphic materials for every festival included in the sample.

After all of the case studies have been presented separately to the reader, then the author offers a combined, comparative analysis section which is meant to better juxtapose and illustrate the similarities and differences in all festival managerial policies and practices in the direction of audience attraction and development. Also these practices are put through the frame of several standard economic theories in order to test their explanatory power.

Now, we open up the data analysis discussion with introducing the first type of culture – reggae culture represented in this study by two cases. A brief introduction to reggae culture will cater for the first two case studies in this thesis as they both happen to represent the same cultural niche. The first case is a Bulgarian reggae festival named “The Big Big Summer Reggae” and the second is a Slovakian counterpart reggae festival called “Uprising Reggae Festival” which is set up near Bratislava. It might be argued that on the one hand, having two festivals of the same genre included in the sample might misbalance the results, but on the other hand, the researcher believes that it will serve as good comparative example where differences and common practices will be easier to spot and better emphasized and outlined as supposedly they are sharing similar characteristics. It has to be mentioned that having two sample cases dedicated to the same niche-type of culture was the initial intent of the researcher for all featured types of cultural festivals. At least 15 festivals were approached in order to form genre-related couples in the sample, however only the reggae couple was completed in time while the other approached festivals did not respond. Regardless of this situation, the researcher has decided to keep the two reggae festivals in the sample for two reasons: a) not to diminish the size of the qualitative sample and b) to be able to do an actual comparison between two similar types of niche-festivals. As the reader will notice, the two festivals although similar in content differ quite a lot in terms of age, magnitude and impact. Furthermore each one of them deserves attention in its own right as they are independently unique for their geographical positions and their host-communities in Central- and South Eastern Europe.

1. Short intro to reggae musical culture

Reggae music is the popular music of the island nation of Jamaica. It has been developing as a distinct musical genre since the early sixties of the nineteen century. International breakthrough for reggae was brought by the late great musician Robert Nesta Marley. Reggae music has eventually blended with the social movement of Rastafari founded by Jamaican native Leonard Howell somewhat 30 years before reggae in the 1930 (King and Foster, 2001). Many popular reggae artists embraced and forwarded the Rastafarian social discourse in their musical artworks. A good summary of the development of reggae and Rastafarian ideology is provided in the works of King and Foster (2001). Another idea that is put forward by the authors is that as part of Jamaican governmental

(cultural) policy the reggae music alongside the Rastafarian movement have been transformed into “cultural heritage symbols“ and subsequently used as a part of serious marketing strategies namely –“touristic culture” and “cultural tourism” (King and Foster, 2001:10). In 1987 a musical festival was designed and was supported by the Jamaican government – The Jamaican “Reggae Sunsplash” viewed as partnership between the government, the music industry and the Rastafarian movement. That event turned out quite successful, attracting thousands of tourists every year. It naturally grew to an annual event that was not only patronizing “cultural heritage” but also was a conspicuous booster for the tourism industry and respectively to the overall Jamaican GDP (King and Foster, 2001).

As technologies changed and the mass production of recorded music became available, the reggae culture has gradually become transnational and started setting roots in North America, Africa, Europe, Japan and the rest of the West Indies (Savishinsky, 1994). “As a highly popular and profitable tourist event, Reggae Sunsplash has even been duplicated in the United States and Japan.” (King and Foster, 2001:10) Furthermore, over the past 25 years there have been numerous other duplications of the event that have taken place all around the European continent. Rototom Sunsplash (Spain), Reggae Summerjam (Germany) and Uppsala Reggae Festival (Sweden) are just to name a few of the pioneer events. There is also a rapidly growing Slovakian reggae festival that is included in the current study (see Case Study #2) - named “Uprising Reggae Festival.” However, the following section focuses on the Bulgarian case and its unique reggae festival called “The Big Big Summer Reggae.”

Case Study 1: “The Big Big Summer Reggae” Festival, Sofia, Bulgaria

Festival Demographics:

The festival is an indoor type of event, situated in the capital city of Bulgaria – Sofia. Traditionally the event lasts for one or two days depending on the line up and usually that happens in the first week of July every year. In 2011 the festival marked its 8th edition, continuing to be the one and only festival event for reggae music in the country. The festival is owned by an informal group of friends who are called “Zionlionz Soundsystem” and are also legally backed up by a registered NGO with an educational and entertainment agenda called “Global Vision Circle.” Although the festival is a first mover in the reggae cultural sector in Bulgaria

and is facing no competition yet, according to the varying annual attendance figures, the festival event remains far back in the long –tail of reggae culture’s niche in Bulgaria. So far, the festival lacks the promotional and statistical benefits of having its own specialized website, but as every other case in the sample it utilizes heavily the digital communication and sharing functionalities of online sharing platforms (social networks) like for instance Facebook, MySpace and Tweeter. Also the first Bulgarian reggae festival still has not registered its logos and graphic designs, however the actual name of the event has gained quite a positive popularity by now and according to organizers it has been well positioned

FESTIVAL'S
ID:



NAME: The Big Big Summer Reggae

AGE: 8 years

LOCATION: Bulgaria, City of Sofia, Indoor, Clubs

OWNERSHIP: Private + NGO

FINANCING: Sponsoring 80%; Box office: 20%

DURATION: 1-2 days

ENTRANCE: ~ 7,5 euro

VISITORS: 500 (2008), 550 (2009), 1200 (2010)

Box 1

and distinguished in the Bulgarian cultural agenda and especially for the infant reggae scene in Bulgaria.

Goals and audience attraction strategies

The goals and audience attraction strategies of The Big Big Summer Reggae have been extracted from the qualitative interview conducted over Skype with Mr. Michail Dimov⁶ who is one of the main founders of the event. The first and most important of all qualitative open-ended questions that have been addressed to all festival organizers is question number five⁷ that asks straight forward about the personal motives of managers to engage in such a type of cultural event production, or in other words: what motives have pushed them to start a festival of their kind in the first place. Several other control questions in a mixed form of fixed-answers and scales are also posed later on in the course of interview with the purpose to support and confirm the authors' assumptions about the goals and motives of the festival at hand. For instance question #6 offers a 5-point Likert scale about several types of pre-formulated, standard goals and measures their importance for festival organizers, and question #17 also asks festival owners to answer if their festival have their own mission statement where usually the goals and the aims are being stated and although they often appear too vague and general, still could be helpful and incremental to the analytical process. From the respondents' answers of the above mentioned questions for every single case study, the researcher attempts to extract the aims and goals that have been set behind the festival event in order to better understand the attendance patterns and the attendance attraction strategies that have been employed to attract particular audience types.

For Mr. Dimov the main motive to start a Bulgarian Reggae festival was the lack of properly organized and promoted reggae events in the country as a whole. In the words of Dimov: "Before the 'Big Big Summer Reggae' there has never been an organized specific reggae party or a concert event with proper promotion and artistic program." The artist/promoter further explains that the main mission and goal of the pilot edition of the

⁶ See full list of participating respondents and their personal contact information at the end of this thesis under Appendix B

⁷ See question #5 in the Sample Questionnaire in Appendix A

festival has been to “establish the Bulgarian reggae scene” by introducing reggae music and culture to Bulgarian audience in a professional way. The event was in a way a test-event that was fully programmed with reggae music and art that aimed to “send a signal to the audience”. It could be argued that the Bulgarian promoters from “Zionlionz Soundsystem” were testing the existence of a local reggae music niche and its vacancy in the Bulgarian live music performance market. By launching their pilot product they were basically the first to move in and occupy that niche and to show to others that there is a demand for such cultural and musical events. Another control question to test if the organization is the sole provider of the product or at least amongst the first-movers in the niche (Q#21) asks the managers about the strength of the competition they feel, and for the Bulgarian reggae promoters the score was put on 1 meaning that there is a *weak to no competition* at all. Furthermore the organizers are asked to provide statistical information about the aggregate annual visits of their events (see Box 1 for the current case). Having actual visitors who are attending the event supports the claim that indeed there is a reggae niche in the Bulgarian live music market and furthermore the ascending figures exemplify that there is an ongoing trend that slowly but surely grows. For all their eight years of work the event managers have held as very important to them the goals to: *develop the local reggae community, to bring people together* and *to promote a special lifestyle and culture*, thus they marked all 5s on the Likert scales suggested to them for these particular goals. The making of *profit* and the *experience of art and music* still come as important goals and were rated with 4s on the importance scale (see Q#6).

When asked about the nature of the festival’s artistic content in terms of uniqueness and exclusivity Mr. Dimov rated the festival as very unique and exclusive giving another 5 on the corresponding scale of uniqueness measurement. However, on the question about the character of the audience’ interests in the context of the host community where the event is held, he was unsure about the personal traits of the audience and restrained from labeling it as *elite* or *special*, as he emphasized that reggae culture strives for unity and equality and therefore all types of audiences are welcome and attendance is desired from all layers of society. Furthermore the unsure attitude towards the audience characteristics is also confirmed by a negative answer to another control question (#19), where the organizers are being asked if they have ever conducted a market research in order to better

understand the preferences of their audience. When asked about what is obvious about their audience (Q#9) and the personal observations of the organizers about the self-expression and appearance of their audience on events, the managers describe that the Bulgarian reggae crowd is prone of *dancing, singing and chanting*, and also exhibiting a *special color-symbolism* and *hairstyles*⁸. These descriptive answers does not fully deny that that the crowd could be a mix of all type of people, but the high presence of colorful symbols and specific hairstyles amongst visitors hints that there is an in-group of people or some sort of an interest-sharing community that feels directly associated and identifies itself with the festival's content. The next question (Q#10) asks the managers about the nature of their program and the elements they include in their event offering. The Big Big Summer Reggae producers rate as very important the usage of the three special colors and furthermore as important elements they list reggae symbols like the image of a lion, the image of a six pointed star and several others.

When asked about the location of the event and the criteria to choose it, Mr. Dimov says that the main decisive factor is the nature of the lineup. Setting the event outdoor is a dream of the organizers but in other to keep the variety reggae sub-genres represented in the artistic program of the festival that would mean to set up several different stages, and there is no such budget allowance to do so. Therefore the fall back solution is to hire large club venues that have several separate (but connected) halls. Having the event in an indoor club where the rent would be less and yet the programming won't be cut and proper presentation will be possible is for now the only way to go about the choice of location for the Bulgarian reggae festival.

On the question about the existence of superstars in the reggae musical genre (Q#22), the organizer totally agrees that there are artists who have reached the stardom status and who are able to dominate even in such a niche-market like reggae music. But Mr. Dimov says that it is not really important for him to have them always present in the lineup, as the budget imbalance cannot allow it. Usually the way the program works is to have one good artists and support him with local or less popular artists and so to speak having a

⁸ For reggae culture symbolic are the three colors – red, yellow and green which come from the Ethiopian national flag, as well as the specific hairstyle called dreadlocks, that is worn either loose or wrapped in a turban (King and Foster, 2001).

sandwich approach towards programming, where at least one good artist is wrapped and surrounded by more average or upcoming new artists. However, because of prices and currency inflation, superstars are really hard to get for the Bulgarian reggae festival, even though the festival's mission statement says that having superstars performing in Bulgaria is one of the "top priorities" of the festival.

Conclusion

Mr. Dimov was humble and rather honest thus he placed the marker in the middle of the scale for goal fulfillment of the festival. The festival is maintaining so far but it has much room for improvements in all aspects of production. The strongest benefit to third parties (excluding the visitors of the festival) in his opinion goes to the clubs and venues in the city as the usage of their rental halls, bars and all other related services is heavily facilitated by regular event promotions like the Big Big Summer Reggae. For the future the managers realize that more interactivity with the audience should be engendered and this will include for the future the creation of more workshops, games and seminars to engage with the audience. Also from the programming side a better fusion with the local Balkan music should be encouraged as the two cultures correspond very well in terms of artistic messages and spirit. Last but not least a great dream to become true for the organizers is to take the event permanently outdoors in order to evolve into a bigger and proper festival event thus becoming more attractive to the local and international audience.

Case Study #2: Uprising Reggae Festival, Bratislava, Slovakia

Festival Demographics:

The event is held outdoors in the vicinity of Bratislava, Slovakia near a lake called “Golden Sands.” The Slovakian reggae festival is called Uprising Reggae Festival and lasts two days usually at the last week of August. The event is only three years old and in 2011 it will be its fourth edition. Owner of the event is a private company whose founder Mr. Rastislav Pruzinec agreed to participate and be interviewed for the purpose of the current study. Mr. Pruzinec is also a reggae musician himself and when he is not occupied with

managing and organizing the event he plays in a band of his own. The festival has a well developed website⁹ with a lot of promotional information and audio visual materials to present the event’s program, location and entry procedures. On the webpage there is also a rich photo section full of images from previous editions of the event, a press releases page for the use of journalists and also a special sub page dedicated to all partnering companies and sponsoring organizations. Furthermore, the festival has its own fan-page¹⁰ in the social

FESTIVAL’S ID:



NAME: Uprising Reggae Festival

AGE: 4 years

LOCATION: Slovakia, Bratislava Golden Sands Lake, C

OWNERSHIP: Private

FINANCING: Private: 30%; Box Office: 60%;
Related Services: 10%

DURATION: 2 days

ENTRANCE: ~25 Euros

VISITORS: 7000 (2008), 13000 (2009), 16000 (2010)

Box 2

⁹ See <http://www.uprising.sk/en/home.html> [24.07.2011]

¹⁰ See <http://www.facebook.com/uprisingreggaefestival> [24.07.2011]

media network of Facebook where 17,897 people are following its regular updates and postings. As mentioned in the interview the Uprising Reggae Festival is the only reggae festival in Slovakia and also the second biggest festival in the country as a whole. The festival has also registered trademark for the name and a registered logo image of a roaring lion (a typical reggae symbol as mentioned earlier) surrounded by sound two large sound speakers. An image of the logo and more demographic details can be found in Box 2.

Goals and audience attraction strategies

The main motive of Mr. Rastislav Pruzinec to start a reggae festival was his love for reggae music. Before deciding to take up the promotion business and delving into the endless logistics of festival management he has tried to make a living like a reggae musician playing in a local Slovakian reggae band. However, his work as an artist was rather poorly paid and he had to constantly look for secondary ways to meet the two ends up. Then he got the idea to start the reggae festival and explained his reasoning like this: “instead of roaming to find a band to work with I realized that I have to make the people come and find me.” Through some family friends he then met up with the biggest and most respected pop-concert promoter in Slovakia who embraced his idea and thought him how to execute his business plan in the best possible way. “It is all budgets, budgets and more budgets... you have to make it big and proper from the very beginning... if you want to make a small drumming circle – do not even bother me, it is a waste of my time” Rastislav, remembers the words of the elder promoter who he claims is one of the biggest in central Europe. The goals for the Uprising Reggae Festival that he wrote up in his business plan and read out for the interview were the following:

“To empower race, culture and social acceptance; to make a better image for Slovakia, at home and abroad; to give space for talented musicians, both local and foreign; to make the festival a part of Slovakian culture; to correlate the name of the festival with the historical memories of the national uprising against the Nazi regime; to give an exclusive experience in good music and to give cultural, sport and social activities to the people.”

Next to these personal goals, Rastislav also gave ratings to the pre-suggested goals that were formulated in the questionnaire under question #6. As very important he pointed

the goals of bringing the people together, promoting the lifestyle of reggae culture, the experience of art through music and dance and of course the making of profit. At first it was less important for him he admits, but now the festival organization has become his living and therefore money making is an essential part of it. He admits that his personal life and particularly his girlfriend continuously suffer from the workloads he has to take as sometimes his workday lasts over 20 hours and more. However he is determined to continue working on the festival and now even develops a plan for a winter edition of the event thus keeping him busy all year round. Rastislav agrees that his event is very unique in the context of Slovakian festivals. However, similar to his Bulgarian counterpart he believes that the audience is mixed and most of the people are random and not really specialized in only reggae music. The financial balance of the event is entirely made out from private capitals which are spread between sponsoring, related services and the box office incomes (see the information in Box 2 for detailed percentages).

When asked about a more precise profile of the audience and presented with several fixed choices (Q#9), Rastislav agrees that all suggested elements are present and the audience tend to express itself with singing and chanting, by displaying of special hairstyles and costumes, by wearing of typical colors, symbols and also sometimes the by performing special rituals like for example drumming and cannabis smoking. On the next question number 10 the promoter was asked about the elements that are important to him in the programming of the festival to see if they are matching with the perceived interests of the crowd and if there are traces of strategic marketing of the event's features. The inclusion of special colors and decorations is important and Rastislav gives it a rating of 4 on the 5point scale, also the special reggae symbols and merchandise are an important feature of the festival's outdoor venue which "turns into a small marketplace" during the period of the festival every last week of August. Very important features of the festival are the water games (waterskiing, water bicycling, etc.) that are enabled by the physical (natural) properties of the venue which is outdoors and is situated near a swimming lake called "Golden Sands." On the other hand the costumes, the hairstyles and the rituals are not so important for the organizer particularly, but he says that they are all very important to the artists that perform on stage and therefore these elements are always present in the event's program . Another audience attraction strategy that the promoter shared was that when

setting up the program and the artists' line up he always includes artists that have already been performing in Slovakia and so the people know them and have more or less a positive opinion and some sort of reference for a positive experience. In fact, when asked about whether he has been researching the preferences of his audience with official surveys, Rastislav admitted that there was never a single market research conducted for the past 4 years and yet he sounded confident in the adequacy of his artistic visions and intuition about programming, coming from his background as a reggae musician. "This is my reggae festival," he says and continues: "I give the people what I want, but I also know what the people want". Another negative response was given on the suggestion to partnering with tourist agencies as a possible strategy to increase attendance. The manager has never engaged in any package deals with travel agents, yet he sounded intrigued by the possibility and was thankful for the insight.

The next set of questions from 11 to 13 was asked in order to understand the channels through which the event advertises its program and features to the audience. The most preferred channel rated with the absolute importance level of 5 was the Internet and particularly the festival's website which furthermore is equipped with an analytical technology from Google which gives some statistical information about the origin of the visitors. Also special attention was given to the Facebook fan page of the festival which by now has been followed by almost 18,000 individuals. The fan page actually presents the organizers with an opportunity to exercise direct marketing over these followers by sending them personal messages and by posting instantly all sorts of audio visual promotion materials online. Another witty way to advertise the festival and in the same time to promote the artists who are featured in the program is by giving away songs and special jingles recorded in a package called "Uprisings Mixtape" the recordings are done for free by the booked artists and later on are distributed online through the website ahead of time before the period of the festival. Rastislav is positive that by now for the past four years the event has built its brand image and has positioned itself as the biggest reggae festival in Central-Europe having its own copyrighted logo and graphical design. A question about the existence and strength of competition was also posed in relation to the advertising strategies and the positioning of the festival in the local market. To that later question

Rastislav said that the festival has no matching rival festival at this point and he does not feel any stress for competition yet.

According to the advices of the more experienced promoters, festivals of this nature should really exploit the natural capitals of the outdoor environment and that is exactly what Uprising has done. The venue has a big capacity and is able to cater for at least 20,000 people, having a camping space and a natural water pool which further attracts visitors and enables the promoters to install relative services like water sport facilities and also benefit from the advantages of a secured swimming zone. On the question (15) how the location of the event was chosen Rastislav says that it was right in front of his eyes, as he lives close to the location. He says that it was the popular water pool where people from Bratislava go to take a swim in a hot summer day. He had a hunch that this would be the perfect place and had to mobilize some serious connections in order to obtain permission to use the place for the purpose of the festival. However he is worried a little bit for the future use of it, as its capacity is 20,000 people and for the next year the attendance of the festival is expected to surpass that number (see Box 2 for attendance figures).

To the questions about the existence of superstars in the reggae genre Rastislav was sure that there are such and that they have the power to attract more people. He mentioned a funny anecdote from the previous event where at least 3000 people were attracted only by one name in the line-up and namely the Indian one-hit wonder artist “Punjabi MC” who actually performed only one song. “When he started singing I went crazy,” says Rastislav and continues: “I didn’t like him and I knew it is only because of his commercial reputation that all these people were there to watch him perform that single song...but he sang terrible, and I wanted to shut down the electricity during his performance but of course I didn’t do it...” Nevertheless, with a bit of dislike Rastislav rated as important feature to have at least one big superstar name in the lineup, yet he still emphasized that it is better to bet on names that have visited the country in the past and that were fairly familiar to the audience in order to avoid unpleasant surprises.

Conclusion

The Slovakian Uprising Reggae Festival is the youngest festival of the whole sample yet it is the fastest growing one. In only four years time it almost tripled its attendance figures starting with 7,000 visitors for its first edition in 2008 and now expecting around

19,000 for its fourth annual edition in 2011. The success of the festival is probably due to the clever way of choosing the location, using the natural capital of the land and particularly the lake of “Golden Sands” that is a great additional attraction in the hot summer period of the event. Also the programming and promotion of the event are executed really professional with a huge line up of well-known and respected artists and a very functional website. Mr. Pruzinec gives a rating of 4 out of 5 on the scale of success of his own festival and says that there is always room for more improvement. As a whole the festival provides various benefits amongst for the local community amongst which the strongest are believed to be for the local food and accommodation business in Bratislava.

2. Short introduction to Salsa Culture

As Pietrobruno (2006) explains, salsa culture and its adjacent form of dancing are products of cultural transnational crossings between the cultural heritages of Cuba, Spain and the Afro-Caribbean nations. This dance is a result of cultural syncretism and it entered the Western world (North America and Europe) mainly through the two-way migration flow of people. At first, western travelers (and also colonialists) who often visited nations located in Latin America and the Caribbean brought home the experience and knowledge from this culture. On the other hand many travelling immigrants were carrying their native music as a symbol of their heritage and as a part of their self-identity. Furthermore, the Latin creative industries continue producing large volumes of salsa cultural products including: books, CDs and videos that also facilitate the access to this special type of culture by the public and since 1990 the Internet started serving as a dominative mean of its distribution across the world. Several key salsa centers have formed around the world and more precisely in the Americas: New York, Cali, Caracas and Havana (Pietrobruno, 2006:2). Interesting about salsa is that it shares some similarities with the “folk” dance and particularly in the way Salsa is able to change and transform its artistic form through collective artistry. There are several denominations of the salsa dance depending on the style and its origin, for example the Cuban version of the dance is called “Casino” and there are also the New York Style and LA-Style. Often times, salsa dance has been deemed as low- and middle class dance form, contrasting the “high art” dance forms like ballet for example. It is argued that this opinion about the dance has form because of the background of immigrants and the fusions with other popular dance forms. Most of the Salsa styles

have developed without the help of concrete artists and also mastery in moves has evolved gradually without anyone knowing exactly who the master was (Pietrobruno, 2006). However, salsa culture is now being promoted and eventually commercialized on a global scale. Pietrobruno (2006) argues that the worldwide success of Salsa is being facilitated by the clubbing and nightlife economies of host-communities which sexualized the dance and started to sell it as a “titillating spectacle” for heterosexual couples, thus overshadowing the artistic, cultural, political or historical value that it may hold for people with Latin descent who regard it as heritage (Pietrobruno, 2006:3). Another interesting point that Pietrobruno (2006:7) makes is how the salsa dance has been transformed into a cultural commodity through the “dance-lesson” and how this new cultural product has nowadays been marketed at dance studios, clubs and various other cultural institutions. As exemplified below in Case Study #3, cultural festivals and their workshop modules also fit well this marketing model of selling salsa dance and culture.

Case Study #3: Tampere International Salsa Festival, Tampere, Finland

Festival Demographics:

The festival is the biggest Salsa event in Finland and has been around for the last 8 years. The dance/musical festival has turned in a traditional gathering event not only for Finland’s salsa community but also for many international guests. Organizers of the festival are several private individuals who also work with a commercial company for the legal side of the event production and marketing. Mr. Oliver Paredes who is one of the main producers

FESTIVAL'S ID:	Tampere International Salsa Festival 22.-24.7.2011
NAME:	Tampere International Salsa Festival
AGE:	8 years
LOCATION:	Finland, Tampere, Indoor
OWNERSHIP:	Private
FINANCING:	Sponsoring 80% and 20% Box Office
DURATION:	3 days
ENTRANCE:	~10/20/35/65/90/110/195 Euros
VISITORS:	800(2008), 800 (2009), 1000 (2010)
	Box 3

of the event was willing to help and provide quality information for the current thesis. Mr. Paredes is also a salsa dancer/teacher, having his own workshops and classes about salsa dancing in the city of Tampere, Finland. Just as the managers described in the studies above (see Cases # 1 and # 2), Paredes also seems to successfully combine his artistic background with his current entrepreneurial and commercial activities. Regarding the financing of the event, funds are mainly acquired through sponsoring and private donations (80%) and also a minor portion comes from the Box Office incomes (20%). The festival has its own website¹¹ that provides useful information about the programming, the locations and the different entry packages that are also available for purchase online. It is worth to mention that Tampere International Salsa Festival utilizes the option of price discrimination and offers different ticket packages depending on the different parts of the program and also depending on the date of purchase of the tickets (the closer the tickets' purchase is to the event's official dates the higher the tickets' price is). The duration of the festival is three days and it is traditionally in the end of the month of July. The event is held indoors and features several dance-lesson workshops, a live orchestra concert and two dancing class performance nights hosted in four different clubs in Tampere.

Goals and audience attraction strategies:

“The summer is really quiet in Finland. That is why we decided that this time of the year needs some revival...” says Mr. Oliver Paredes when asked about the motives behind starting the International Salsa Festival in Tampere. He further refers to salsa as a special type of culture that brings positive and warm feelings alongside the cheerful music and the passionate dance moves and therefore was seen by the organizers as the best choice of a summer festival for a country like Finland. When asked to qualify the audience of the salsa festival the manager agrees that the audience is small in numbers and with very special interests. “Finland is a Rock nation...” continues Mr. Paredes and explains how the idea to organize such an event in a rock-dominated musical scene came as something very unique and alternative and it quickly grabbed the attention of people with different interests than rock music. Very important goals for the organizers are the bringing of these people together, the promotion of the salsa lifestyle and culture and the experiencing of the

¹¹ See <http://www.salsapasion.net/festival/> [24.07.2011]

characteristic music and dance art forms. Apparently for the Tampere International Salsa Festival the financial struggle for profit and cost coverage is pretty hard and as one can see – the entrance fees are pretty high in comparison to the other niche-festivals included in the sample (see Box 3 for the differentiated entrance fees of the event). At the end of the day profit is also one of the most important goals for this festival as there is no form of government support for this type of cultural activities. The initiative is entirely funded with private money and through the box office incomes. Sponsors are not rated as helpful by Mr. Paredes who explains: “...usually they offer unfair deals, they request something like 50 free tickets and in exchange offer something like 100 Euros which is ridiculous.”

Answering to the questions about the managerial observation on the characteristics of the audience (Q#9), the organizer is confident that the people who attend the festival are expressing themselves with lots of dancing and also singing and chanting, because after all salsa is all about doing the dance and enjoying the good music. From their supply side the festival tries to correspond to the public's profile and rates as very important elements of their programming the dance workshops, and also the special colorful costumes and decorations of the venues. Merchandise and specific Latin cuisine is also an important feature for the producers although a notch less from the workshops and the overall visual appearance of the event. The feedback from the audience is very important for the organizers and thus they conduct annually an internal market research that is held as very important (rated 5 on the scale of importance in question #20). The audience data is being collected by volunteers on the festival's site through distributing and collecting questionnaires in both Finnish and English language. The internal research shows that 95% of the visitors are local and the rest are tourists who are arriving from different countries. Mr. Paredes hopes that this percentage ratio will change soon in favor of more tourists visiting the event. However, as most of the other respondents Mr. Paredes was also unfamiliar with the opportunity to work or collaborate with tourist agencies in order to increase its audience through making a packages deal including visits to the festival in the agencies' holiday travel offers.

On the questions about preferred advertising channels and used materials (Q#13&14) Mr. Paredes pointed out that Radio and TV are not really important to him in contrast to Internet and print media promotion where most important materials are his

logo, the slogans of the festival and the typical graphic design with Latin motives. When asking about adverts the question about competition also comes along inquiring the way it is perceived by the management (Q#21). The producer said that Tampere's International Salsa Festival is the biggest event and until recent it has been the only one, but last year another event with salsa content has been created. Mr. Paredes is not intimidated by it because it is still a pretty small event that draws a crowd of no more than 100 people, but still it needs to be recognized for its existence and thus he gave it a rating of 3 on the competition strength scale. He also expressed his annoyance by the unprofessional positioning of that event in the same time slot as the Tampere International Salsa Festival which is not a good idea and could only bring problems for both promoters.

The preferred locations for the salsa festival are indoor clubs with spacious dance floors. This is revealed in the answers of questions #14 and 15. The decision to prefer an indoor location than an outdoor one comes from the bad weather conditions in Finland and the fact that an unexpected rainfall could really spoil the dancing experience of the guests. Usually there are four partnering clubs – two bigger and two smaller that traditionally host the different modules of the event and also the workshops and dancing classes. The bigger clubs are equipped with a stage for a live salsa orchestra to perform.

Talking about orchestras we also inquire Mr. Paredes about his opinion on superstars in the salsa field. He is totally positive about their existence and agrees that there are a lot of successful dancers and musicians in the genre. However he was a bit skeptical on their permanent inclusion in the line-up of the festival. One of his concerns is coming from the large costs that he has to endure for hosting a whole orchestra and also sometimes he says that they are arrogant and think they are “too good for a festival like this.” Therefore in his practice he does not insist on having a superstar always, although he thinks that more or less they work positive for the process of audience attraction (rated 3 on the scale of importance).

Conclusion

“Salsa in Finland runs difficult. People are not willing to pay all those high ticket prices and no one else really helps us. The bureaucracy here in Finland is very bad,” these are the concluding words of Mr. Oliver Paredes who nevertheless of the financial struggle is satisfied with the performance of his festival event. He gives it a score of 4 from the 5 point

scale of success in terms of fulfilling its goals. Furthermore he believes that Tampere's International Salsa Festival brings tangible benefits for the local community, the public services in town and also to the local food and accommodation businesses. Also it is a chance for local craftsmen and small art shops to make some profit as they are being allowed to sell their products on the festival sites. However, Mr. Paredes is firm about the idea that changes need to be made in order to sustain the festival. It seems that Baumol's cost disease is really the biggest problem to the budgets of Finland's salsa festival and since sponsoring is not the preferred solution then some serious cuts need to be made. The organizer sees as a main burden for his budget sheets the booking, the accommodating and also the rewarding of large live salsa orchestras who have always been a part of the program so far. For the future Mr. Paredes is thinking to substitute the live orchestras with a cheaper solution like inviting single or several DJs instead. This will definitely deflate the expenditures but it might well mean undermining the uniqueness and exclusivity of the festival.

3. Short Introduction to Roma Music Culture

Imre (2008) argues that motion (transition) and music are the two main essences of Roma identity. Ethnomusicology is the academic field that focuses on ethnic music and also studied to certain extent Roma musical heritage and places it in the music market under the category of 'world music.' However, as Imre (2008) points out this positioning of the Roma music is purged from any of its actual political and social charges, thus its value is diminished and made to look as an authentic yet a primitive form of entertainment. However, Imre (2008) argues that Roma music is politically saturated. When trying to identify the nature of this music and its substance a parallel is drawn with the Afro-Caribbean nations and their musical forms of expression like hip-hop and reggae that help them to build for themselves a kind of national identity, some sort of foundation in an otherwise status of "relentless movement" and constant transitions. The main point of Imre (2008) is that music for Roma people just like for the Caribbean is a virtual "*heimat*" - their homeland that never existed. For the Roma people their musical play is their survival strategy against their recurring poverty and homelessness that otherwise would become unbearable. Therefore Roma artists have picked up on other ethnicity-related musical flows and now through Globalization and affordable technology now there are phenomena as

“Gypsy Jazz” and “Roma Rap” with an impressive plethora of artist amongst the dispersed Roma diasporas. Governments however behave ambivalent towards the Roma issues and this globalization of Roma music. On the one hand ghetto politics continue to stay in place in most of Eastern Europe and the image of the Roma is dubbed oriental, barbarian and lazy. Furthermore the messages of struggle and aggression in contemporary Roma music as Roma Rap are sometimes treated as racist and damaging to the music market. On the other hand, when talented Roma artists manage to achieve some international recognition for their works, local governments all of a sudden embrace them as their own gifted nationals and claim their achievements as a product of national talent. However, in support of the position of Imre (2008) that music and culture are powerful tools to dismantle stereotypes and prejudices, the author wants to present the next case study of “Khamoro World Roma Festival” in The Czech Republic. As the reader will find out it indeed started as Roma initiative, and was later embraced and supported by the local Czech government in their effort to integrate Roma in the Czech society by presenting Roma people in a cultural light where their best artistic talents are put forward.

Case Study #4 World Roma Festival Khamoro, Prague, Czech Republic

Festival Demographics:

The World Roma Festival Khamoro is the biggest cultural event dedicated to Roma music and Roma traditional culture in Czech Republic and Europe for that matter. The current management of the festival represented by Mr. Michal Miko claims that Khamoro was actually the first Roma festival to be ever created on the European continent with its pilot edition twelve years ago in the city of Prague. The festival is produced and managed by a non-government organization, a foundation that was established by Roma refugees from Bosnia

and Herzegovina. The current event case is the only one from the whole sample of the study that is actually supported by the government in its financial struggles and receives 55% of subsidies. The reminding 45% of the expenditures are covered by ticket sales -35%, and 10% private capital respectively. It could be argued that Khamoro festival is a successful part of the Czech Republic's cultural and social policies about Roma integration that are instrumented by different social activities and cultural events that present professionally the Roma society in a positive and artistic aspect. The event has its own

FESTIVAL'S ID:

**Kha
mo
ro**
světový romský festival
world roma festival
22 — 28 05 2011

NAME: World Roma Festival Khamoro

AGE: 12 years

LOCATION: Czech Republic, Prague, Indoor & Outdoor

OWNERSHIP: NGO

FINANCING: Government: 55%; Sponsoring: 10%;
Box Office: 35%

DURATION: 7 days

ENTRANCE: ~5/10/13/18 Euros

VISITORS: 6500(2008), 7000 (2009), 7800 (2010)

Box 4

website¹² where detailed information is presented, including programming, past editions, visual materials and entry prices for the different types of sub-events. As a tradition the event lasts for a whole week at the end of May and is held in several different venues. The event is also one of the few from the sample that interchanges between both indoor and outdoor environments and has a traditional street parade that runs down to a main square in the city Prague.

Another interesting and unique feature of the festival's program beside the parade is also the annual reconstruction and reenactment of typical Roma customs and traditions. In the last edition of Khamoro the organizers reconstructed for the audience a typical Roma wedding ceremony and celebration with lots of music, singing and dancing.

Goals and audience attraction strategies:

As mentioned earlier the main goal of the festival is to present positively the artistic qualities of Roma music and Roma society to the host community of Prague and to the European world. Citing Mr. Miko: "Through music, we wanted to break the prejudices against Roma people and to change their bad position in society..." Except profit making (the festival is organized by a NPO, so naturally profit is not a priority), all other goals that were suggested to the respondent in question #6 were rated very important for the Khamoro festival including community development, gathering of people from different backgrounds, promoting the specific Roma culture and also experiencing the unique musical and dancing heritage of this people. Self-assessment of the nature of the festival rates it as highly unique type of event, but still it is open to all kinds of people and definitely not targeting only Roma people. Mr. Miko remembers, that in the first couple of editions of the fest, indeed there was only the local Roma population that was interested and attended the event, but eventually with the years passing by the audience circles of the event grew, developed and increased on a large scale, thus now Khamoro is having guests that fly over from Australia only to see and hear the program.

Elaborating more on the audience characteristics, Mr. Miko agrees that their guests are generally merry people who like to dance, sing and chant and sometimes represent the typical Roma identity and especially the female part of the visitors who are wearing big

¹² See <http://www.khamoro.cz> [24.07.2011]

earrings and loads of colorful scarves. Khamoro festival on the other hand responds to these peculiarities and further encourages more Roma values by having different elements in the program amongst which the most important are connected with the colorful clothes of artists, the costumes and the hairstyles, the traditional rituals and of course the inclusion of social workshops and seminars where things cross the border of pure entertainment and become a little bit more political. This year's hot topic of the annual panel discussion was dedicated to all issues related to the integration of Roma children in Czech public school system. Merchandizing and commercial activities related to the program are not that important (scoring 2 on the 5 points scale) for the festival owners. Of course if there was no governmental support to cover the costs of production, the ratings would probably be much different. However, one of the most important features that the organizational committee invests in and which is offered to the public as a separate purchase is the participation in the reconstruction of typical Roma customs and rituals. The later feature could be labeled as an additional offering but it is also with an educative purpose for the audience that furthermore presents the peculiarities of the exotic Roma society and the way it celebrates its culture.

Marketing research has never been conducted, although Mr. Miko as one of the managing producers' team agrees that it could be more or less helpful in order to better understand the preferences of the public. However, he says that the festival follows the decisions of a higher artistic director who thinks that the audience does not know better about the ways of promoting Roma culture and thus the festival is being carried annually on a more or less fixed agenda that has been designed by the general director and has been proven to work.

All suggested channels for advertising and reaching the audience (mentioned in question #11) were rated as very important to the organizers and the manager could not stress whether one or the other is more effective. In addition to the suggestions Mr. Miko added that they also hire large billboards around the city where they put the official logo of the festival and they further use a street parade as mini PR campaign that further receives media attention and is a perfect opportunity for staff members to directly approach and agitate spectators to join the celebration procession and to follow them into the clubbing venues later on at night when the program continues indoors. Khamoro festival as most of

the other festival events described in this study have not worked so far with tourist agencies towards the idea of strategic audience attraction of more international and local tourists. The suggested idea of collaboration between festival organizers and travel agencies was unfamiliar, yet was appreciated as a good opportunity for the future. In connection to advertising there is also the question about competition and the way the organizers feel its strength. As expected for this sample of niche-festivals most of the cases feel almost no competition in terms of rival events and so is the case with the Kahmoro festival. Mr. Miko recognizes that there are other local events dedicated to Roma culture in different parts of the country but their magnitude is so small that they are not able to cause any damage to their annual attendance rate. On the contrary the major Roma Festival is benevolent towards those smaller initiatives and sometimes even supports them as it sees them as a part of their bigger mission.

Regarding the locations of the festival decisions are made depending on the program and the stylistic content of the music (questions 14 and 15). Smaller clubs are chosen for the young population where contemporary Roma music is played like Roma-Rap and Gypsy-Jazz for example, and bigger concert halls are hired for the serious live orchestras. Also outdoor experience is included with the street parade that circles around the central streets of Prague and eventually ends up on a main square in heart of the town. Mr. Miko says that he chooses the locations based on their reputation amongst citizens and usually goes for the most famous bars and halls in town. For 12 years now there is an established relationship between the organizers and most of the venues so there is a mutual loyalty and continuity in partnership every year. However, if issues concerning capacity arise, the organizers always have to be ready to quickly to change the location and therefore usually backup solutions are considered in advance.

International superstars also exists in the field of Roma music, Mr. Miko is fully confident and cites the names of Emir Kosturica and Esma Redjepova when asked to name a few. However he says that they are not a major priority for the festival's line up and it is not mandatory to have a superstar in order to attract more people, although he is more or less prone to think that it would be helpful to have at least one superstar in the artist line up to promote the festival's name and to reinforce the status and prestige of the event.

Conclusion

The Khamoro World Roma Festival is an important event for the Czech Republic but also for all Roma people across Europe. The event has started as a civic niche-culture initiative designed by Roma refugees but later on it has grown to become a part of the governmental cultural and social policies of the Czech Republic and its struggles with minority integration issues. The festival puts the best of Roma artistic nature forward and continues to grow annually in scale as the attendance figures attest (see Box 4). The mission of the festival, although not clearly formulated in words is well represented by the strategies and the programming that are designed for the event. Also the different and versatile concerts, the reenactments and the discussion modules which all have differentiated prices are well thought and capture a greater amount of visitors yet giving them greater flexibility and freedom to pick and choose the modules they want to attend and that definitely leaves a positive note on the festival's reputation.

4. Short Introduction to Bagpipe Music Culture

As Masera (1980:1) reveals in her study about the history and origins of the bagpipe the instrument is so interwoven into history that “it appears to have been used in every single European, Middle Eastern, North African, and Asian country.” Most of these areas trace the bagpipe instrument far back to their antiquity periods and tend to proclaim themselves as its actual creators, and this intricate situation is makes the study of bagpipes one of the most controversial subjects in modern musicology (Masera, 1989). In support for this claim come various other regional researches that tell the story of bagpipes (that slightly differ in structure) as a traditional instruments of nations like Bulgaria (Rice, 1996), Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine (Lajic, 2003). Ronström (1989) also tells that the bagpipe has been cherished by Nordic nations as well and particularly by the Swedish. Of course the most notable historical accounts of bagpipe music culture come from the Highlands, where Scottish folk have been piping for quite a long time and their tradition has been kept so firm that nowadays the instrument's origins are mostly associated with Scotland and the most famous type of bagpipe is the Great Highland Bagpipe (Cannon, 1988). The mystery of the true origins of the bagpipe still is not revealed, yet some light have been shed on the subject by the archeologist Sir Leonard Wooley who in

1926 uncovered a pair of silver pipes in what 3000 B.C. would have been the Sumerian city of Ur (Collinson, 1975) .

It appears that bagpipe culture has eventually been disconnected from its roots. As Masera (1980) explains, most of the Lowland and Eastern European countries have buried the traces to the bag piping tradition due to rapid social and political changes and the bagpipe status have been downplayed and forgotten throughout their history.

Furthermore, the bagpipe has been qualified as a “stubborn” instrument and as Masera (1980) explains it has a complicated performance technique that is hard to be mastered. The instrument has its peculiarities of producing and holding harmony, melody and continuous high tones and often times these peculiarities are regarded as limitations of the instrument. This is probably why the bagpipe has not become really popular instrument worldwide and why colonizers and imperialists have not continued the instrument’s tradition. The former assumptions fits the idea of bag piping to be regarded as a niche-music culture typical for specific societies and therefore to find its place in the current study sample.

Interesting is the tendency that nowadays many nation states turn back to history and with the help of musicology look for their forgotten musical traditions and portray them as symbols of their national identity - so has been the case with bagpipes in Sweden and so appears to be the case in Belarus as revealed by Zmicer Sosnowski producer of the biggest and oldest bagpipe festival in Minsk, Belarus. The festival is named “Dudarski Fest” and it aims to reposition the bagpipe as the national musical instrument of the country. The special event dedicated to the Belorussian type of bagpipe called “Duda” is presented in greater details in the section below.

Case Study #5: Dudarski (Bagpipe) Fest, Minsk, Belarus

Festival Demographics:

The bagpipe fest in Minsk, Belarus called Dudarski Fest is the only international festival in the country which is dedicated to the revival of the bagpipe as one of the most respected and traditional Belarusian folklore instruments. The initiative about the festival is a private one and the main producer Mr. Zmicer Sosnowski agreed to tell the story about the Belarusian bagpipe called “Duda” and about a bagpipe tradition in Belarus that was discredited by politicians during the Soviet regime in favor of another folklore instrument – the cymbal. The idea about such a festival

is actually much older than the actual editions that the current event had had. Almost twenty years ago the idea about having a traditional bagpipe festival has been conceived, yet from that time until now only 10 editions of the Bagpipe festival event had been produced. The discontinuity of the event editions could be partially explained because of its mode of financing which is a combination of private funds (40%) and box office incomes (60%). As Mr. Sosnowski explains, the Belarusian government has never been cooperative and helpful to the organizers, just on the contrary it tried two times to take over the event by staging an identical event and furthermore using the same name – “Dudarski Fest”. These actions from the government were objected by the private company of Mr. Sosnowski, as he and his colleagues held the copyrights to the name of the festival and thus managed to defend

FESTIVAL'S ID:



NAME: Dudarski (Bagpipe) Fest

AGE: 10 years

LOCATION: Belarus, Minsk, Indoor & Outdoor

OWNERSHIP: Private

FINANCING: Sponsoring: 40%
Box Office: 60%

DURATION: 4 days

ENTRANCE: ~5 Euros

VISITORS: 700(2008), 800 (2009), 800 (2010)

Box 5

their intellectual property from the government's attempt of arbitration. The success and sustainability of this niche-festival are believed to be due to the strong determination and patriotism of the organizers who strive to revive the Belarusian national and cultural identity that was underrated by the government. The audience although average in size also played a positive role as it remained loyal to the well-known festival of Mr. Sosnowski. He further copyrighted the logo (a bagpiper's silhouette with a solar sign in the background) and chose a traditional musical theme for the festival in order to strengthen the brand and image of his event (See Box 5 Festival's ID for the logo image and more details). The content of the festival is various and the main idea is to revive the image of the bagpipe and to facilitate the meeting of older and newer generations of international bagpipers, where the old transfer knowledge and playing techniques to the upcoming new musicians. The event lasts for four days and similarly to the festival described in case #4 features mixture of indoor and outdoor sub-events that include live performing concerts in a club and a concert hall as well as workshops and yet more live performances in an open-air historical museum complex in the city of Minsk. The festival has its own website¹³, yet it is rather simple and only features information on the festival's concept and a rich archive of audio and video materials, but no online ticket purchasing is available to the visitors. However, the festival organizers have founded a "Dudarski Club" or a bagpipers members' club, where in a physical place members meet up on a regular basis and share information in focus groups and also virtually using an e-mail database and a newsletter communication system.

Goals and audience attraction strategies:

The mission of the festival is stated in the answer of question 17: "Preservation of the Belarusian national traditions and handing them over to the younger generations and the children." Other goals are revealed through the answers given by Mr. Sosnowski to the sub points of question #6: a) the development of the local community is rated less important to the organizers (scoring 3 on the Likert scale), than b) the idea to gather the people who share a common lifestyle and culture (scoring 5) and c) together to rejoice and share their love towards the bagpipe tradition while in the same time d) the visitors should

¹³ See <http://www.dudar.info> [24.07.2011]

be gaining authentic experience through traditional dancing, appreciating bagpipe musical performances and performing special rituals (scoring 4). The goal to make profit out of the festival is not really important to the organizers and it is rated as 1 on the scale. The self-assessment of the festival uniqueness for the local East European scene is very high (scoring another 5 on the Likert scale), but similarly to the reggae events above the organizers rate the elitist character of their audience somewhere in the middle which points that the festival is indeed oriented towards people with specific interests yet not towards the people who are following too commercial trends on the one hand or behaving as too elitist on the other hand.

The answers to Q#9 reveal better the profile of the audience and its temptations to express its love to national identity and culture through dancing, singing and chanting, also using special symbols like traditional flags and sometimes wearing special gonfalons. On the other hand the organizers also send similar messages to the audience by encouraging the realization of values for the national identity and the bagpipe tradition by including certain elements in their festival's program like: traditional costumes for the artists (rated 4 on the 5 point scale of importance), performing traditional dances on stage (a major symbol for the festival) that are meant to be interactive and practiced by the audience as well (rated 5 on the importance scale). Also a special ritual between the organizers and the community is the traditional sowing of an oak tree for every edition of the festival. The program also features games for the public as well as master-classes in playing the bagpipe that are given by old professionals to the rookies that attend. One of the nights is situated traditionally near the cottage of the most respected elderly bagpiper in the country. Food and traditional drinks are a vital part of the festival (rated 4), also various merchandise goods are offered including actual bagpipes are sold for the real lovers of the instrument.

As a further support to the discussion on the familiarity with the audience and its profile the organizers are asked about their attitude towards market research. The answers of questions 19 and 20 reveal that for the bagpipe "Dudarski" festival, market research is a vital part of the audience attraction strategies and is highly rated by the producers. Annually there are at least two internal market researches, conducted inside the "Dudarski Club" before and after the actual event. Data extraction is done with the help of focus groups with fans are formed and their preferences, remarks and suggestions towards

outdoor locations, club venues and the event programming are being examined. Knowing their audience and receiving feedback is a valuable way for the organizers to plan their advertising as well.

Question 11 and its answers elucidate which are the most used and preferred channels of advertising, or how exactly the organizers reach their potential audience. Internet, radio and TV are amongst the top rated channels (scoring 5) and second to them comes all print media materials like articles, posters, billboards and flyers (rated 4). It is obvious that the advertising strategy of the event is with an emphasis on the audio-visual side of the festival and the internet newsletter serves the most dedicated fans that have subscribed in order to receive the important information and offers almost instantly.

Answers to questions 14 and 15 give an idea about the influence of the festival location toward the audience attraction. The club venues where concerts are performed are chosen according the preference of the younger fans, while the outdoor parts that feature acoustic concerts, horse riding, lake swimming and a conference at a historical museum complex are oriented more to the crowd of local and international cultural tourists.

Superstars and their inclusion in the program is also an important part of the audience development strategies of the festival (Q#23). Most of the times the superstars are just guests in the audience but usually they come up on stage to greet the people and to improvise a little bit with the upcoming new artists who debut on stage. This is another important aspect of transferring traditional values from the experience of the old into to the hands of the young generations.

Conclusion

This festival is a typical example of a civic initiative that fills up a cultural niche that was ignored and underdeveloped by the cultural policy of the government. It has turned into a platform for expressing national identity values through the revival and the repositioning of a traditional musical instrument and all its related music/dance performances, rituals, cultural symbols, traditional cuisine and so forth. The way of future development of the fest goes for the eventual fusion of traditional bagpipe music with the modern day electronic and digital music which is what the new generations like and admire. Such a cultural and artistic fusion will on the one hand save the tradition and on the other it will facilitate the acceptance and revival of the bagpipe instrument bringing it back from the

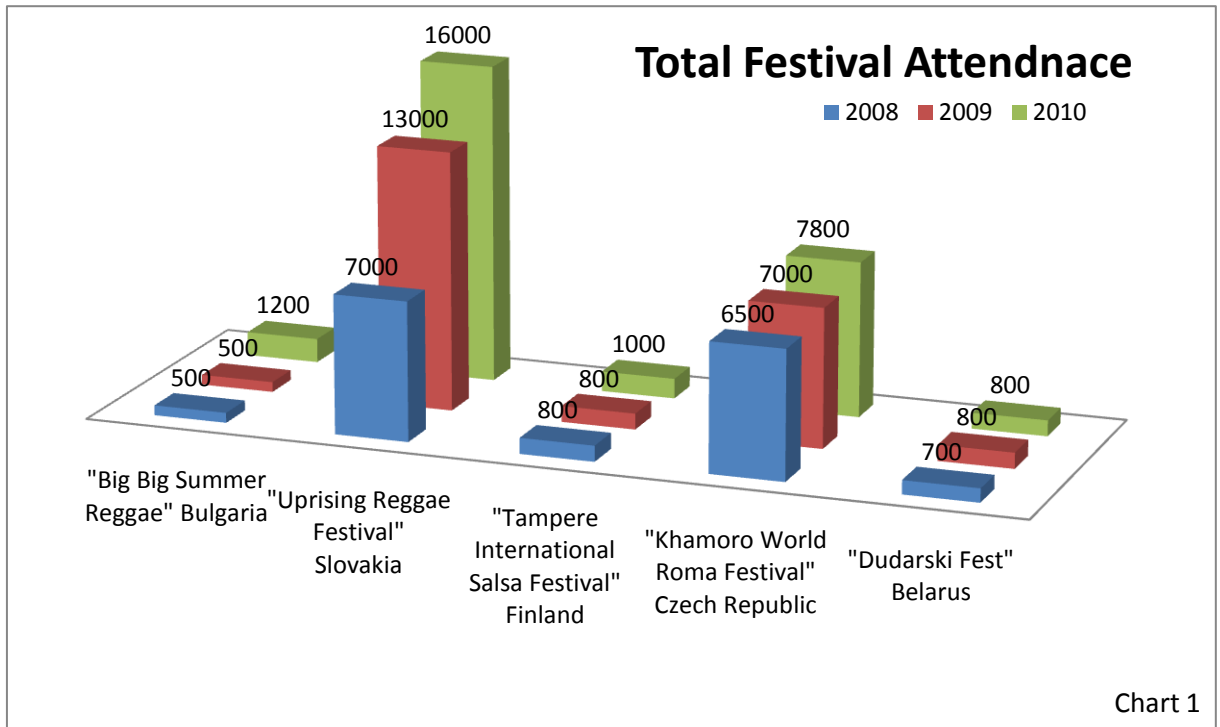
past and repositioning it into the present. The aims and goals of the festival are well thought and realized. The audience attraction strategies are adequate and well designed according to the mission of the festival and therefore give all hopes for the successful future and sustainability of the festival.

5. Comparative Analysis of Cases and Theory Testing

In the following section we compare all case studies of the sample and their answers to questions designed to represent and test the different economic theories. The comparative analysis will be structured so that the information of all five respondents is put through the lenses of the different economic theories in the same order discussed in Chapter 2 and lastly through the lens of strategic marketing for festival management. The attempt of this analysis is to expose the results, to compare them, and finally to observe and comment on the relevance of the economic theories to the process of festival organization done by every respondent. Also a less important aim of the analysis is to comment on whether the special festivals' are in general strategically oriented towards their audience or not in a marketing sense. Graphical representation of data inputs is produced with the help of SPSS and Excel software in the form of bar charts. A small database file was created for all scaled questions for the sake of comparison through and chart building. The rest of the powerful statistical tools of the software were not fully utilized as the analytical discussion remains qualitative in nature as described in Methods (Chapter 3).

In the beginning of this chapter, the results from the interview with every respondent were thoroughly presented independently and question by question for each one of the five case studies. However, in the following section we aggregate the responses of all five cases and put them through the lenses of the theories in order to see how good they fit. The final goal is to be able to explain which theory is the closest or best fitting the observed reality and to be able to answer the question how exactly European international niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience. Before we start with the first theory form the framework – the Superstar Theory, the reader should be presented with an aggregate illustration of the audience attraction figures of all festivals for their past three editions. This has been done already independently for ever case study but for the purpose of the comparative analysis and the final answer of the research question we believe that having them presented in an aggregated form across the last three years will be helpful and

better elucidating the big picture of audience attraction trends for the sampled European international niche-music festivals (see Chart1 below).



6. Superstar Theory in International Niche-Music Festivals in Europe

After the seminal work of Rosen (1981) many economists applied his superstar economy principle to different sectors and markets. The original theory was designed for the economic success and attractive power of individuals but Frey (1998) took it a step beyond and applied the mechanism to art institutions and in particular to museums. In the following thesis we test whether it is relevant to speak about superstar festivals and whether the same principle that was concluded to work for art institutions and cities can work for festivals in their aim of visitor attraction and particularly interesting is to apply it not to all kinds of festivals in general but especially on festivals that are catering for a niche type of culture thus are trying to attract a niche-type of audience.

In the course of the research a total of five niche-music festivals have been sampled and their producers and general managers have been interviewed over the phone or online using the help of Internet telephony like Skype. To test the relevance of the

Superstar Theory we use the proposed framework and compare the answers of all five festivals on the questions #5a, #7, #10, #11, #19, #20, and #22. The last question inquires directly about the importance and familiarity of superstars.

All five respondents were familiar with the term superstar and fully agreed that there is such a top-rated segment of artists present in their market niche (Q22a), thus confirming the reasoning of Rosen (1981). Furthermore according to Frey (1998) having a blockbuster or superstar artists/artworks is essential for the attractiveness of the exhibitions of art institutions like museums and in the case for music festivals that would be translated into having a music superstar booked and presented in the line-up of the particular festival event. However, when managers were asked whether superstars are important elements when devising the line-ups of every annual edition of their festival (Q22b), there were slight differences in the managerial attitude towards superstars and their attractive power (see Chart 2 below).

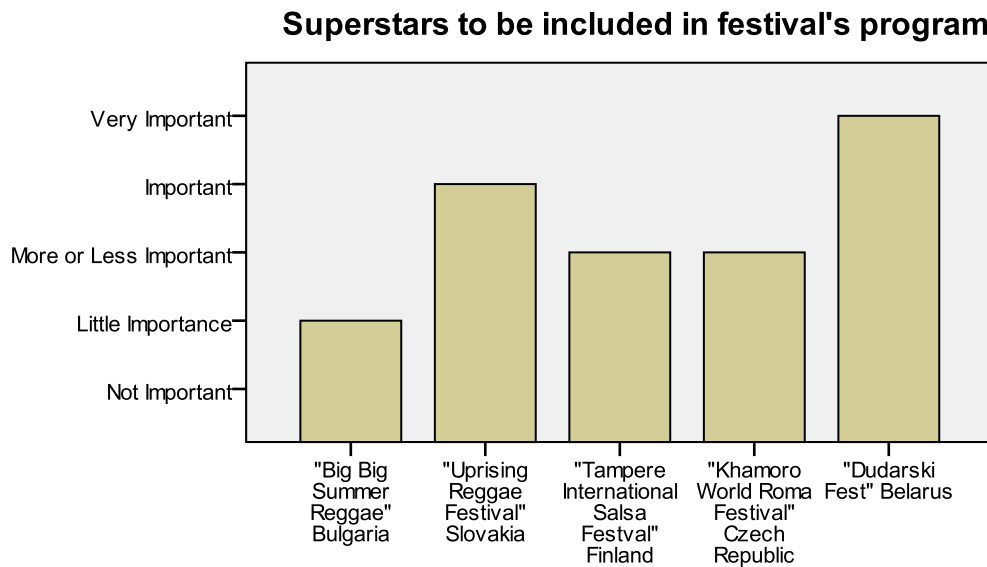


Chart 2

As most important to have a superstar in the show at all times was reported by the Belarusian International Bagpipe Festival “Dudarski Fest.” The manager Mr. Sosnowski said that superstar bagpipers are always present in the programming of the festival and take part in the different modules of the festival whether that would be performing on stage or participating in workshops. As a part of the festivals’ mission of transferring the

traditional techniques of playing bagpipe music, he explained that the only way to do so is through the gathering of elder- (superstar bagpipers) with newbie bagpipe players and letting them exchange knowledge between each other. Questions #5, #6 and #7 test for the festival orientation, the former asks about motives of the festival and the later inquires about the personal opinion toward uniqueness of the festival itself and the uniqueness of the visitors attending. One might argue that because the bagpipe festival is more oriented towards tradition preservation and the revival of the bagpipe as a national instrument and less so towards the visitors' experience, there will be shrinkage in attractiveness. However, the total attendance of the "Dudarski Fest" clustered across the last three years show different and in fact it is slightly increasing (see Chart 1 on previous page). In fact in the bagpipe fest there is a large gamma of tradition-related activities oriented especially at the audience. Question #10 reveals the different modules of the program and further exposes that superstars although important are a part of a bigger offering. Indeed there is a total experience element oriented towards the visitor, where importance have the exposure of traditional costumes and dances, the obedience to annual rituals connected with the praise of nature, the learning of bagpipe play through workshops and games and also the marketing of traditional symbols and fest merchandise.

However, drastic is the difference when we compare the later attendance figures to the attendance progression of the next festival that rates superstar inclusion as important – "The Uprising Reggae Festival" Slovakia. The Slovakian reggae fest is actually the youngest and fastest growing festival in the sample and as we see on Chart 1 its attendance increase as if it has been on the power of two. It is interesting to find out whether this massive visitors' attraction power is solely due to the superstar effect. The manager was clear about his believes that superstars are not really so superior in talent than many of the non-star rated participants in the artistic program and yet he admitted that there is an attraction power that superstar names possess and it must be used. He remembered how in last year's edition of the festival at least 1000 tickets were sold instantly after the

announcement of “Punjabi MC” (who is treated by the industry as a “one-hit wonder”¹⁴ type of artist) as a guest on the festival.

The Salsa and the Roma International festivals come third in line treating equally superstars as being more or less important for their line-ups. However, the “Khamoro World Roma Festival” seems to attract more audience than the Finland’s International Salsa Festival in Tampere although having the same indifferent attitude towards superstars. The manager of Tampere Festival says that sometimes superstars are just too good for his festival, as they act too pretentious and therefore his respect for them is mediocre. Clearly there should be other factors into play as Frey (1998) points for superstar museums there are other characteristic components that contribute for the visitors “total experience” and his argument is that exactly that total experience is what attracts the masses of visitors and not only the superstars.

Surprisingly, the Bulgarian festival managers rate the superstars’ inclusion in the programming as having a little importance. There is an apparent contradiction between preaching and practicing, because their mission statement clearly says that “bringing world famous reggae artist to Bulgaria is amongst our top priorities.” Regardless of the negative attitude toward superstars, still the festival exhibits a slow growth in attendance, which again confirms that the lack of superstars must have been compensated with something else. The main reason why superstars in reggae are less important for Bulgaria is due to economic struggles from both the supply and the demand side of the reggae music market in Bulgaria. Promoters and consumers are both unwilling to pay the high fixed costs and entry prices that are required by the market to operate as superstar economy. The reluctance of sponsors to finance reggae events and the complete lack of government support makes it even harder for small entrepreneurs to exploit the attractiveness of superstars and makes them look for alternative solutions.

To conclude, by looking at all these mixed results on the attitude towards superstars inclusion in niche-festival events shows that according to managers superstars alone are not what really brings the people, yet it surely helps for the attractiveness of the

¹⁴ This term is related to *fads* and *buzzes* (Caves, 2000) where the one-hit wonder status is given to an act or an artist that is known for only a single success and translated for music performers it would mean that they have only one hit single.

festival. All of the managers are positive that superstars should be included in the line-ups of festival events as an additional visitor attraction booster. Frey's (1998) argument about having a "total experience" effect by other related services and activities seems very plausible and adequate. All festivals include different modules and one can argue that there are aiming at the superstar status. Two of the festivals from the sample are growing at a faster pace and show that attraction power is exerted thus the superstar theory although partially works for the niche-music festivals.

7. Long Tail Theory in International Niche-Music Festivals in Europe

As explained in the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, the Long Tail theory proposed by Anderson (2004, 2006) is only partially applicable to the promotion and retailing so to speak of festival events. It is a theory that is considered having a logic counter to the one of the superstars' economies by Rosen (1981) yet in the current thesis we believe that it could also have some explanatory power in the question of how niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience. The theory postulates that having an online retail outlet that does not depend on any storage space (i.e. physical location) can actually cater for a larger group of specially oriented customers who can browse through endless virtual catalogs of niche-products that if it was not for the Internet would have never made it to the products lists in stores. However festivals are generally bound to a physical location and the actual product is the experience on site, therefore the theory does not fully correlate with the properties of festival events as other niche-products. However, applicable are the technological improvements in product showcasing and of online retailing that could be applied to festivals and thus some of the benefits of the Log Tail logic could be used. If festivals utilize the benefits of Internet and the opportunities for selling tickets online it would definitely increase the number of visitors because their searching costs will be minimized significantly. For this we researched how many of the sampled niche-festivals have their own website where there is a virtual box office stand. Four out of the five cases have websites¹⁵, with the exception of the Bulgarian case. However, only three out of the

¹⁵ See Appendix B for detailed contact information as well as website addresses of all sample studies.

four festival websites have online ticketing service and are considered to be functional enough to exploit the logic of the Long Tail theory. The website of the Belarusian “Dudarski Fest” is quite informative with a rich audio/video section including clips from previous editions but as a whole it looks quite underdeveloped in comparison to the others and furthermore it does not have any online retail features present. The best looking and most functional site is the one of “Uprising Reggae Festival” Slovakia as it utilizes the latest features of web programming. The site is not only interactive with a lot of animated and auditable content, but it is also connected with the social sharing platforms like Facebook and Twitter and customers might log in directly with their profiles through the website and repost valuable information about the promotional activities and the preparation of the festival.

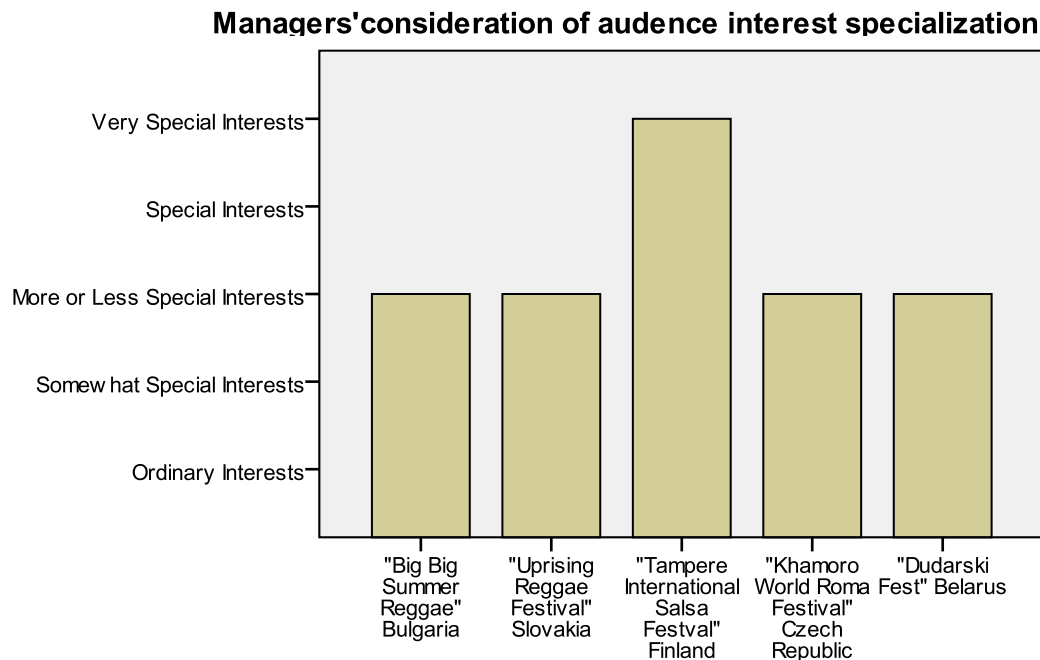


Chart 3

On the question whether or not managers consider their event as a special type and as a unique in content event they were all certain to the fullest degree that their events are highly specialized. However, we were also interested to understand whether or not the managers consider their audience as unique as their festival and whether they treat them as a niche-type of audience. This information is revealed in the answers of question #7 and it is graphically represented on Chart 3 above. It turns out that only “Tampere International

Salsa Festival” considers that it targets a niche-type of consumers, whereas all the rest of the managers said that their audience is a mixed crowd that includes people from various backgrounds and who are not necessarily relating to the content of the festival and furthermore they stated that their festival is open to anyone and not strictly designed to cater for a special segment of the audience. When checking with the answers of the control question #19 that asks whether or not a marketing research has been conducted in order to understand the audience profile and characteristics we see that only “Tampere International Salsa Festival” and the “Dudarski Fest” conduct marketing researches on an annual and biannual basis. This latter fact can be used as a support of the argument that these two festivals really know their audience and are aware of its profile and preferences and therefore we might conclude that the Salsa Festival of Finland really caters for a niche type of audience. The rest of the festivals could be blamed in indifference towards their audience preferences, but the loose managerial attitude towards audience profiling may also be influenced by another factor and that is particularly the hope that the festival would transform in the future from a niche-type to a superstar type of festival that attracts large masses of various audiences. In fact the managers of the Reggae and the Roma festivals were explicit and said that this is a part of their mission, to attract different people from all classes, colors and creeds. However in order to attract large number of visitors, it is essential that the festival is visible and within reach of the masses, meaning that advertising and information should be available and targeted in a way to spare the visitors’ time for obtaining information.

Question #11 reveals the attitude of managers towards advertising in the media and towards the dissemination of information about the festival. Comparing the answers of festival managers, their collective attitude towards Radio and TV seems to be giving away position to Internet and Prints (posters, flyers billboards and magazine articles) where three out of five managers state that Radio and TV are not preferred channels at all while all fully agree that Internet is really powerful channel and also print outs in different sizes and formats. The “Khamoro World Roma Festival” and the “Dudarski Fest” treat all advertising channels as equally high in importance. If the Long Tail is to be profited from then search costs of visitors should be minimized as much as possible and this is true for all festivals whether they are aiming at a niche- or a general type of audience. So it could be

argued that there is room for improvement in terms of information dissemination by the majority of the sampled festival cases.

The next question #12 inquires managers whether or not they make any effort to reduce transportation costs of visitors as well. Reaching the location of the festival is an essential part of the visitors' budgets and therefore if reduced that might boost attendance and attract people who were reluctant to make that extra cost in order to attend. The idea that festival owners collaborate with tourist agencies and offer the consumer package deals with combined travel and entertainment offers was hinted in the works of Towse (2010) and was suggested to festival producers in the interview. It was interesting as this idea came as a surprise to four out of the five inquired managers and only the "Dudarski Fest" of Belarus admitted that it has worked with tourist agencies and the manager was familiar with the practice of working with tour operators. The idea was welcomed warmly by managers who never thought about it and the Belarusian manager was quite familiar with the concept probably because his festival is the oldest in the sample and had had the most editions so far.

In conclusion, the Long Tail theory partially works for festivals and audience attraction. However the potential of the theory is far from fully utilized by the sampled festivals. Although all festival managers rate the Internet as a very important media channel it seems that the digital potential of the global network is not utilized far beyond the online retail of tickets and the multimedia sharing. A lot of the marginal and search costs of visitors are successfully reduced, and yet to fully exploit the benefits of the Long Tail theory, physical borders and boundaries must be removed completely for the niche-consumer to reach the product. Except for a single case that is cutting transportation costs, none of the rest of the sampled festivals seems to think about the drawbacks of being stuck to a physical location. It is not impossible though and definitely not unthinkable for a festival and its artistic product to become completely independent from physical constraints – and that is by making the fest and its program a fully digital experience, putting it online in Internet. This would truly make the festival attractive to audiences that reside in the never ending niches of the Long Tail and were never expected to purchase a ticket because they were simply out of physical reach. The idea might appear farfetched on first sight, but as studies show the rapid success of online retailing, we believe it is worth a try.

8. Central Place Theory in International Niche-Music Festivals in Europe

As seen in the theoretical introduction in Chapter 2, the Central Place Theory developed by German geographer Walter Christaller (1933) seeks to describe the number, the size, the spacing and the functional composition of retailing and service centers (Brown, 1995). The idea of central places has emerged and further geometrical patterns were described about their development around populated areas and hinterlands. The theory of Christaller was developed to account for a positivist macroeconomic world where buyers and sellers are perceived to be equally affluent and rational (Brown, 1995). In the same normative spirit we now want to translate the ideas of the central place theory to the dynamics of audience attraction of niche-music festivals in order to see how relevant it is in explaining the patterns of audience attraction. Because this study is oriented towards the supply side's perspective of the niche-music market and extracts its information from festival managers, we will adapt the Central Place Theory from their point of view mostly and less from the visitors' viewpoint.

Central places are the retail/service centers that attract consumers from nearby locations, translating the later to the festivals' landscape we have to perceive festivals and their event locations as aspiring central places. To check whether such an idea is plausible, we have inquired where exactly the locations of the festival are. Four out of five festivals are being situated inside the limits of a city and are being held indoors inside one or several clubbing venues. Only the Slovakian "Uprising Reggae Festival" has its own remote location that is an outdoor lake complex in the vicinity of Bratislava. The later facts would mean that four out of five festivals fall inside the scope of another central place already as being situated in a city and therefore their own chances of becoming a central place are close to zero. Festivals situated in big cities could not become separate central places on their own, as they are being shadowed by the bigger location. The chances of these event locations to become central places are even slimmer if the central place they fall in is a Capital location. According to Christaller (1933) there are five categories of central places arranged by their size, where City and Capital Center are the biggest. At best the festival might become a cultural attachment of the big city – a jewel in the city's crown so to speak, or if the city is not a capital, then the festival might gradually start to represent the spirit and

the ethos of the town and eventually to turn into the town's *hallmark event*, like the case of Edinburgh Festival (Getz, 1997, Allen et al., 2002:13). However, the Slovakian festival which is located near a lake in the vicinity of Bratislava is the only event from the sample truly has the chances of becoming a central place of its own.

Another parallel that could be made between Christaller's theory (1933) and the reality of festivals is between the low- and high-order goods that are being sold in central places and the "total experience" of visitors marketed in festivals that Frey (2008) talks about. In other words to be true central places festivals must be distribution centers of low- and high-order goods also. To check whether this is so we can use question #10 which requests from managers to list the items of their festival programs. Except for the entry *food and drinks* all other items that have been offered on the festival can be considered as high-goods as they more or less are part of the visitors' leisure activities. The food and the drinks seem to be only low-order goods that have been offered on festival events. All festivals rate the inclusion of these essential items as an important concern, and probably having food and drinks on site guarantees some extra profit, yet for the festivals that are located in city clubs (i.e. located in a central place already) this is not so much the case as bars are often property of the venues and furthermore it is highly probable that visitors have already taken care of their low-order needs from other, more competitive, city vendors.

In the case of the Slovakian "Uprising Reggae festival" which is located on a remote camp, low-order goods are not only demanded they are a must, otherwise the visitors would have to leave the camp pretty soon. From visitors' point of view having to travel to a location of the festival would mean that the whole experience of the festival is regarded as a high-order good. When observing the answers to question number 15 we can understand whether the location of the festival was planned or randomly chosen depending on other circumstance. In the most of the cases, clubs are the preferred location choices for the niche-festival events and these choices have been made because of economic situation. For example the Bulgarian manager Mr. Dimov was very firm in his position that a festival events must be held outdoors and that this is one of his personal top-priorities for the next edition of the festival. It turns out that attractive power is in the actual physical location itself which further connects with Throsby's (2001) idea that the natural capital of the

environment could be utilized for economic benefits and exploited as an additional audience attraction tool.

Relevant to festival locations is also the late contribution of Chirstaller about the *tourist cycle* (Brown, 2005). Places discovered by few individuals gradually turn to great and attractive locations for the rest of the mass visitors, yet with time the attraction falls from favor as crowding and polluting *denude* the experience and eventually the location ends up in a state of decline. Rastislav Pruzinec, the manager of the Slovakian “Uprising Reggae” revealed that the location of their festival – the lake “Golden Sands” has been working as magic for the attraction of audiences so far and actually it remains the preferred spot for summer relaxation of Bratislava’s inhabitants who visit the lake not only for the festival but also during other times of the year. Indeed the festival exploits the location only for 3 years now and it could be argued that denudation processes are not yet in effect. However, Rastislav was very concerned and certainly aware about the negative environmental impacts of the festival over the physical properties of the landscape. Therefore he was adamant about his future plans for the organization of the upcoming editions of his event saying that they must be more eco-friendly than before, with more volunteering assistants to clean up and of course providing more and better hygiene facilities on the festival location.

In conclusion the Central Place Theory seems to fit niche-music festivals, yet to be fully responsible for the attraction of their audience, the researched niche-music festivals must become central places for the hinterlands and populated areas around them. As it was shown most of the festivals in the sample are already located at a central place, and therefore they can only play a supportive role thus try exploiting the attractive power of the bigger central place they are in. The one festival that seems to best utilizes the logic of central places is the Slovakian “Uprising Reggae Festival” that has strategically placed the location of the festival and has made sure that it provides a total experience including low-order and high-order services.

Conclusion

In the following chapter we have presented in great details the cultures and the niche-music festivals that represent them. Qualitative data has been extracted and transcribed from the individual interviews with festival owners and managers for all five case studies of this master thesis. After presenting all cases separately a joint comparative

analysis scrutinizes all five participants through the theoretical framework of the thesis and thus tested for the explanatory power and relevance of every theory put in here. The general conclusions from the research and the final answer of the question of “*How European international niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience?*” have been outlined in the last Chapter 5 of this thesis. In the same last chapter of the work, readers can also find suggestions for further research on the topic.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Recapitulation

The content of the current thesis has dealt with the phenomena of organization and offering of international musical festivals as forms of special events in a cultural economics/ cultural tourism context. Main focus of the research fell on European festivals, which were offering a specialized musical program associated with a niche-type of culture or an artifact. The objectives of the research were to compare existing and functioning European niche-festivals in terms of their audience attraction practices. Furthermore, the study connected the qualitatively observed reality with certain economic and theories and tested to what extent observations and theories were congruent and adequate in explaining the researched phenomenon. The Superstar Theory of Rosen (1981), the Long Tail Theory of Anderson (2006) and the Central Place Theory of Christaller (1933) were all embedded in a theoretical framework through which the qualitative data was analyzed and compared in order to test if these theories are contributing towards understanding the audience attendance and attraction patterns.

1. Answering the main research question

The main goal of this work was to answer the question of *“How European international niche-music festivals reach and attract their audience?”* The gathered qualitative data and the subsequent analysis have shown that strategic marketing is not the main audience attraction policy of the niche-music festivals in the studied sample. The observed practices seem more congruent with different parts of the proposed economic theories and therefore we conclude that all three theories could be used to explain the total audience attraction patterns of the festival events in the sample. A particular relevant parallel has been made with the work of Frey (1998) where the logic of superstar museums seems highly correlating with the visitors’ dynamics of music festivals and so the proposition to consider the existence of superstar festivals was made. No single theory from the proposed theoretical framework has been singled out as a sole explanation of the total festival attendance of any of the festivals in the current thesis. On the other hand, none of the suggested theories seemed to be completely irrelevant to the subject as well. However, the

author's personal feeling is that the theories that are most adequate in explaining the majority of the visitor's attraction are the Superstar Theory (Rosen1981, Frey 1998) and the Central Place Theory (Christaller, 1933) with a champion example for this sample the Slovakian "Uprising Reggae Festival" in Bratislava.

2. Conclusions from theoretical point of view

In the pursuit to understand how successful the different theories are in explaining the audience attendance we have looked at all three proposed theories consecutively. For the explanatory power of the Superstar Theory and its attractiveness to visitors we have concluded that the theory is functional and applicable to festivals yet it could not be fully responsible for the attendance behavior of consumers. Rosen's (1981) early models correlate only a little to the attractiveness of the special events like festivals, while the later argument of Frey's (1998) about having a superstar institutions that offer a "total experience" seemed very plausible and more adequate. The discussion on superstars and festivals has raised the potential to consider the existence of superstar festivals similar in nature to the Frey's superstar museums. Indeed, all festivals have included different modules and related services thus striving to provide all kinds of consumption activities to the audience. With more or less confidence we can argue that at least three out of five of the researched festivals are aiming at the superstar status and are advancing on that way in a fast pace. Two of the festivals from the sample grew much faster than the rest and this have shown that attraction power has been attained and that it has been partially aided by the Superstar Theory.

The next best explanatory theory was found to be the Central Place Theory, that fits niche-music festivals well, yet it also cannot be held as fully responsible for the total attraction of niche-festivals' audience. It has been concluded that the researched niche-music festivals must become in a way central places for the hinterlands and populated areas around them. Festivals situated outside of large towns and cities have the best chance to become central places, while the festivals situated inside the populated areas have at best the chance to exploit the attractive power of those locations and eventually to become associated with its image. As it was seen from the case studies, most of the festivals in the sample were already located at central places, and the one that has its own remote location and promotes it, has the most success in terms of attendance figures in almost no time.

We have also attempted to apply the Long Tail Theory to the nature of niche-festivals particularly because its logic is oriented toward niche-product consumers. It has been concluded that the theory of Anderson (2006) could partially work for festivals and audience attraction. However the potential of the theory is far from fully utilized by the sampled festivals as the traditional concept of experiencing festivals as products so far remains to be bounded to a bricks-and-mortar or an open-air locations. The reasoning of the Long Tail has made sense and could slightly explain some increase of visitor attendance with its reductionist policies towards marginal and search costs of visitors with the help of new/digital technology. However, all physical borders and boundaries that surround festivals must be removed completely for a fully fledged the Long Tail effect to be observed and for the niche-consumer to be able to freely connect to the niche-market and fulfill his/her special wants and needs. Thus the theory combined with contemporary digital retailing has given grounds to suggest a possible digitalization of music-festivals in the near future.

3. Conclusions from managerial point of view

The above stated conclusions were also indirectly supported by the views and beliefs of the interviewed managers, whose personal backgrounds were not researched and so their realization and familiarity with the principles of the above mentioned theories was considered more or less on a subconscious level. For instance, for the Superstar Theory, obtaining mixed results on the attitude of managers towards the superstars' inclusion in niche-festival events showed that most of the managers think that superstars alone are not what really bring the people, yet they all agreed that famous acts and artists in the program help for the overall increase of the events' attractiveness. All of the managers were positive that superstars should be considered as an additional visitor attraction booster.

Although all festival managers have rated the connectivity between them and the audience as very important, it seems that strategic marketing is not dominating their practices and furthermore the digital potential of the Internet is not fully utilized. Online retail of tickets and the multimedia sharing are present in most of the cases, yet many additional features of the web and the digital media are yet to be explored and benefited from. Also, except for a single case that is cutting transportation costs, none of the rest of

the sampled festivals seems to think about the drawbacks of being stuck to a physical location.

4. Suggestions to fellow festival managers

Following the prescriptions of Frey (2008) for superstar museums the most important suggestion to fellow festival organizers would be to aim for the provision of a “total experience” for their audiences. The artistic program is really important and superstar acts must be showcased, yet all related experiences during the event period must be also advertised and promoted.

From the point of view of locations, festivals managers must realize the attractive power of unspoiled outdoor venues that are furthermore located away from big cities and towns. Going outdoor and going big in terms of exploiting natural capital is what seems as the best strategy for success in audience attraction. Of course this suggestion comes with the warning of the so called “tourist cycle” of locations and the dangers of negative environmental impacts of massively attended events. I call for the realization of managerial responsibilities and taking conscious actions towards sustainability and preservation of the natural capital of environmental landscapes.

Last but not least, a bold suggestion to fellow festival managers could be to consider a full real time digitalization plan for their program. For example, broadcasts in real time of stage performances are now easy to be put online and successfully marketed through secure digital streaming channels that could be accessed with subscription fees. In this way, visitors who are potential attendees but due to physical obstructions are unable to attend, could still be attracted and thus more marginal profit will not go to waste. Furthermore, broadcasts rights might also be sold and resold to TV, Radio and to other cross types of digital media across the world, thus gaining more from copyright royalties.

5. Limitations of the current study and suggestions to fellow cultural economists for further research

The current study is limited in a way because of the narrow scope of its sample. It would be interesting to test the proposed theories to larger population of festivals including popular ones in order to be able to state conclusions with more confidence and to be able to make inferences to the global festival market. Also the conclusions presented here are

more or less normative in tone and come through the subjective perspective of the supply side – from managers themselves. A further balancing counterpart study of the demand side might be useful to research attendance dynamics of visitors from their own perspective.

The world of special events is limitless and festivals could be characterized as cross-breeds between entertainment and art/culture education which open up new research alleys for cultural economists. In general I believe that more research is needed in the field of festival production, as festivals prove to be the modern centers for total experiences, and furthermore could be fully connected with commercial activities through classical and contemporary art and culture.

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Appendix A: Short Online Questionnaire directed at managerial staff (supply side) of international specialized festivals in Europe.

Here the reader can observe the structure or the guidelines that the researcher has followed when conducting the qualitative interviews according to the methods described thoroughly in Chapter 3 of the paper. This framework contains a mix of 25 open-ended and fixed choice questions and Likert scales that following more or less the same order were posed to producers/managers of European niche-music festivals. As explained earlier the questionnaire is not a central data collection tool but a supportive instrument to ensure that comparability will be enhanced and facilitated when later analyzing the interview transcripts.

START OF INTEVIEW

1. What is the title/name of your festival?

.....

2. Who/what type of body is the owner/organizer of the festival?

.....

3. How old is the festival?

..... years old.

4. Is your festival more or less set at a fixed time every year?

Yes it is at the same time period every year? (When?)

No, time period differs every year (Why? What defines the time of happening?)

5. What were the motives to start this festival in the first place?

.....

.....

6. Please consider the following proposed motives/goals and state the level of their importance to you (1 means not important and 5 is very important):

- a. **To help develop the local community**
not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important
- b. **To bring people together**
not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important
- c. **To promote a special type of lifestyle/culture**
not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important
- d. **To experience art like music/dance**
not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important
- e. **To make profit**
not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important

7. How would you describe the nature of your festival:

- a. **How would you rate the uniqueness/exclusivity of the festival**
ordinary 1----2----3----4----5 very unique
- b. **Do you agree that your program is targeted at special audience interests**
ordinary interests 1----2----3----4----5 very special interest

8. How is your festival being financed and how is the finance divided in percents?

- Private Capital/Sponsors (.....%)
- Government subsidies (.....%)
- Private Cultural funds (.....%)
- Other, specify (.....%)

9. Does your audience tend to express its uniqueness in some specific ways? (multiple answers):

- Dancing
- Singing and chanting
- Display of symbols (for example:)
- Accessories
- Typical costumes/appearance
- Other (what exactly):
.....
.....

10. Does the program of your festival feature some other specifics and their level of significance? (multi answer, mark all relevant propositions to your program):

- Special colors (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Costumes (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Hairstyle (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Dancing (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Rituals (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Workshops/Seminars (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Games (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Symbols (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Special Food and Drinks (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Merchandise/Souvenirs (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Safety/Health (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Information/communication (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Other, Please specify:..... (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- None of the above occur

11. Please choose the 3 most preferred channels to you use when advertising and communicating with your audience:

- Internet (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- TV (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Radio(not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Print media(not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Posters (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Print outs (Flyers) (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)
- Others types, specify:..... (not important 1----2----3----4----5 very important)

12. Do you work closely with touristic agencies? If Yes then, please choose one or all applicable propositions, if no skip to next question):

- Submit information in tourist guides and tourist agency publications
- Negotiate package deals for event tickets with tour operators
- Receive audience expansion offers from touristic agents
- Other type of collaboration, please specify: _____
- No we don't work with tourist companies

13. Does the advertising materials for the festival feature? (multiple options):

- Logo
- Slogan/Moto
- Copyrighted color scheme
- Copyrighted graphic design
- Copyrighted musical theme
- Other trade mark artifacts (specify):

- None of the above occur

14. You festival are being held in:

- On a Stadium
- In a big hall (like sport/concert hall)
- Inside a club (or several clubs)
- On a square
- Other type of outdoor (please specify):

15. How did you choose the location of the festival?

.....

.....

16. Has the festival been moved around/relocated geographically?

- No, the festival still remains on its original place (skip to question 17)

- Yes (Can you please specify):

a. How many times in total has the festival been moved?

.....

b. The festival moved from where to where?

.....

.....

c. Why was this movement(s) necessary?

.....

.....

17. Does your festival have an official mission statement?

- No, there is no festival mission statement formulated, nor written (go to Q18).
- YES (then, can you please formulate it as it appears officially)

.....

18. Can you please give accurate or approximate *total attendance figures* (total number of visitors) for all editions of your fest or at least for the past 3 editions?

Year of festival edition	Number of total visitors
2010	
2009	
2008 Etc. ...	

19. Do you usually conduct/ or in a moment in time have conducted your own market research?

- Yes (please, fill out the following sub questions)
 - a. Please explain how visitor data is being collected

 - b. How often is information collected(updated):
 - Single study (once in the past)
 - Annually (Before every edition)
 - Biannually(every two years)
 - c. When was the last time you did market research?

 - d. What percentage of your audience (roughly) is local population?

 - e. What percentage of your audience are tourists/foreigners?

 - f. Would you like to change the above mentioned percentage and in which direction?

- No
 - a. Why not?

20. Do you think a market research was/could be helpful to your festival in general?

Not helpful 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 very helpful

21. How do you feel about the strength of competition your festival is facing from other similar festivals?

Weak competition 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 heavy competition

22. When creating your artistic program do you aim to have superstars artists in the program?

a. There are superstars in the artistic field of your festival

disagree 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 fully agree

b. Are superstars included in the lineup of your festival

Not included 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 always included

23. How do you evaluate your festival in terms of fulfilling its goals?

Festival goals are poorly met; 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Festival goals are fully met;

24. In your perspective does your festival promote/give benefits and positive image to other institutions/organizations in the region?

- the city/ region: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- the local community: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- the visitors: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- local food and accommodation businesses: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- communal services (parking, public transport, road taxation, etc.):
little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- NPOs/NGOs : little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- tourist agencies: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- politicians/government: little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit
- other, specify _____ : little benefit 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 strong benefit

25. Can something be done differently in the future from how it is been done now or in the past?

What are your future plans for development?

.....
.....

END OF INTERVIEW

Appendix B: Full Contact Information of Sample Participants and Festival ID Table

Below the reader can find all the contact information of participants in the current study. This contact information is publicly available and is presented here for the convenience of anyone who is interested in contacting the producers of the featured niche-music festivals. After the contact details there is also a joint Festival ID table (Table 2) that holds the basic demographic and characteristic information of the event as well its distinctive graphic design appearance.

Contact details of niche-music festival managers included in this thesis sample:

The Big Big Summer Reggae, Sofia, Bulgaria

Mr. Mihail Dimov
Producer, DJ
+359884674953
djdancingangel@gmail.com
<http://www.zionlionz.org>

Tampere International Salsa Festival, Tampere, Finland

Mr. Oliver Paredes
Producer, Owner, Salsa Teacher
+358505343943
oliver@salsapassion.net
<http://www.salsapasion.net/festival/>

Uprising Reggae Festival, Bratislava, Slovakia

Mr. Rastislav Pruzinec
Producer, Owner
+421904938998
rasto.pruzinec@kulturise.sk
<http://www.uprising.sk>

Khamoro World Roma Festival, Prague, Czech Republic

Mr. Michal Miko
Manager, Producer
+420222518554
festivalkhamoro@gmail.com
<http://www.khamoro.cz>

Dudarski Fest, Minsk, Belarus

Mr. Zmicer Sosnowski
Producer, Owner
+375 29 663 68 79
+375 29 258 92 83
zasnouski@tut.by
<http://www.dudar.info>

International Niche-Music Festivals ID Profiles' Table






FESTIVAL'S ID:					
NAME:	The Big Big Summer Reggae	Uprising Reggae Festival	Tampere International Salsa Festival	World Roma Festival Khamoro	Dudarski (Bagpipe) Fest
AGE:	8 years	4 years	8 years	12 years	10 years
LOCATION:	Bulgaria, City of Sofia, Indoor, Clubs	Slovakia, Bratislava Golden Sands Lake, Outdoor	Finland, Tampere, Indoor	Czech Republic, Prague, Indoor & Outdoor	Belarus, Minsk, Indoor & Outdoor
OWNERSHIP:	Private + NGO	Private	Private	NGO	Private
FINANCING:	Sponsoring: 80% Box office: 20%	Sponsoring 30% Box Office: 60% Related Services: 10%	Sponsoring 80% Box Office: 20%	Government: 55% Sponsoring : 10%; Box Office: 35%	Sponsoring: 40% Box Office: 60%
DURATION:	1-2 days	2 days	3 days	7 days	4 days
ENTRANCE:	~ 7,5 Euro	25 Euros	~10/20/35/65/90/110/195 Euros	~5/10/13/18 Euros	~5 Euros
VISITORS:	500 (2008), 550 (2009), 1200 (2010)	7000 (2008), 13000 (2009), 16000 (2010)	800(2008), 800 (2009), 1000 (2010)	6500(2008), 7000 (2009), 7800 (2010)	700(2008), 800 (2009), 800 (2010)

Table 2