



Часопис *БизИнфо*
Година 2015, волумен 6, број 2, стр. 83-97
BizInfo Journal
Year 2015, Volume 6, Number 2, pp. 83-97

Стручни рад/ Professional paper

УДК/UDC: 005.51:338.48-61

DOI: DOI:10.5937/BIZINFO1502083O

THE ROLE OF EVENTS IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

УЛОГА ДОГАЂАЈА У РАЗВОЈУ ТУРИЗМА

Sonja Oklobdžija

Visoka poslovna škola strukovnih studija, Blace

Abstract: *Tourism is the act of travel for the purpose of recreation and leisure, and also refers to the provision of services to achieve this goal. As the number of tourists worldwide is rising, so do their expectations and needs for specific experiences. There lays the role of events and their significance in modern tourism. Events are not only one of the most important parts of tourism, but also inseparable part of human society. They are global phenomenon which is gaining greater and greater importance through the event industry. There are a number of different types of events in the world, and there are more arising every year. Under these circumstances, the key role of success of certain event lies in proper strategic planning. The subject of this paper is to present the roles of events in contemporary tourism and to define their origins, classification, tourist value, impacts and outcomes.*

Keywords: *events, event tourism, the portfolio approach, strategic planning.*

Анстракт: Туризам представља чин путовања у сврхе рекреације и одмора, и такође се односи и на пружање услуга како би се постигли ти циљеви. Како број туриста широм света расте, тако расту и њихове потребе и захтеви за специфичним искуствима. Ту лежи улога догађаја и њихов значај у модерном туризму. Догађаји нису само један од најважнијих делова туризма, већ су и неизоставни део лјудског друштва. Они су глابلни феномен који сваким даном добија све већи значај кроз индустрију догађаја. Постоји огроман број догађаја на целом свету и њихов број се повећава сваке године. У овим околностима, кључна улога успеха једног догађаја лежи у правилном стратешком планирању. Тема овог рада је представљање улоге догађаја у савременом туризму, као и дефинисање њиховог порекла,

класификација, туристичка вредност и кратак приказ утицаја и исхода догађаја на развој туризма у дестинацији.

Кључне речи: *догађаји, туризам догађаја, портфолио приступ, стратешко планирање.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Various types of festivals and events have long existed as significant part of human society and were devised as forms of public display, civic ritual and collective celebration. In fact, people in all cultures recognized the need to set aside certain times and spaces for communal creativity and celebration (Quinn, 2009). These practices date back centuries, even millenniums. Considering the diverse nature of events, their formation is not linked to the same time period. It is well known that the exhibitions and trade events were held in the ancient period. Ancient historians noted sport events as significant and prestigious form of social activities, which reached its peak with the organization of the ancient Olympic Games. Festival-type events are known to have existed since the Middle Ages when they were financed by the church, although some types of similar events date back to the Roman times. As much as it seems that the conference events are a product of modern life, their origins date back to the 18th century.

Events are likely to have originated even before the appearance of money, but the establishment and acceptance of the general equivalent was undoubtedly followed by their further development. The emergence of capitalism, new products and new social relations, as well as the new way of life paved the way for more versatile development of the growing number of events. However, it was during the 20th century when the development of all the different types of events peaked and they came close to what we nowadays consider events. It was because of the phenomenon of discretionary income, increase in purchasing power and standards of consumers, shifting the focus from fundamental to additional needs, and the birth of completely new consumers' needs which all increased the demand for a specific range of events, which then stimulated the development of various contemporary events. Development of events in the economic sense helped solve the problem of employment and had an impact on economic growth, especially in developed market economies. The best example for that is the impact of mega sport events such as the Olympic Games or World Championships of popular sports on the economic growth of host countries. Historical research demonstrates how the events evolved from primitive gathering of people for agricultural or religious reasons to modern type of events, as well as their long history of attracting tourists and establishing host communities as tourist destinations.

2. DEFINITIONS OF EVENTS

There is no single universally accepted definition of event. Many authors have discussed the definition of events and the various terms used to describe them. However, there is only limited agreement on standardised terms, definitions or categories to use. The differences are manifested as a result of different approaches of authors to defining certain events. Most authors agree that the event in the economic sense is a part of service economy, and different approaches to defining the event are the consequences of the specific characteristics of the environment in which some of the authors work and create. In addition, the events are highly versatile; therefore the definition of the events can be flexible to suit different situations.

The Accepted Practices Exchange Industry Glossary of TERMS (APEX, 2005) defines an event as, “An organized occasion such as a meeting, convention, exhibition, special event, gala dinner, etc. An event is often composed of several different yet related functions.”

Goldblatt (2005) focuses on special events as “a unique moment in time, celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs.” Getz (2008) notes that events are spatial - temporal phenomena and that each is unique because of interactions among the setting, people, and management systems, including design elements and the program. He highlights the fact that the biggest appeal of events is that they are never the same, and that the guest has “to be there” in order to enjoy the experience fully. He suggests two definitions, from the perspective of the event organizers, as well as the guests’:

1. A special event is a one-time or infrequently occurring event outside normal programmes or activities of the sponsoring or organizing body.
2. To the customer or guest, a special event is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday experience.

Bowdin (2006) notes that the term “event” has been used “to describe specific rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are consciously planned and created to mark special occasions and/or to achieve particular social, cultural or corporate goals and objectives.” Jago and Shaw (1998) suggest six features of special events. According to them, special events should:

1. Attract tourists or tourism development
2. Be of limited duration
3. Be one-off or infrequent occurrence
4. Raise the awareness, image, or profile of a region

5. Offer a social experience
6. Be out of the ordinary

Summarising the definition of a special event, they note it as: “A one-time or infrequently occurring event of limited duration that provides the consumer with a leisure and social opportunity beyond everyday experience. Such events, which attract or have the potential to attract tourists, are often held to raise the profile, image or awareness of a region.”

3. CLASSIFICATION OF EVENTS

There are different criteria for classification of events. The basic one classifies events as planned and unplanned. Planned events are the subject of study of event management and they require setup, management, executives and certain length of time. Unplanned events are accidents, natural disasters and other similar, and they will not be taken into consideration in this paper. If the events are classified according to their size and scope, it is possible to distinguish the following four types:

1. Mega events
2. Hallmark events
3. Major events
4. Local events

Mega event is an event that has impacts on the overall economic activity of the host country, and is globally covered by media. In economic terms, mega event is strongly reflected in the tourism and economic infrastructure of the host country. These events are generally associated to sports events. They include the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, the FIFA World Cup, the IAAF World Championships and World Fairs, but it is difficult for many other events to fit into this category.

Getz (2005) defines them: “Mega-events, by way of their size or significance, are those that yield extraordinarily high levels of tourism, media coverage, prestige, or economic impact for the host community, venue or organization.” Another author, Hall, explains that mega events owe their name to their size in terms of attendance, target market, level of public financial involvement, political effects, extent of television coverage, construction of facilities, and impact on economic and social fabric of the host community (Allen et al., 2011).

Hallmark event is an event with the distinctive quality of the program. Hallmark events are so identified with the spirit and soul of a host community that they become synonymous with the name of the place, and gain widespread recognition and awareness. Hallmark events are of special

importance and attractiveness both for participants and visitors, they attract great attention of the public, contribute to the image of destination and maintain and revitalize the tradition. Classic examples of hallmark events are Carnival in Rio, the Tour de France, the Oktoberfest in Munich and Wimbledon. These events are identified with the very essence of these places and their citizens, and bring huge tourist revenue as well as a strong sense of local pride and international recognition.

Tourism researcher Ritchie (Quinn, 2009) published the first general discussion of their impact and defined them as “major one time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourist destination in the short term or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.” Getz (2005) emphasizes their role in image making, place marketing and destination branding of host communities: “The term ‘hallmark’ describes an event that possesses such significance, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, quality or publicity, that the event provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time the event and destination can become inextricably linked.”

Major event is a large-scale event, with strong public interest and media coverage. Major events attract large numbers of visitors, and help the organizers achieve good economic results. In practice of management of events, these events are often sports-oriented, with an international reputation, and defined structure of competition (example: Formula One Grand Prix).

Local event is an event that is targeted mainly for local audiences and staged primarily for their social, fun and entertainment value. These events often produce a range of benefits, including engendering pride in the community, strengthening a feeling of belonging and creating a sense of place. They can also help with exposing people to new ideas and experiences, encouraging participation in sports and arts activities, and encouraging tolerance and diversity.

Another common way of classifying events is by their form or content:

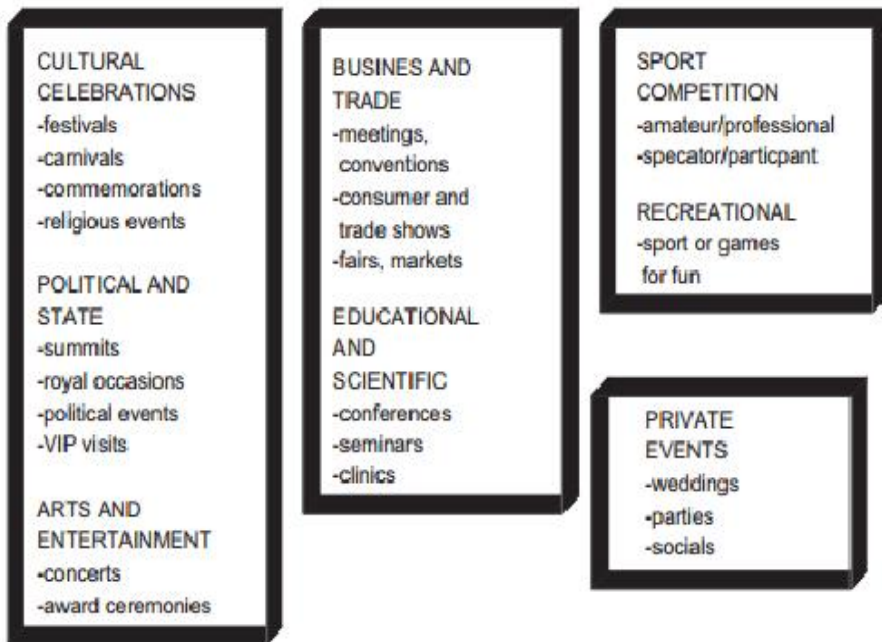
- Cultural celebrations
- Arts and Entertainment
- Business and Trade
- Sport competitions
- Recreational
- Educational and Scientific
- Political and state

- Private events.

Figure 1 provides a classification of planned events based primarily on their form - that is, obvious differences in their purpose and program. Some are for public celebration, while others are planned for purposes of competition, fun, entertainment, business or socializing.

One more criterion of classifying the events that is often mentioned in literature is according to the level they are attached to particular destination. Therefore, there are events that always take place in the same community, those that always take place in a different community, and those that take place simultaneously in several communities, or they cover the entire region. As Getz (2008) explains, mega events, which by definition always take place in different community, are typically global in their orientation and require a competitive bid to “win” them as a one-time event for a particular place. On the other hand, hallmark events cannot exist independently of their host community, as well as regional and local events which are rooted in one place.

Figure 1. Classification of events based on their form



Source: Getz, 2008.

Finally, all events can be categorized as profitable and non-profit events. Non-profit events are characterized by special programmes mainly devised to enhance the image of the organizers, participants or some organizations. Another type of non-profit events is charity events, devised to collect funds, not for the organizers or participants, but for charity purposes. Nevertheless, the majority of events are profitable. Their economic goal is the profit, and social objectives are related to implementation of various types of programmes - sports, cultural, artistic, business, educational, political or scientific.

4. TOURIST VALUE OF EVENTS

Events can be categorized according to their attractiveness for tourism. Even though the majority of events are tourist driven, there are a significant number of those with little or no thought given to their tourism appeal or potential. Getz (2008) explains that this is either due to the organizers' specific aims, or there is simply no relationship established between specific events and tourism. According to events' attractiveness for tourism, they can be classified in three following categories:

1. Festivals and events that are organized primarily for local residents and often with the help of volunteers. Although in the majority of the cases these events are small and have limited or none tourist attractiveness, they can still function as a valuable opportunity for visitors to the area. However, most of the local events do not have the need to be tourism oriented; their organizers even feel threatened by it and take pride in their events not being commercialized. That comes as no surprise considering the fact that they are community and culturally oriented, and massive tourism would have potential negative impacts and probably corrupt their authenticity.
2. Events of regional and provincial significance which can have a significant tourist attractiveness power. These events are rarely aimed to become larger. However, with the help of tourists attracted to the event and future investments, their tourist potential can be developed. Usually the events in this group have a professional staff.
3. Events of national and international significance which are most attractive from the tourist point of view. These events attract national and international tourists, and can further enhance the reputation and attractiveness of certain destination. Unlike local events, their primary goal is to increase the tourism appeal of the host destination as much as possible.

5. THE PORTFOLIO APPROACH

Every year a large number of different types of events that attract tourists take place in many destinations and also, a great number of new events are planned annually. More and more destinations are trying to figure out the potential of events in implementation of various economic and tourist objectives, and in order to achieve that, they need the portfolio approach. The portfolio approach is similar to how a company strategically evaluates and develops its line of products and services. It is goal-driven and value-based. Destinations must decide what they want from events, that is, what the desired benefits are and how they will measure their value (Getz, 2008).

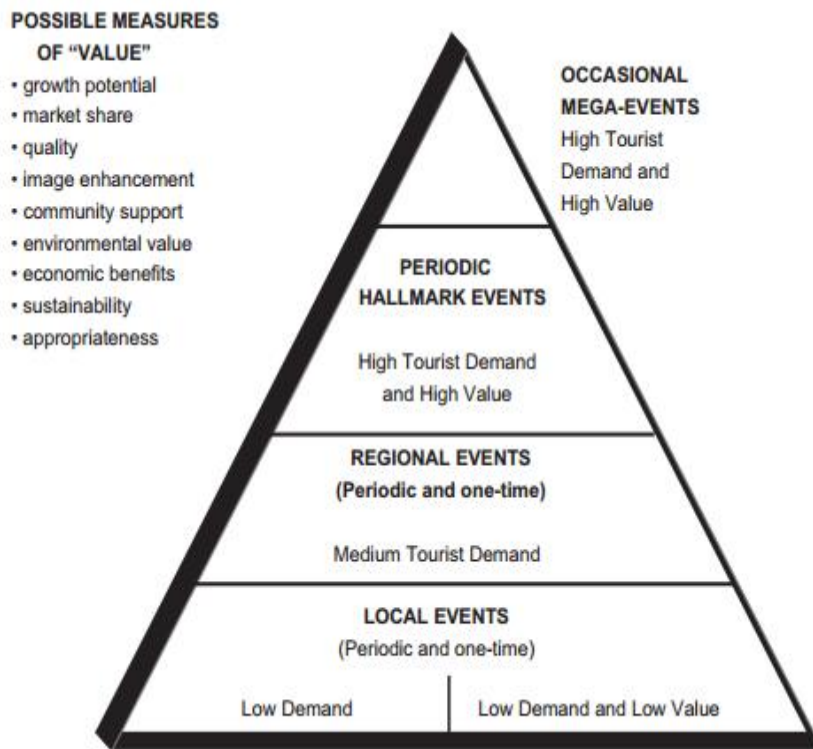
The basic idea behind the portfolio approach is that destinations and tourist organizations should use more strategic thinking in relation to the events and their management from the perspective of tourism. The content of the portfolio, or the kind of event that the destination has or is planning, as well as event's tourist value and demand, should be the result of strategic planning, and not random and unrelated decisions. Getz, cited in Pivac and Stamenković (2011), defines a portfolio approach as a series of events that a destination has to offer, each with their own values, costs, market share and profitability. Each type of event should help meet the different goals of development of event tourism. According to him, all the destinations should develop their portfolio approach according to type, season and attractiveness for the tourist market, and in that way they will achieve specific tourist values. He also emphasizes that the main role of the portfolio approach is to attract new tourists.

According to Getz, all the events in one destination can be grouped according to two criteria: the demand, which is measured by number of tourists attracted, and the value which is measured in meeting other touristic purposes, such as media attention, image enhancement, development and sustainability. Getz has developed a model to describe the portfolio of events that illustrates how different events have different travel demand and value.

The portfolio approach and the model mentioned are designed based on one basic principle. Almost all events have tourist and local value, but only some of them are able to generate enormous tourist demand. Therefore, the hierarchy of events will be present within any destination, with most of the events that have little or no direct tourist attraction, regardless of the type of event. Accordingly, local and regional events which are at the lower part of the model cannot be of major importance for the destination image, while hallmark and mega events, which are at the higher part, can attract a lot of

tourists and have large and long-term impact on the image and attractiveness of the destination.

Figure 2. The portfolio approach



Source: Getz, 2008.

At the bottom of the triangle (Figure 2) there are local events with low demand and low value. These events are usually small and organized periodically or only once. The second group of events in the model are regional events with medium tourist demand and medium value. As well as local events, regional events can be periodic or one-time. The third group of events are periodic hallmark events with high tourist demand and high value. At the top of the triangle are periodic mega events with high value and high tourist demand. The model also explains what the possible measures of value are: growth potential, market share, quality, image enhancement, community support, environmental value, economic benefits, sustainability and appropriateness.

According to Getz, the model portfolio approach can be used as a tool for planning and evaluation. With the help of the model, destinations and tourism organizations can assess their current tourist offer of events and their tourist value. The portfolio model also helps destinations and tourism organizations in planning how to build or improve their portfolio of events in order to maximize the tourist value.

6. EVENT TOURISM

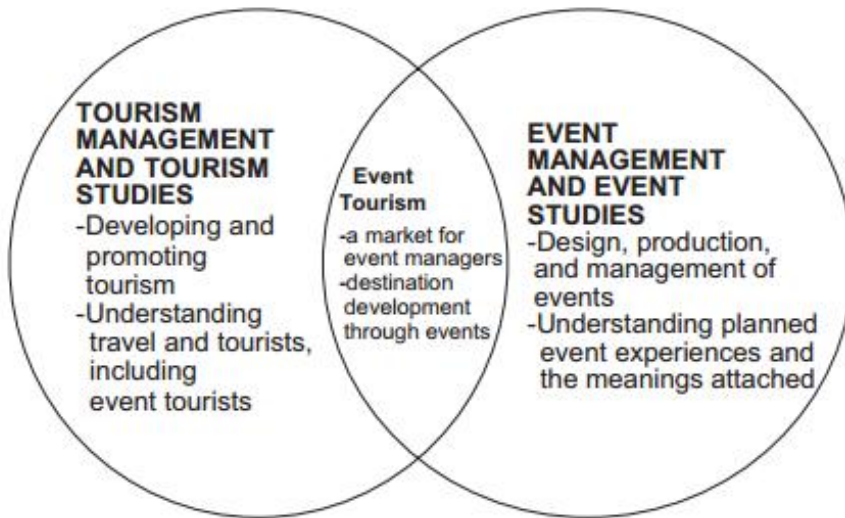
As it was already mentioned and explained, events are important motivators of tourism, and they greatly influence the development of a destination. Their roles and impacts within tourism have been well documented in tourism related literature. Yet it was only a few decades ago that “event tourism” became established as an independent discipline in both the tourism industry and in the research community. The study of events has existed long before that, but only as a part of other disciplines such as anthropology or geography. Event studies were considered an unnecessary and perhaps irrelevant idea until the academics doing event-related research published great number of papers and books on the subject of events, as well as established journals and conferences that are specialized in events. By doing so, they generated sufficient interest in that field. As a result, “event management” developed as a fast growing professional field in which tourists constitute a potential market for planned events.

Getz (2008) defines event tourism as a set of interrelations between tourism management and event management. Tourism management deals with tourism development based on analysing the behaviour and motivation of all kinds of tourists. On the other hand, event management deals with event marketing, design and managing of an event. Moreover, it tries to understand the event experiences and to manage them. Hence, event tourism is in the middle of the two sectors. In other words, event tourism aims at full exploitation of the capabilities of events in order to achieve tourism development of host communities.

As Getz explains, event tourism is generally accepted term that includes all planned events in an integrated approach to development and marketing of destinations. As with all forms of special-interest travel, event tourism must be viewed from both demand and supply sides. The demand side consists of determining the value of events in promoting a positive destination image, the position of event marketing within the general marketing of the destination, and potential of co-branding with destinations. On the supply side, destinations develop and promote events of all kinds to meet multiple goals:

- to attract more tourists (especially in the off-peak seasons)
- to serve as a catalyst for urban renewal, and for increasing the infrastructure and tourism capacity of the destination
- to foster a positive destination image
- to contribute to general place marketing
- to animate specific attractions or areas.

Figure 3. Event tourism



Source: Getz, 2008.

Event tourism and other event-related research are still insufficiently developed. Events are primarily driven by the goal of economic benefits. In fact, so much research has been devoted to this, that other outcomes such as social, cultural and personal development have been neglected. According to Getz (2008), event tourism should identify inputs - what it takes to make events happen, including the costs of bidding, facility development and marketing, transforming processes - events as agents of change, and outcomes - desired and undesired impacts of events. Depending on one's perspective, outcomes and transforming processes might be interpreted as a positive or negative impact.

7. OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS OF EVENTS

Roche, cited in Getz (2008), described events as “important elements in the orientation of national societies to international or global society.” Indeed, many countries have used events in order to gain legitimacy and reputation, highlight their achievements, support trade and tourists, or assist in the process of opening their countries to global influences. Tourists can have a positive image of the destination, but it is only one of the many choices, so the question “why do they need to visit that destination at that specific moment?” can arise. It is the event that can be the “engine” that creates the real reason for that potential tourist to visit a particular destination.

When tourists visit a destination for the purpose of attending an event, they tend to stay before and after the event as well. That enables the sale of other

products the destination has to offer. Events increase the level of local businesses, fill hotel capacities, and in long term perspective, they enhance the infrastructure, quality of life of the local population and add additional value to the identity of destination. In addition, many destinations have a seasonal problem, which means that tourist flows are concentrated in a relatively short period of the year. Events can play an important role in overcoming these problems and attract tourists during the off-season periods as well.

Events can have a significant effect on the formation of destination image and can help with promoting, positioning and branding it, which can contribute to a more favourable perception as a potential tourist destination. For many destinations, events can provide a wide public attention through extensive media coverage. Socio-cultural benefits of events on local community, such as increased activity associated with the event and the strengthening of regional values and traditions are also significant.

However, in the process of searching for specific events it is very important that they match a desired image of the destination. For example, does the destination want to establish the image of modern European city, or wants to preserve the image of a traditional town. It is of extreme importance to carefully select the events for the destination, because each event can always have both positive and negative effects on destination image. A major event may jeopardize the image of the destination, as tourists will be more involved in the event than the destination itself, which will not have a long term effect, while a major event cannot attract sufficient attention of tourists if the destination is unknown.

By perceiving all the outcomes of events, it is obvious that they can offer a variety of economic and social benefits for the destination. Therefore, destination managers should use events as an effective “tool” for the development of tourism in the destination and adopt a long-term, strategic approach to event tourism in the field of planning and development, in order to realize the full potential of the destination.

8. STRATEGIC PLANNING IN EVENT TOURISM

Every destination that wants to become an attractive tourist destination should have a strategy that seeks to optimize the potential benefits of event tourism. In addition, constant monitoring is necessary, as well as adaptation of tourism strategies to any changes, with innovation - including various events, playing a key role, especially in relation to the quality of the tourism product. According to Getz, cited in Pivac and Stamenković (2011), strategic planning in the case of tourism involves many different steps. The first task

for the planner of tourism development of a destination who wants to promote destination and event at the same time is to formulate a vision of event tourism in order to determine the direction of the strategy. Tourism organizations responsible for the development of a tourism strategy in a destination should establish overall objectives of event tourism which should deal with several different issues.

The objectives of event tourism should include, for example, decisions about the extent to which current events have been developed and promoted as a tourist attraction, and to what extent will the creation and development of new events and event offers be supported. In addition, the role the events play in the creation and strengthening of the destination image should be taken into consideration.

After formulating the vision and goals of the event tourism, the planners should undertake the assessment of the resources and potential tourism products. Resources represent the potential the destination has, and their analysis includes the assessment of human, financial, physical, political and technological factors that may be used in the development and marketing of destination. Besides resources and potential tourism products assessment, the destination should also implement the SWOT analysis, which consists of analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to event tourism.

The resources, potential products and SWOT analysis should help the destination identify what can provide maximum effectiveness of events. Every destination has its limitations concerning the kind of event it can host, depending on the availability of accommodation and preferences of the tourists. Even if the destination wants to host certain event, it should be considered whether the event corresponds to the possibilities of the destination, its strengths, weaknesses and needs.

Getz, cited in Pivac and Stamenković (2011), defined several tourism strategies. First, events can be used as the main attraction around which destinations can develop a theme and create image. This kind of strategy is suitable for small or large cities and for rural areas which lack basic tourism infrastructure. In this strategy, it is desirable that the destination has one or more hallmark events, so that the event and destinations become inseparable and mutually supportive. It can also be only one event – a mega event, which is suitable for all the destinations striving to high tourism growth. However, using mega event as a strategy is extremely expensive and hard to achieve, considering the fact that mega events require bidding.

There is also the generic tourism strategy which includes several different events in one community. Instead of attracting big events or creating new ones, this strategy is based on already existing events, and their strengthening. It also contributes to authenticity, diversity and stronger support of community in attracting and satisfying the tourists.

Whichever the chosen strategy is, it must be carefully selected and thoroughly thought of. Inappropriate event tourism strategy can lead to numerous negative outcomes, especially regarding the economic aspect. However, even the appropriate strategy can fail if it is applied without the proper support of other factors. One of the most important ones is marketing.

9. CONCLUSION

Every destination that wants to improve its tourist attractiveness should make detailed plans for the development of tourism. These plans should not only incorporate, but focus on strategic planning of events if they want to realize the full potential of event tourism. The events that take place in a certain destination should be systematically planned and developed, and should be established as tourist attractions, catalyst for further development, image builders and animators of the destination. It is important that the events are planned and organized in a way that they differ from each other, considering the fact that well defined product or service that an event offers provides recognition in the market and advantage over the competition, which results in greater satisfaction of visitors and their loyalty, which is important for repeating events. The more recognizable events the destination has, the more it is attractive for the tourists. The key of their success lies in the support of the accommodation facilities of an appropriate standard, the high level of cooperation between tourist agencies, the availability of specific information about events and follow-up activities, and most importantly, proper marketing activities.

REFERENCES

1. Allen, J. et al., 2011. *Festival & Special event management*. 5th edition. John Wiley & Sons: Brisbane.
2. Bowdin, G., 2006. Identifying and analysing existing research undertaken in the events industry: a literature review for People1st. Leeds Metropolitan University: Leeds.
3. Getz, D., 2005. *Event Management and Event Tourism*. 2nd edition. Cognizant Communications Corporation: New York.
4. Getz, D., 2008. Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research. *Tourism Management*, 29 (3), pp. 403-428.

5. Goldblatt, J., 2005. *Special Events: Event Leadership for a New World*. 4th edition. John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken.
6. Hall, C.M., 1992. *Hallmark tourist events: Impacts, management and planning*. Belhaven: London.
7. Jago, L. and Shaw, R., 1998. Special Events: a conceptual and differential framework. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 5 (2), pp. 21-31.
8. Pivac, T. and Stamenković, I., 2011. *Menadžment događaja*. Prirodno-matematički fakultet u Novom Sadu: Novi Sad.
9. Quinn, B. eds., 2009. *Festivals, events and tourism in the SAGE Handbook of Tourism Studies*. Sage: London.
10. APEX, 2005. *The APEX Event Specifications Guide Template*. [online] Available at: <http://www.conventionindustry.org/Files/APEX/APEX_Event_Specifications_Guide.pdf> [Accessed 19 January 2016].

Рад је примљен: 20.12.2015.

Прихваћен за објављивање: 25.12.2015.

Received: 20 December 2015

Accepted: 25 December 2015