

Book review

Events Management: An International Approach

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In the last three decades, there has been an unprecedented growth in event management studies, covering not only the familiar and well-known international mega events, but also the growing recognition of national, regional and local community-based events. It is easy to forget that the first academic course in event management was developed a little over 25 years ago, and today, there are event management programmes that range from technical diplomas to PhDs. The first edition of the book was published in 2012, but given the rapid change in our understanding of the issues facing event managers, there is a greater need for event management students to be even better informed of the challenging and emerging issues facing the sector. This second edition attempts to build, develop and update the issues raised in the first edition.

In words drawn from the preface, this book takes an “explicit international approach [...] to prepare students for the realities of working in (the) sector”, and like the first edition, it highlights “key critical global issues affecting events”. This second edition also highlights and focusses on some of the key drivers in event management, as well as exploring a number of new theoretical advances within the events sector. This second edition differs from the first, by removing some of the extended case studies (but still makes very good use of a number of practical case studies) and has added four new chapters, which cover topics, such as: the increasing importance of social media, a much stronger emphasis on international events

and the inclusion of more case studies from North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia.

As with an increasing number of text books, the book itself is only one of a number of links to support the students learning experiences. Through access to an accompanying website, the students can make use of additional learning resources: including free online reading material from the Sage journal database, and video links to case studies which help to illustrate the issues raised in each chapter. For lecturers, there is a supporting instructor’s manual, along with teaching notes as well as a list of suggested learning tasks.

The book covers 14 chapters written by 22 authors from countries such as: Australia, Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Taiwan and the UK. Although it is not surprising that most of the authors are from academia, a fair number of them have also worked in the events sector, while other authors are currently working in the sector. This is one of the strengths of the book, it explores issues through the eye of the practitioner. As for the book itself, it is grouped into three well-defined sections, the first section “Introducing an International Approach to Events Management” explores through two chapters, the macro contextual factors, challenges and issues faced by the events management landscape, by exploring both the positive and negative impacts of global issues and how they impact local event management decisions. The second section “International Events Management in Practice” is the core focus of this book, and covers in eight chapters the management issues that event managers will face in practice. These chapters are well-constructed and packaged, and in each chapter, the current research knowledge on the topic along with the event manager’s perspectives into issues are explored, along with a well-chosen case study, which illustrates the points issues raised in the chapter. The individual chapter topics covered in this section are: event design, managing events, team building, marketing,

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sponsorship, financing issues, risk management and the particular challenge of event evaluation. These chapters also illustrate the challenges faced by international events, and how lessons from such events can also be applied to more local events. The final section "Contemporary Issues in International Events Management" focusses on four chapters on emerging issues, including: the growth and impact of social media before, at and after the event; corporate social responsibility and sustainability, and questions the seriousness of event managers in fully understanding these issues; the importance of events to a destination's tourism profile and whether events alone, can change this profile. The final chapter looks to the future of events by exploring through scenario planning how event managers can "future proof" their events. It concludes with advice for event management students, that by understanding future changes impacting the sector, they can be better prepared for future job opportunities.

While it would be wrong to say, the book was fun to read, but it was certainly enjoyable to read. Unlike many second editions, it is a genuine improvement on the first edition, as it not only covers new issues, but also was not afraid to change the format, for example, by dropping the extensive use of very detailed case studies. Edited books with multiple authors can sometimes read like a series of unrelated and loosely linked chapters, using many of the same dated references. This cannot be said about this book, as the editors and authors worked hard to link the chapters together, to bring a level of consistency often missing from edited books, with for example, references to other chapters so that the reader could better understand the linkages in the discussions. It was particularly helpful that a common format was adopted for each section/chapter: an overview the chapters in each section; clear learning objectives for each chapter; a well-written chapter summary; relevant case study along with questions for the reader to consider; listing of

useful websites; additional reading material along with a short sentence explaining the content of these references. The great strength of the book and this is to be commended, was the extensive use of relevant case studies, which added substantially to the quality of the reader's experience.

It is difficult to make any serious criticisms of the book, as it is an improvement from the first edition, but my suggestions in any third edition, would be the provision of a separate listing of the case studies in the index, along with additional case study material on the publishers website. This would add appeal to event practitioners, as it would aid them in their future planning. In addition, I would like to see some more insights and lessons about events from other destinations, in particular from Africa, South America and China, all of which have a rich history of local and national events.

Finally, in terms of a recommendation, as I said before the book was an enjoyable read, which provided a lot of useful insightful and practical information for event management students. Indeed, I would find it difficult to understand why the book should not form part of the reading list of any event management course, as it covers all the key issues that event management students should be exploring. However, the book deserves a wider readership, it should also be of interest to tourism students, and also to those working in event management, as many of the issues will be familiar to them in their day-to-day work. Although this book could not be described as essential reading for tourism futurologists, it does discuss issues that will impact the future direction of events management within a tourism context, and as such the book should be welcomed by tourism futurologists.

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