What about the event? How do tourism leveraging strategies affect small-scale events?

Donna M. Kelly, Sheranne Fairley*

The University of Queensland, Australia

HIGHLIGHTS

- Leveraging strategies’ effects vary with event size.
- Grant funding that encourages tourism leveraging diverts attention from events’ core purpose.
- Effects of tourism leveraging strategies are contingent on event-related factors.
- Collaboration between tourism organisations and event managers is critical.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 12 July 2016
Received in revised form 7 September 2017
Accepted 8 September 2017

Keywords:
Event leverage
Small-scale events
Tourism gain
Contingency theory
Event managers

ABSTRACT

This study draws on contingency theory to investigate whether tourism leveraging strategies designed for mega-events are applicable to small-scale events. In-depth interviews conducted with eight event managers of small-scale events revealed that the managers perceived grant funding offered to promote tourism leveraging to be a diversion from the core purpose of staging the event. Restrictions on grant funding directed the event managers’ focus to increasing the number of tourists and their length of stay and their spending in the destination. While event managers acknowledged that engaging in tourism leveraging expanded the event’s target markets and increased the size of the event, they believed that tourism operators were the key beneficiaries of the leveraging. Mutual benefits between event and tourism organisations occurred when the funding partner(s) and the event collaborated. A grounded theory model was developed to show the impact of tourism leveraging strategies on small-scale events. The findings are consistent with the tenets of contingency theory, which suggest that managerial solutions are not automatically scalable.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The utility of deriving tourism benefits from hosting events has long been acknowledged (Burns, Hatch, & Mules, 1986; Chalip, 2004; Getz, 2007, 2008; Mules & Faulkner, 1996). The tourism benefits flowing from hosting events are multifaceted and include destination competitiveness from offering a diversified tourism product (Getz, 2007, 2008; Sant, Mason, & Hinch, 2013), upgraded event facilities and transportation infrastructure (Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2005; Hiller, 2000), and an increased influx of visitors (Mules & Faulkner, 1996). Further, event tourists who have primary motivation to attend or participate in an event spend more, stay longer in the destination, and often travel in a group, suggesting that event tourists are a lucrative target market (Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2003; Tang & Turco, 2001; Yoon, Spencer, Holec, & Kim, 2000).

While tourism benefits from events were initially expected as a matter of course (Gursoy & Kendall, 2006; Shipway, 2007), recent research has suggested that the outcomes of events are maximised only if strategies are designed to reach the stated tourism objectives (Chalip, 2014). Ensuring maximum gain from an event is known as “event leverage” (O’Brien & Chalip, 2007a), and focuses on the strategies used to achieve the stated outcomes (Chalip, 2004; O’Brien & Chalip, 2007a). Destinations seek to leverage events to secure a competitive advantage in the marketplace and to achieve destination goals (Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, van Lill, & Vorster, 2010). For example, destination marketers can use leverage to optimise limited resources (Hall, 2009; Kellett, Hede, & Chalip, 2008; Stokes & Jago, 2007), distribute benefits of the event over a wider area...
Much of the work on event leveraging for tourism gain has been based on mega-events (Chalip, 2000, 2002; Gardiner & Chalip, 2006; Kellett et al., 2008; O'Brien & Gardiner, 2006). The first explicit use of event leveraging for tourism gain was Australia’s attempt to capitalise on the projected gains from the hosting of the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games (Chalip, 2002; Gardiner & Chalip, 2006; O’Brien, 2006). However, not all large scale events are successfully leveraged successfully for tourism gain (cf., Agha, Fairley, & Gibson, 2012).

Although research has focused on the benefits from leveraging mega-events, it may be useful to consider the potential benefits that could be obtained from leveraging small-scale events. According to Higham (1999) small-scale events can be more advantageous to host destinations as they often operate within existing infrastructure, require minimal public investment, and avoid crowding and congestion that is often associated with mega-events. Destinations have sought to leverage events of all sizes, with the anticipation of similar success. However, despite destinations’ adoption of event-leveraging strategies, negligible research has examined leveraging theory in the context of small-to-medium-scale events (Misener, 2015). Drawing on contingency theory, this study examines the applicability of tourism leveraging strategies devised for mega-events to small-scale events.

2.3. Contingency theory

Contingency theory was developed as a response to criticisms of other managerial theories that were believed to make universalist assumptions (Luthans, 1973). Contingency theory (Burns & Stalker, 1961) posits that no managerial solution is equally suited to all organisations in all circumstances (Otley, 1992), as the components of a solution or strategy depend on the specific circumstances of the organisation (Otley, 1992; Van de Ven & Drazin, 1984). In particular, the situational factors and environment in which a managerial solution is applied must be considered (Luthans, 1973). There are four key tenets of contingency theory. Contingency theory postulates that there is no single or universal strategy to address management challenges; and that the design and management of an organisation and its subsystem must ‘fit’ or rely on the interplay between the environment. Further, contingency theory suggests that clear-cut and formal differentiation of subsystems is necessary to achieve optimal performance; and the needs of an organisation are better satisfied when the prevailing conditions or environment are assessed. These tenets are then used to assess the most appropriate approach to resolve a challenge (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Luthans, 1973).

Thus, contingency theory posits that the application of managerial processes or solutions in varying situations may lead to varying results (Schreyogg, 1980). One situational influencer of a managerial solution’s effectiveness is the size of the business or organisation (Neilsen, 1974). Small businesses obviously differ from their larger counterparts in scale and scope, and as a result strategies designed for one size of business do not perform similar to a business of a different size (Shenhar, 2001). Thus, tourism leveraging strategies devised for mega-events are not likely to be equally applicable to small-scale events. Therefore, contingency theory can be usefully applied to understand the environmental, situational, and management considerations that influence the leveraging of small-scale events. Understanding the impact of tourism leveraging strategies on small-scale events will provide insight for event managers and policymakers as they devise leveraging strategies to optimise tourism outcomes.
دریافت فوری
متن کامل مقاله

امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات