

EVENT MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY IN SMES – DO THEY NEED EDUCATED PERSONNEL?

Does the supply and demand meet in case of event management education in Hungary?

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Abstract:

Companies depending on their size and financial position are seeking for well-educated staff in event management. Some organizations have business in events management, but many are not operating in this sector, and for this latter group the motivation is train up or apply own staff to provide in-house capacity to set up and run events for themselves. Corporate management would require outside assistance in case of such occasions which are presented for a bigger degree and range of points that have to be handled or selections that should be considered are a lot larger sized. To examine the corporate behaviour in event management a survey on core competences in the field of events in small and medium sized enterprises and organizations was conducted in the scope of an EU Leonardo da Vinci Partnership project called COMPEVENT. This article introduces the key findings of research focusing on the place of organizing events in company organizational structure, the most commonly organized events and method of event organizing. Related to research results the Hungarian education market is assessed to find out whether the supply and demand meet in case of event management education.

Keywords: Event management, education, SMEs, Hungary

Introduction

The number of people involved in organizing an event depends upon the size and scale of the event and the company. While organizing a small party in an SME may require only few people, organizing a very large event like new product launching road show by a medium size firm may require several dozen people.

Companies depending on their size and financial position seeking for trained staff in the skills associated with event management. Some of these organizations are those, whose business is that of events management, but many are not operating in this sector, and for this latter group the motivation is train up their own staff to provide in-house capacity to set up and run events for themselves.

It is clear that event activity is now a more common feature of organizational life than hitherto, particularly for SME's – as these enterprises are usually small enough to have own event department or constant contract with a professional event organizer -, and that suitable training programmes for staff to provide operational support for setting up and running events are hard to find. It is thought that this may be attributable to the absence of work that has been undertaken into the competencies required at this level. Most education programmes designed to meet needs in the events management field are two or three year programmes, commonly offered at degree level. They are not appropriate for the training requirements of the organizations described above.

This article introduces the main results of a survey conducted in 2011 which was focused on the examination of enterprises' event organization activity and behaviour in Hungary, in Germany and France. Besides the national differences the paper assesses the current situation on the Hungarian education market to find out does the supply and demand – generated by SMEs – meet in case of event management education?

1. Organizing events – theoretical background

1.1. Main features of organizing events

“Event management is the capability and control of the process of purpose, people and place” defined by Raj, Rashid and Walters (2009). Organizing events is a complex process containing management of different resources like time, money or capacities. As time, money

and capacities limited resource, planning plays a key role in event management. Watt (1998) defines seven steps to follow to plan an event properly.

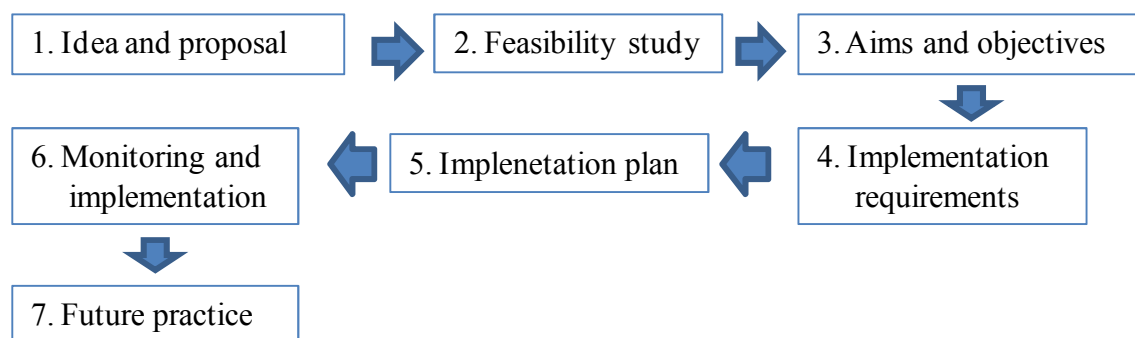


Figure 1 Planning process by Watt, David (1998)

The first step is considering the reason for the planned event, form a clear and well detailed idea and proposal. To establish the plan making a feasibility study is needed which examines the organisation external and internal environment (marketing, budget, resources, availability) and the economic effect of the event on the business and wilder environment. Economic assessment should followed by aims and objectives to cover customer-led and strategic approach. Stage 4 (implementation plan) develops the logistical distribution and collects partners involved in the event.

Implementation plan identifies the key stakeholders of event and discovers how and at what level affect these actors the planning process. Monitoring and implementation (stage 6) finds out how to manage the event consider the existing constraints and barriers in order to achieve the event’s key aims and objectives. This stage contains customer evaluation as well. Stage 7 summarizes experiences of event planning for future use.

Although the planning process is determined by the resources and type of event, appropriate personnel also could be bottleneck in the organization. In this case cooperation with event organizers or develop independent event department helps to provide professional staff.

1.2. Types of company events

A. Conferences

The term ‘conferences’ can use to different gatherings from a group of board members who are training to a group of IT developer who meet to discuss new results. Participants are usually with a common interest or background, their main aim to learn and

discuss issues, ideas and work that focus on a topic of mutual concern. Conference organization can be the responsibility of a corporate employee or a professional event manager.

There are many types of conferences, like academic, professional association (as medical), issue- or problem-related, business and training conferences. Besides that the number of Internet conferences has grown as travel and accommodation costs have increased while company budgets have not. Even though they may seem as simple as just providing online connection, these conferences also require planning even if the participants live in different time zones.

Term ‘business conference’ consists of several types. The most typical is annual meeting but if a company has many divisions around the world, often the management teams get together to talk about the business’ direction and to share best practices in the company’s headquarters. Large organizations hold training conferences several times a year. This gives everyone the opportunity to learn new information and share best practices with their colleagues.

B. Seminars

Seminars’ aim is to present information to diverse audiences. These tutorials can be private or public, series of events or just single, commercial or informative, lecture- or dialogue-based. Business seminars are usually less formal than academic lectures, allowing audience to interpose opinions or give feedback. Seminars are an outstanding venue for sharing expertise in an effective form thus one of the most common forms of business events.

C. Meetings

A meeting is an event which gathers individuals to achieve a common aim. In business meetings, presenters use oral communication, audiovisual support, group discussions and other methods to accomplish the objectives of meeting.

D. Team building events

Team building events develop and motivate teams in companies. Team building events are dedicated to motivate employees and develop real teams in the division or department. During these events participants are doing exercises from dancing in pair on a piece of paper to just trusting that your teammates will catch you when you fall. Many companies have used these exercises to motivate employees to work better.

E. Trade shows/expos/fairs

Trade shows or fairs are important events for companies to present their products and innovations and to get in touch with its potential customers and business partners. To the visitors these expos are good way to find out more about businesses, particularly if people are engaged in a certain type of business.

F. Press events

Several types of press events are used to notify media about the important announcements or latest news. In a press conference an interview held for news reporters by a manager or spokesman. The press breakfast and luncheon are types of press briefings but a phone interview or in-person interview may be also an effective way of dissemination.

G. Incentive travels

Incentive travel events usually motivate key employees and the best customers to work better or to buy more products. “Global management tool that uses an exceptional travel experience to motivate and/or recognize participants for increased levels of performance in support of organizational tools” defined properly by Society of Incentive & Travel Executives Foundation Studies. These trips can range from a week in a distant location to a weekend-break in nearby resort. Most of the time all of the costs are paid by the company including accommodation, catering and travelling.

H. Product launching

Product launching is an event to introduce a new product or product line to the public and media. It is a chance to promote positive information about the product before any negative reviews are given by reviewers or competitors.

I. Staff meeting

Staff meeting is an employee conference that may be convened in whichever manner and frequency the organizer – typically an authority figure within the organization - deems appropriate. Staff meetings usually focus on operational goals and company processes.

J. Open day

For the immediate family of employees or the general public, open days are a good way to talk about the enterprise. In addition, it allows people outside the company to look around or discuss employees and make the corporate better image.

K. Charity events

A charity event is a fundraiser held specifically for the purpose of raising money for a specific cause. Fundraising events provide a great opportunity to bring in funds for the supported organization or cause, while company's awareness is increasing.

1.3. Event management in the corporate organizational structure

Enterprises organize variations of corporate events which is need to have vast organizing and also setup. For example, manufacturing companies often prepare product launch events to demonstrate through which innovation is achieved in the laboratories. The success or failure for these events have a dramatic affect on the complete image of the company as the event is usually insured in both regional and nation's press.

Organizational tasks of routine business events, medium-sized activities or dinner parties are controllable at some level. Fragmentation of tasks in the organization depends on corporate size or organizational structure. The skilled and esteemed corporate personnel addresses every single task interested in handling the business event. If they are qualified adequate to set up and effortlessly run the gatherings like staff or board meetings, product shows, company meetings besides other corporate events in quite planned and handled way.

Corporate management would require outside assistance is case of such occasions which are generally presented for a bigger degree and range of points that have to be handled or selections that should be considered are a lot larger sized. The larger the event, the greater is the desire for group and arranging for the same. Consequently, for giant corporate events, use of professional event organizing to control everything can be essential.

2. Research results

Survey on core competences in the field of events in small and medium sized enterprises and organizations was conducted in the scope of an EU Leonardo da Vinci Partnership project called COMPEVENT (Establishing competencies required by SMEs in the events management sector). The aim of the project is to identify competencies required by organizations, particularly SMEs, to organize and assist in management of events. The project was initiated in 2010 for a 2-year project period.

2.1. Questionnaire and dataset

In order to achieve the objectives of the programme, the research identified (i) the place of organizing events in company organizational structure; (ii) the most commonly organized events and (iii) method of event organizing. The method used to meet the main objectives of the study was a survey based on a structured questionnaire.

The sample consisted of 500 German, 854 French and 350 Hungarian private and public organisations registered in the database of the work placement offices of the institutions and regional Chambers of Commerce and Manufacture. The sample comprised an existing database of organisations and firms which had employed students from EBC Hochschule Hamburg, Institut Supérieur de la Communication de la Presse et l'Audiovisuel (ISCPA) GROUPE IGS and College of Szolnok. However, in the questionnaire, the organisations were asked to provide information regarding their economic sector and size that is the number of employees. The response ratio was really low in all countries, as 23 questionnaires were completed until the end of January 2011 in Germany; therefore decision was made to extend the timescale until mid March. By this time 42 surveys were completed in Germany, 33 in France and 21 in Hungary.

The questionnaire was created by SurveyMonkey online marketing research tool and the link of the document was distributed via email. Experience had shown that the administration of questionnaire by SurveyMonkey result only a significantly low response rate although the completion period was extended. Besides that there was no report of any comprehension problems by the respondents.

The questionnaire had two distinct parts. The first had a number of questions that covered a description of the general characteristics of each organisation and an overall evaluation of the method of organizing events. The second part was structured through a list of questions which examined the generic competences of the staff in response to organizing events. Evaluation of this part is not in focus in this article.

2.2. Key findings compared to the three countries

The results of the survey indicated that companies involved in completion of questionnaire were belong to manufacturing in Germany, wholesale and retail in Hungary and other sector in France.

To which sector does your company belong?	France		Germany		Hungary	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Agriculture	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	19.0%	4
Manufacturing	0.0%	0	28.6%	12	33.3%	7
Electricity, gas, water supply	3.0%	1	0.0%	0	4.8%	1
Construction	3.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Wholesale and Retail Trade	9.1%	3	7.1%	3	42.9%	9
Repair	3.0%	1	2.4%	1	0.0%	0
Hotels and Restaurants	6.1%	2	0.0%	0	14.3%	3
Transport and Storage	3.0%	1	0.0%	0	9.5%	2
Communication	15.2%	5	0.0%	0	14.3%	3
Financial Negotiations	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	9.5%	2
Real Estate, Renting and Business Activity	3.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0
Public Services	6.1%	2	2.4%	1	0.0%	0
Education	6.1%	2	11.9%	5	4.8%	1
Health and Social Work	3.0%	1	11.9%	5	0.0%	0
Others	39.4%	13	35.7%	15	9.5%	2
<i>answered question</i>		33		42		21

Table 1 Distribution of economy sectors of examined companies

As the response ratio was really low, 5.6% in the total sample, there is no reason for crosstab or other correlation analysis. That is why the evaluation of results must have been reduced for frequency analysis and furthermore, in some cases assessment of the different countries' results makes no statistical sense.

The sampling method occurred that although the survey wanted to focus on small and medium-size enterprises, some large companies has been involved in the sample. Omission of these elements would reduce more the sample size which makes critical the assessment of findings, therefore the twelve companies' response has been kept.

How many staff do you employ?	France		Germany		Hungary	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
< 10	45.6%	15	19.0%	8	33.3%	7
10-49	24.2%	8	38.1%	16	23.8%	5
50-99	9.1%	3	23.8%	10	14.3%	3
100-249	3.0%	1	9.5%	4	19.0%	4
> 250	18.2%	6	9.5%	4	9.5%	2
<i>Number of SMEs in the sample</i>		27		38		19

Table 2 Size of companies involved in the survey

One of the main objectives of this survey was to discover the common place of organizing events in company organizational structure. Micro and small-size enterprises often managed by families or an expert supported by few staff. The null hypothesis of this survey question was that organizing events in small companies is the task of managers or personal assistants; in medium-size companies usually marketing or sales department is in charge of event organization and event department as an independent organization is common just in case of large enterprises.

Findings of survey show that null hypothesis should be accepted. However the willingness to respond to this question was extremely low and it is really hard to determine the reasons. Probably the person who was charge in filling the questionnaire had no

information about the question or organizing events is not a systematic process in the company and it was hard to define who is really responsible for it.

Who internally organizes the events?	France		Germany		Hungary	
	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count	Response Percent	Response Count
Management	57.1%	4	57.1%	8	38.9%	7
Personal assistants	14.3%	1	42.9%	6	27.8%	5
Marketing Department	14.3%	1	42.9%	6	27.8%	5
Sales department	14.3%	1	7.1%	1	22.2%	4
Human Resources Department	0.0%	0	7.1%	1	5.6%	1
Event Department	28.6%	2	21.4%	3	11.1%	2
Other		3		5		1
<i>answered question</i>		7		14		18
<i>skipped question</i>		26		31		3

Table 3 Place of organizing events in company organizational structure

The examination of two following research objectives - most commonly organized events and method of event organizing - was conducted in the questionnaire complexly. The common company events were grouped into corporate, staff, public, consumer/exhibition and charity /social events sets and were asked to indicate the number per year and how they planned. The null hypothesis was that companies use an external contractor to organize corporate or public events as the professional level of these events is crucial. In contrast with corporate events staff events are organized by in-house personnel because they require less special experience in event management, in our modern world these events are the part of everyday business routine.

Set 1 Corporate events							
Answer Options	never	1-5 times	> 5 times	in-house	both	Use an external contractor	Response count of events
Product launches/presentations							
France	4	3	2	0	0	2	9
Germany	7	9	1	9	0	0	17
Hungary	2	4	3	5	1	0	9
General Meetings							
France	5	2	1	1	0	1	8
Germany	12	8	0	8	0	1	20
Hungary	1	1	7	8	1	0	9
Anniversaries							
France	4	2	0	0	1	1	6
Germany	6	12	0	11	0	1	18
Hungary	2	10	1	7	0	0	13

Table 4 Characteristics of organizing corporate events

Results show that corporate events are highly planned by in-house organization. It is even true for product launches and anniversaries which events also attract external visitors or VIP guests. On the basis of set 1 of events null hypothesis should be rejected.

Significant differences occur in number of events per year in the different countries, such as the post-socialist Hungary dominantly leads the number of general meetings. In France proportionally less corporate events are held than in the other two countries and this feature also characterizes the other sets of events.

Answers of staff events have similar characteristics to the previous set. Events primary organized by corporate personnel, this statement is especially true for Hungary, where due to the responses, event organizers are not used to plan staff events. In case of staff events null hypothesis was correct, enterprises usually organize staff events in-house.

Set 2 Staff events							
Answer Options	never	1-5 times	> 5 times	in-house	both	Use an external contractor	Response count of events
Incentives							
France	4	1	0	0	0	1	5
Germany	6	14	0	12	0	1	20
Hungary	4	3	0	3	0	0	7
Training Sessions							
France	2	2	2	0	0	2	6
Germany	3	12	4	9	2	3	19
Hungary	0	5	3	5	2	0	8
Workshops							
France	1	4	0	0	0	1	5
Germany	5	8	5	8	1	3	18
Hungary	2	5	2	3	0	0	6
Meetings							
France	0	4	1	0	0	3	5
Germany	2	7	9	14	0	1	18
Hungary	0	1	9	7	1	0	10
Conferences							

France	2	1	3	0	0	2	6
Germany	6	6	4	6	1	3	16
Hungary	3	3	1	1	0	0	7
Seminars							
France	1	3	2	0	1	2	6
Germany	7	6	2	4	1	3	15
Hungary	5	1	2	2	0	0	8
Annual events							
France	2	3	0	0	0	2	5
Germany	1	20	0	14	0	0	21
Hungary	0	11	1	5	1	0	12

Table 5 Characteristics of organizing staff events

Public events have a significant impact on corporate image and external and internal business environment. As this article discussed before public events typically requires professional organization to maintain the adequate quality level. Research findings show that contrary to the theoretical principles and null hypothesis companies do not use external contractor to organize public events. The reason could be cost saving or existing experience within the organization to plan media events or open days.

Set 3 Public events							
Answer Options	never	1-5 times	> 5 times	in-house	both	Use an external contractor	Response count of events
	Media events						
France	4	2	1	0	0	2	7
Germany	7	9	1	9	0	0	17
Hungary	0	8	1	2	1	1	10

Open days							
France	13	6	1	4	0	2	20
Germany	12	7	2	4	0	2	21
Hungary	2	7	0	2	0	0	9

Table 6 Characteristics of organizing public events

Consumer and exhibition events gather huge number of visitors which need proper set up and organization. Although in-house organization had been mentioned (mainly in Germany), use of professional event organizer appeared in the answers in relatively high proportion. Trade fairs and congresses are too great to handle by a manager assistant or sales department.

Set 4 Consumer and exhibition events							
Answer Options	never	1-5 times	> 5 times	in-house	both	Use an external contractor	Response count of events
Promotions							
France	4	3	0	0	0	1	7
Germany	18	3	0	2	0	1	21
Hungary	6	5	1	0	2	0	12
Trade fairs / Exhibitions							
France	2	4	1	0	0	1	7
Germany	7	10	4	4	2	2	21
Hungary	5	6	0	0	2	1	11
Congresses							
France	4	1	2	0	0	2	7
Germany	11	8	1	5	0	2	19
Hungary	8	1	0	0	0	0	9

Table 7 Characteristics of organizing consumer and exhibition events

Charity events are held rarely but in this case primary organized by professional event organizer. This type of event is typical neither in Western nor in Central Europe and typically organized by medium or large-size companies.

Set 5 Charity events							
Answer Options	never	1-5 times	> 5 times	in-house	both	Use an external contractor	Response count of events
Fund-raising events							
France	6	2	0	0	0	1	8
Germany	15	3	2	1	0	2	20
Hungary	8	3	0	0	1	0	11

Table 8 Characteristics of organizing charity events

Besides type, size of events also has been examined. The questionnaire asked how many visitors have been at the biggest corporate event of the year on average. In Hungary small business events (number of participants is less than 50) are the most common to organize. On average 20-300 visitors took part in the biggest corporate events in Germany whilst French companies dominantly organize great-size business events. This result shows that in the sample there is no linear proportionality between the size of corporate and size of organized business events.

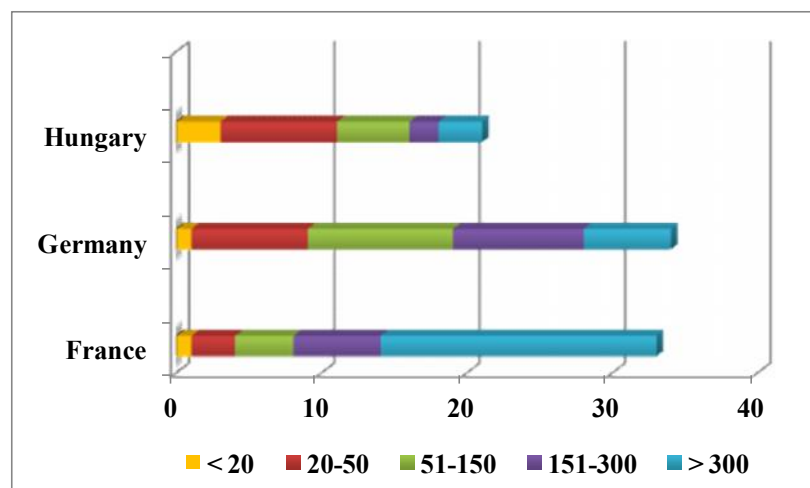


Figure 2 Number of participants in biggest event of the year on average

Above detailed question sets examine the use of external contractor to organize special kind of business events. Respondents were asked to answer whether the company had a

permanent contract with a professional event organizer. In the sample French companies make occasional agreements on event organizing whilst German and Hungarian corporate have permanent contract for event management with professionals.

The questionnaire would also reveal the reason for having contact with external event organizers. In France and Germany the same number of responses related to the following characteristics: time saving, know-how and creativity. Contrary in Hungary answers show that external event organizing has good cost-value ratio (4 responses) and it saves time and provide professional know-how (2-2 responses).

	Yes	No
France	1	32
Germany	6	36
Hungary	3	18

Table 9 Answers to question ‘Does the company use professional event organizer?’

The most common reasons for organizing business events in-house is having own staff to plan (France 7, Germany 10, Hungary 9 responses) and being cheaper than use professional event organize (3,8,8 responses). In the case of Hungary, the results show that over a certain company size it is more profitable to use external service provider than planning events in-house.

Summarizing the received results, it is clear, that in Hungary small and medium-size enterprises usually organizes both corporate and staff events in-house, managers, personal assistants, staff of sales and marketing department should have competencies and knowledge in event planning and organizing. Organizational events just a category within special events (Shone – Perry, 2004) but event management is a discipline with theoretical foundation and well structured processes. Proficiency in event management needs special trainings; medium or higher-level education which is examined in the following subchapter.

2.3. Examination of the Hungarian event management education market

To understand the educational market conditions it is important to overlook the framework of secondary and tertiary education in Hungary.

On the basis of Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education and Act XLVI of 2006 Amendment of Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education as well as Act LXXIII of 2006 Amendment of Act CXXXIX of 2005 on Higher Education each Hungarian higher education institution participated in the transformation and degree programmes have been re-structured by principles of Bologna process. The legislation does not only regulate the different levels of the degree structure and their durations, but the scope and potential disciplines of programmes as well. The act determines areas of training based on mainly the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the Hungarian academic classification, defining within these areas the potential BA programmes and making preliminary recommendations on MSc programmes, so this way the National Training Register (NTR) was established (Derényi, 2009).

Event management is taught within tourism and catering education. This discipline is one of the most popular fields of education, widely taught in different levels in Hungary.

I. Secondary education

1. Upper secondary education (level 3) in vocational secondary schools

“They are typically designed to complete secondary education in preparation for tertiary education, or to provide skills relevant to employment, or both” (UNESCO, 2011). More than 240 vocational and technical schools offer programme in the field of tourism and catering. It is important to emphasize that not all of these courses has teaching activity in event management. Students completing courses on this level are able to assist to organize events, set up to the event and monitor ongoing processes during the event.

2. Post-secondary non-tertiary education (level 4)

“Post-secondary non-tertiary education provides learning experiences building on secondary education and preparing for labour market entry as well as tertiary education. It aims at the individual acquisition of knowledge, skills and competencies below the high level of complexity characteristic of tertiary education” (UNESCO, 2011).

Two training programmes can be classified into this category, which primarily differ in their status but the training processes show a high level of similarity: (1) Post-baccalaureate training where programme participants can obtain ISCED 4C level, NTR-defined qualification and (2) higher-level vocational training, which is part both vocational secondary and higher education. This special kind of education is a bridge between the two levels as

does not provide a higher education degree. The classification of this programme is not strictly unified in the Hungarian literature, even the official statistics register on ISCED 5B level.

Post-baccalaureate training programme is offered in cultural event organization, this course trains students to plan and manage cultural events, disseminate events in the different communication channels, enhance participation in different events, etc. Although this programme focuses on community events, students have insight into event management processes so they could use their experiences in a corporate environment.

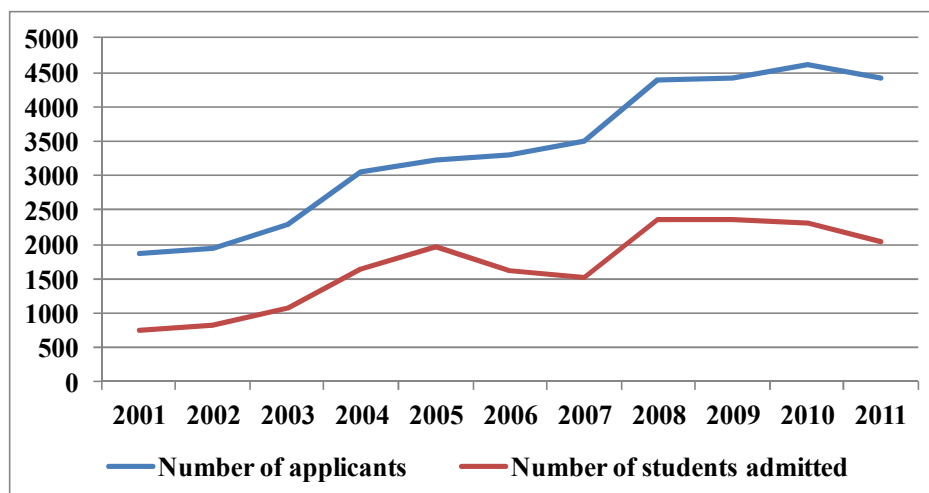
II. Tertiary education

3. *Short-cycle tertiary programmes at ISCED level 5 (at least 2 years)*

“They are designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Typically, they are practically based, occupationally specific and prepare students to enter the labour market. However, programmes may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education programmes” (UNESCO, 2011). As higher-level vocational training was detailed above, this programme is a link between secondary and tertiary education and allowed to train by secondary schools and higher education institutions as well. On the field of tourism 3 different programmes are offered in Hungary:

- Tourism Assistant Manager
- Catering Assistant Manager
- Protocol and Tour Administrator. Those students who had completed this programme can obtain qualification in event and conference organizing.

Level 5B 2-year programmes provide tourism-specific education and prepare students to enter the labour market. Event organization is part of core subjects, students are able to plan, manage and monitor events alone or with assistance. Their knowledge is also beefed up with studies in economics, finance and communication. This programme is very popular in Hungary, students who have no intention to get higher education diploma or want to achieve some extra points by having level 5B qualification in the application procedure for higher education institutions are interested in.



The spring and second-round autumn admission procedure was introduced in 2008 which increased the number of applicants and admitted students significantly.

Figure 3 Number of applicants and admitted students on the field of Tourism & Catering containing autumn, spring and second-round autumn admission procedures for level 5B programmes (Source of data: http://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/ponthatarok_rangsorok/elmult_evek/!ElmultEvek/elmult_evek.php?stat=28, accessed on 9 February 2012, figure was designed by the author)

These courses are offered all around in Hungary, students have good access to level 5B programmes, *see Table 10 below*. After getting qualification students usually firstly try to find a job on the labour market e.g. return to their traineeship employer or go back to home city. Consequently distribution of labour is homogenous enough to provide well-educated employees for companies even in rural areas.

Region	Institution
Budapest and Central Hungary	Budapest Business School (Faculty of Commerce, Catering and Tourism, Faculty of Management, Finance and Accounting)
	Budapest Communication and Business College Faculty of Tourism and Economy called 'Heller Farkas'
	Szent István University Faculty Applied Arts and Pedagogy
Central Transdanubia	College of Dunaújváros
	EDUTUS College
	Kodolányi János College
	Pázmány Péter Catholic University Faculty of Vitéz János
Western	Széchenyi István University Faculty of Economics called 'Kautz Gyula'

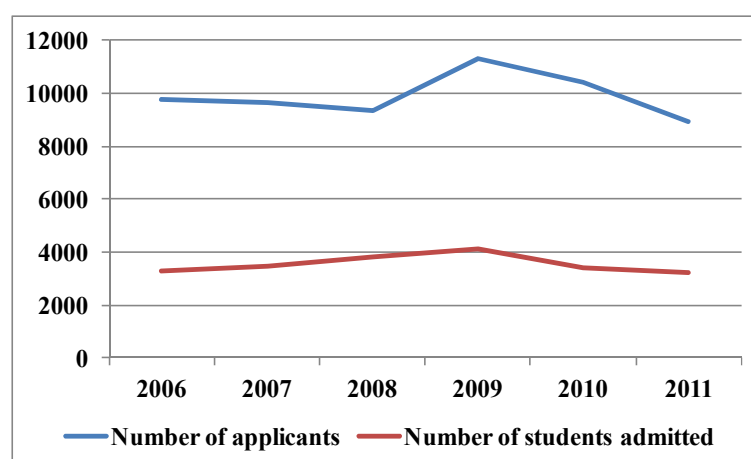
Transdanubia	University of West Hungary (Faculty of Apáczai Csere János, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Natural Sciences)
Southern Transdanubia	Science University of Pécs (Faculty of Ilyés Gyula, Faculty of Adult Education and HR Development)
	University of Kaposvár Faculty of Pedagogy
Southern Great Plain	Eötvös József College Faculty of Pedagogy
	Tomori Pál College
	University of Szeged Faculty of Pedagogy called ‘Juhász Gyula’
Northern Great Plain	College of Nyíregyháza Faculty of Natural Sciences and Informatics
	College of Szolnok
Northern Hungary	Eszterházy Károly College
	Károly Róbert College Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences

Table 10 List of higher education institutions which offer programmes in Tourism and Catering on level 5B (list was completed by the author)

4. Bachelor or equivalent first degree programmes at ISCED level 6 (3-4 years)

“These programmes are often designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Programmes at this level are typically theoretically based but may include practical components and are informed by state of the art research and/or best professional practice (UNESCO, 2011)”.

Tourism and Catering BA courses – according to Bologna process – were commenced in 2006. Event management is taught as a subject or specialization of Tourism and Catering BA programme (*see table 11 for list of institutions*).



The spring and second-round autumn admission procedure was introduced in 2008 which has occurred a hasty increase in number of applicants and admitted students.

Figure 4 Number of applicants and admitted students on the field of Tourism & Catering containing autumn, spring and second-round autumn admission procedures for level 6 programmes (Source of data: http://www.felvi.hu/felveteli/ponthatarok_rangsorok/elmult_evek/!ElmultEvek/elmult_evek.php?stat=25, accessed on 9 February 2012, figure was designed by the author)

Institution	Specialization	Subject
Corvinus University of Budapest	no	Event Management (2+2, 5 credits) is taught as a compulsory elective subject
Budapest Business School Faculty of Commerce, Catering and Tourism	no	Organization of Events (1+2, 3 credits) is taught as a subject of a specialization
Budapest Communication and Business College Faculty of Tourism and Economy called 'Heller Farkas'	MICE Tourism	
Debrecen University Faculty of Management and Rural Development	no	Organization of Events (2+0, 4 credits) is taught as a subject of a specialization
EDUTUS College	information not available on college website	
Eszterházy Károly College	information not available on college website	
Kodolányi János College	no	information not available on college website
Károly Róbert College Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences	Event, Tour Operation and Attraction Management	Organization of Events is taught as a core subject of Tourism
Miskolc University Faculty of Economics	no	information not available on college website
College of Nyíregyháza	information not available on college website	
University of West Hungary Faculty of Apáczai Csere János	no	information not available on college website

Pannon University Faculty of Georgikon	no	information not available on college website
Pannon University Faculty of Economics	Tour Operation and Event Management	
Science University of Pécs Faculty of Ilyés Gyula	no	information not available on college website
College of Szolnok	no	Business and Conference Service Management (2+1, 5 credits) is taught as a specialization subject
Szent István University Institute of Economics and Social Sciences	Conference Organization	

Table 11 List of higher education institutions which offer programmes in Tourism and Catering on level 6, teaching of event management is also indicated (list was completed by the author)

Based on data of spring application process in 2010, Tourism & Catering was the first, in 2011 the second most popular course on the Hungarian public education market. However the finance of higher education system is being under restructuring and to cut costs government decided to decrease significantly number of public financed students on economics studies in January 2012. Compared to the previous 4900 vacancies only 250 places are available in the form of full public financing and the effects of dramatic change for the market cannot be predicted now. In short-term number of applicants are likely going to decline but in the long term number of institutions also should decrease.

Specialised Postgraduate Studies

Higher education institutions also offer postgraduate specialist training for students who completed successfully their Bachelor and Master studies. Through the completion of 60-120 credits a specialised qualification can be obtained. The length of the programme varies between 2-4 semesters up to the institution.

Institution	Programme	Length of Programme
Budapest Communication and Business College Faculty of Tourism and Economy called ‘Heller Farkas’	Protocol Consultant and Event Organizer	3 semesters
Budapest Business School Faculty of Commerce, Catering and Tourism	Protocol and Event Manager	3 semesters
College of Szolnok	Event and Protocol Officer	3 semesters
Debrecen University Faculty of Management and Rural Development	Economist Specialized in Conference and Event Management Conference and Event Management Consultant	2 semesters 3 semesters
Reformed Theological University of Debrecen	Event Organizer	2 semesters
Science University of Pécs Faculty of Adult Education and HR Development	Protocol Consultant and Event Organizer	3 semesters
University of Debrecen Faculty of Child and Adult Education	Organizer of Experiences, Events and Community	2 semesters
Zsigmond King College	Event and Protocol Officer	3 semesters

Table 12 List of higher education institutions which offer specialized postgraduate programmes in event management (list was completed by the author)

Besides Level 5B programmes specialized postgraduate courses give practically based, occupationally specific studies for students with bachelor or master level diploma so they can plan, organize, set up and monitor events alone. Employees with diploma in social sciences and qualification in event management are the best choice to occupy a multifunctional position in small and medium-size enterprises.

2.4. Legal regulations of event organizing

Government Decree No. 23/2011 made it compulsory for professional event organizers to have higher-level vocational qualification in event management. Due to the regulation, “organizers of events entertaining with music and/or dance must have higher-level vocational qualification in event management”. Paragraph 10, indent one says that “event entertaining with music and/or dance is allowed to organize by operator of club/premise or event organizer having higher-level vocational qualification in event management”. Open-air events are extended to use above mentioned regulation in case of planning more than 1,000 visitors. There is exception for the following events: demonstrations, election parties, religious and family events and events organized by public education institutions. Qualification can be obtained in ‘cultural event organization’ and ‘event and conference organization’, these programmes has been detailed above.

Not just small and medium-size enterprises need well-educated employers but professional event organizers and companies organizing events regularly (e.g. night clubs). The reason of state regulation is providing professionalism in (mass) event organization.

Conclusion

When organising an event, there are a multitude of things to consider. First of all the company needs to clearly identify exactly why it wants to hold the corporate event and what are its aims and objectives. It is also important to know whether company and staff well in its current state to organize and run an event. If the clear aim of the event has been established, than next need to be clear about budget as well. They should also decide whether wish to hire a professional event planner who manages all aspects of corporate events from venue to catering or if company has someone in-house who has skills in event management.

Event organisation and management takes place across the full spectrum of business and community activity. Small and medium-size enterprises usually organizes both corporate and staff events in-house to cut costs; managers, personal assistants or staff of sales and marketing department should have competencies and knowledge in event planning and organizing.

Organizing and managing meetings is considered to be not an easy task, employee has to get the requisite education to get effective results out of meeting and event planning. People

with lower level education and hands-on experience obtaining couple of years or who have undergone higher-level courses related to event management also can attend properly. To achieve the adequate level of qualification the Hungarian education market offers wide range of courses from level 4 to level 6 in sufficient quality and quantity.

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