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Welcome to the booming exper

Brands are investing in an experience economy where consumer audiences can marketing events often boosted by latest technologies

OVERVIEW

YASMIN ARRIGO

From launching an urban forest festival in a disused car park through to creating a gravy fountain in homage to the revered British Sunday roast, brand experiences have dominated marketing campaigns as events become evermore experiential.

Immersive experiences are enjoying their ascension from underground gatherings to large-scale events, designed to delight mass audiences, as witnessed by the meteoric rise of Secret Cinema. The British events company specialising in cinema experiences smashed its attendance records last year with its production of *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*. Across a 100-day run, more than 100,000 people ventured out to a disused newspaper printing plant in Canada Water, east London, which was transformed into locations from the film, to take part and witness a fully immersive production.

And whether the audience is business or consumer-led, brands are increasingly choosing to activate their live campaigns in London. Zanine Adams, head of events and business development at the capital's official promotional company London & Partners, explains: "Experiential events continue to be at the forefront of many a marketing campaign as organisers see the value in using London's exciting backdrop to enhance brand sales and media opportunities."

Wahaca was among the brands to choose the capital for their activation in 2015, hosting their *Day of the Dead* festival, created and executed by brand experience agency RPM at Tobacco Dock. More than 4,500 people attended the 12-hour event, which featured a Mexican market, pop-up supper club plus sets from artists including indie rock band The Horrors.

And while many believed that increasingly digital lives would in turn have a dampening effect on events, far from it. As consumers grow evermore weary of the constant digital bombardment of brand messages, they seek out more authentic experiences that allow them the bandwidth to immerse themselves with a brand.

Cadbury has long taken an experiential approach to its events and this year the confectionary giant



Olivia Weetch/Secret Cinema

- 01
Secret Cinema transformed a disused newspaper printing plant into scenes from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*
- 02
Hostel group Generator partners with music platform Boiler Room to create events at its hostels across Europe

unveiled one of its more ambitious projects to date. The Creme Egg Café, a seven-week pop-up residing on Soho's Greek Street, spanned three floors with interactive elements, plus a menu honouring the fondant-filled egg. Creating an authentic environment to engage consumers emotionally against a backdrop of socially shareable moments could help the brand overcome the challenge of an early Easter.

The shift in consumer engagement is fuelling the rise in brand experiences, says Mintel's senior trends consultant Richard Cope. The market intelligence agency found that 20 per cent of consumers interviewed want somewhere to relax and unwind.

Mr Cope explains: "This presents opportunities for brands to create holistic experiences and environments that also immerse consumers in their products and ethics. We'll see a rise in the number of consumers looking for concepts such as Soho House's sit-down store in Berlin, which looks like an apartment, but where everything is for sale, and IKEA's ball pools for adults in France."

The quest for shared experiences and moments to amplify over social



Generator

media is on the rise as consumers lead increasingly digital lives yet demand authentic experiences. "Generation download" is weary from incessant digital brand messages and now craves immersive experiences, seeking out communities to join in a live environment rather than behind a screen.

This digital detox principle was behind Innocent Drink's recent music event. Held in the Kent countryside, *Innocent Un-plugged* encouraged its 1,500-strong audience to ditch their mobiles, forego social media and enjoy a festival staffed by the brand's workforce, with their managing director serving afternoon tea.

Yet undoubtedly, technology and live events are inextricably

twinned and, as agency Adding Value's founder Randle Stonier says, the events industry is at a crossroads. "We are at the start of a deep cultural shift in communications and engagement, and therefore events," he says.

"Virtual reality such as Oculus Rift and augmented reality technology will increasingly gather momentum and transform our thinking and approach to events and immersive audience engagement. A great AR experience will transform how we interact with each other and the world around us. We are now entering the world of outer-body experiences that we can bring to life way before any global gathering in a way that will really resonate with our audiences."

ience economy

immerse themselves in live interactive

FreemanXP Europe, Middle East and Africa senior vice president and managing director Kim Myhre agrees: “The use of event technology to enhance the attendee experience is now top of mind for brand experience designers. Emerging technology has begun to transform the live event experience, whether it is providing better networking, richer content experiences or more interactive participation.”

So as technology advances and immersive experiences multiply, how will the hospitality industry compete, and offer the experiences that consumers will expect? There is a rise in smaller bespoke experiences says Concerto Group chief executive Sam Gill. “The trend is for very focused, targeted entertainment for smaller groups, with private dining and boxes at sell-out concerts and major sporting occasions in high demand,” he says.

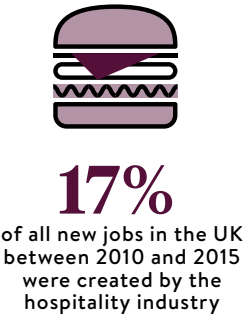
For hotels, cross-brand collaboration is key to welcoming new audiences as witnessed by Boiler

Room’s partnership with Generator Hostels. The underground music network produced and created events on Generator’s rooftops, lobbies and penthouses, allowing the accommodation provider access to a much-desired audience and underlining its commitment to music, art and culture.

Events and hospitality will continue to thrive in a digital world, Gareth Dimelow, founder of communications consultancy Lifted, concludes. “Technology enables interaction at events, whether that’s using gamification for data capture, interactive screens for content showcases or social media to enable organisers to really listen to their audiences,” he says. “We have no choice but to exploit tech innovations as ultimately they serve to make our experiences more compelling, rewarding and effective.”



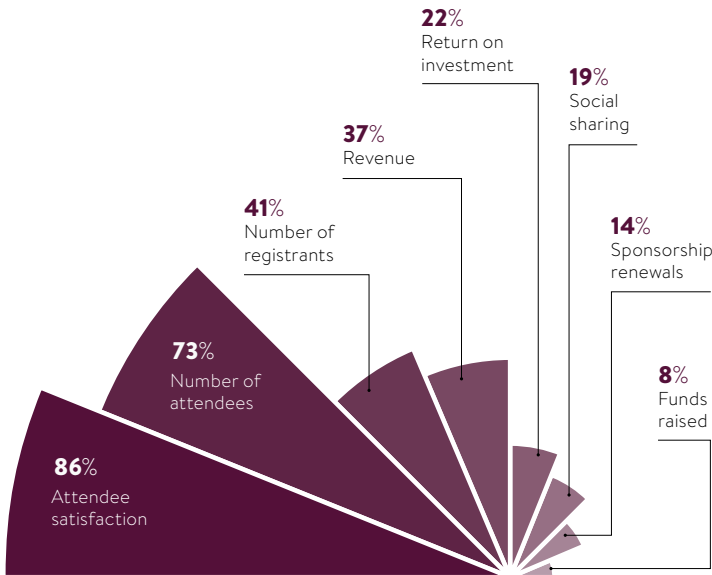
Source: Business Visits and Events Partnership 2015



Source: British Hospitality Association 2016

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METRICS USED BY EVENT ORGANISERS TO GAUGE AN EVENT’S SUCESS



Source: Guidebook 2014

COMMERCIAL FEATURE



FREEMANXP ON 7 PRINCIPLES OF EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Jordan Waid, vice president of brand experience at FreemanXP EMEA, mastermind of the agency’s TrendLab, discusses the seven key tenets of brand experience design

1. THE HERO: We are bombarded with so much marketing noise these days that it’s increasingly hard to zero in on what brands are trying to tell us. When creating an experience that can break through this clutter it’s critical that brands focus on the most important thing they want to communicate to achieve their objectives. Making sure that you, the brand and the product are clearly articulated, as the hero of the experience, is critical to successful brand experience design.

2. THE DESIGN: So many people in the brand experience world get hung up on design for the sake of design. Design frames the brand to create an iconic and memorable environment. Design is purposeful, not random. So ask yourself, what do you want the experience to achieve? Make sure your design creates a memorable world for your hero to deliver your objectives.

3. THE MESSAGE: What is your message? What do you want your audience to feel and think about you? What is your call to action? And most importantly, is your messaging clear and joined up with the rest of your communications? So many brilliant brand experiences are isolated from the overall brand message. Make sure yours ties in with every other channel of your campaign. Leading brands understand the importance of joined-up messaging that embraces the concept of flowing its message through from advertising to video to live – be sure to do this with your experience too.

4. THE NARRATIVE: Clients are constantly asking us how to create an authentic emotional connection on an individual level. We believe that the best way to make this connection is through emotive storytelling. Creating a narrative where the audience can immediately see how it relates to them. A narrative based brand experience focuses on emotional reaction and connection rather than just a moment. The best narrative campaigns have a pre-event, during and post-communications strategy, and are truly channel agnostic and support the overall message.

5. THE ENGAGEMENT: Event attendees have evolved from passive to much more active participants. No longer are we happy to be broadcast to, and our attention spans are now far shorter and much more selective. That’s why we believe the best way to tell the story is through hands-on, immersive engagement. Discover by doing and sharing your experience.

6. THE SHAREABILITY: Creating experiences that can be captured and shared is so important nowadays. This is how a strong emotional connection between consumer and brand is established, and the result is an audience caring enough to share their own brand story and experience with their communities.

7. THE ARTEFACT: The giveaway of choice used to be a pin badge or a bag, but by creating the perfect brand artefact, you could be prolonging your brand message and increasing shareability. Brand



Jordan Waid
Vice president, FreemanXP

artefacts should be a reminder and re-enforcer of the experience. If you sell pens, then give out pens. The Guinness Storehouse in Dublin created the most emotive ticket (and artefact) ever, a clear acrylic palm-sized pebble with a drop of Guinness within it – the perfect representation of the experience and the brand’s DNA. Just make sure your artefact communicates your brand proposition.

FINAL WORD ON 7XP: At FreemanXP we have developed a process and set of principles that we use in experience design. Called 7XP, it allows us to be “objective” and not “subjective” in our point of view. The 7XP is focused on designing an emotive user-centric experience that takes place across “time” and “multiple channels” to creative hero-brand story-worlds.

[freemanxp.com](#)
[freeman-emea.com](#)



More choice as hotels have room for change

Hotels are not only changing the way they sell their rooms, they are also transforming the nature of staying away from home

HOTELS
CLARE GASCOIGNE

Sleeping on a friend's sofa seems the most unlikely hotel concept ever to anyone over the age of 35. But the image so carefully, if questionably, nurtured by Airbnb, the short-stay rental business that in less than a decade has revolutionised the hospitality sector, has lessons the rest of the industry are fast embracing. "By 2020, 50 per cent of travellers will be millennials [the demographic currently aged roughly between 18 and 35]," says Rob Payne, chief executive of Best Western GB, a membership organisation of more than 280 independent hotels. "They don't want a one-size-fits-all hotel – they are looking for experiences and stories." The rise and rise of the personalised experience is a key theme within the industry. Cloud 7 is a

new company aiming to meet the needs of what they prefer to call "new travellers". "We don't believe it's just about age – Iris Apfel [the iconic American designer who turns 95 this year] was one of our inspirations," says Cloud 7 chief executive Marloes Knippenberg. "This is to do with attitude and behaviour." Cloud 7 – so called because, after reading a survey that found 55 per cent of millennials would rather lose their sense of smell than their mobile, the founders dubbed the mobile phone the seventh sense – is opening hotels that use technology to create a sensation of spontaneity and local connections. So, instead of a lobby with a check-in desk there is a "social zone" coffee shop where a member of staff will come and register you via an iPad while you have a drink. In your room you can watch a movie from your own Netflix account, take a call in

the shower via Bluetooth speakers and stream photos from your Android on to the TV. "Why should you have to pay for TV or only have TV in a language you don't understand?" asks Antony Doucet, brand director of The House Hotel Collection. "This is not about technology to open and close the curtains, technology for technology's sake. It's simply about doing things as you would do them at home." The use of technology has moved well beyond simply having wi-fi. Last year, Best Western showcased li-fi, a 5G system that transmits data using lights. "Wi-fi is now like a utility, like having power or water," says John Hardy, founder of the Radical Innovation Awards, which promotes new ideas in hospitality. 2015's winner was Zoku, an alternative hotel offering; runner up Snoozebox offers portable hotel rooms for events and festivals. "But it's very difficult for hospitality to keep up with the [technology] bandwidth required; people want to be able to connect anywhere and connect multiple devices. Add in to that personalised controls for lights, aircon, music – but not everyone wants to deal with all that," says Mr Hardy. Hence much of the technology is behind the scenes; it has to do with the cookies on your computer that allow hotels to recognise and remember customer preferences. "Hoteliers seek to offer their guests the experience that fits their individual needs and personal preferences," says Lee Horgan, chief executive at Newmarket, which provides technology to the hospitality industry. "It is key that all the extra 'little things', such as optimum room temperature, bedding preferences or food allergy information, are taken into consideration. All these items help deliver the proper guest experience every time at the right time, which will be largely driven by data and sophisticated analytics." Mr Hardy believes it is the big publicly quoted companies that have driven much of the technology now found in luxury hotel rooms – all part of a bid to reduce margins by cutting back on staff numbers. But an app that enables you to order new towels is hardly the point, says Mr Payne. "Hospitality is segmenting. What we are trying to do is create white space between all

01 Zoku in Amsterdam, which describes itself as a 'flexible home/office hybrid'

02 Snoozy, the inflatable pop-up hotel room from Snoozebox, offers premium on-site accommodation at events and festivals

03 Four Points by Sheraton is developing smart mirror technology in its hotel rooms



ZOKU

Japanese for family, tribe or clan, Zoku proclaims itself as the "end of the hotel room... a flexible home-office hybrid, with the services of a hotel and the social buzz of a thriving neighbourhood". The Dutch company's version of an hotel is almost more like an

upmarket university campus. It offers live-work hybrids where "knowledge, ideas and people mingle". The design takes elements from the Tiny House movement, lofting the bed and making the table the focus of the room. It's all about finding a community.

UMAID BHAWAN PALACE

Located in Jodhpur, the Umaid Bhawan Palace took first place in TripAdvisor's Traveller's Choice 2016 rankings, with reviews calling it "a living dream", "real touch of royal traditions" – the hotel is merely part of a royal palace in which the family still live –

and "an architectural marvel". By no means cheap, this is as experiential as it gets; if you want the experience of being an Indian maharaja, this is it. With 26 acres of gardens and opulent Art Deco styling, it is proof there's nothing new in experiential design.

ALBERGHI DIFFUSI

More of a movement than a hotel, Alberghi Diffusi is a means of reviving small Italian villages off the beaten track. An almost untranslatable concept – literally, "spread out hotel" – it offers rooms dotted throughout a village, but with a central reception and dinner in

a local restaurant. It could be a conical trulli down in Puglia or a villa near the Austrian border, but these privately owned spaces offer a glimpse into a community and provide a purpose for historic buildings that might otherwise fall into ruins.

“The rise and rise of the personalised experience is a key theme within the industry

our brands," he says. So the customers who want to stay in a Best Western Vib, featuring boutique style and technology, or Executive Residency may not overlap with those looking at the Plus or Premier brands. Best Western is not alone; Hilton has launched the Tru brand and Marriott a chain called Moxy – all aiming at millennials. "Millennials attach a higher value to brands than the baby boomers do. They are looking to be surrounded by like-minded people and referrals are commonplace," says Mr Payne. Instead of using a travel agent, millennials will use Instagram to find somewhere to rest their heads – or more likely, somewhere to party through the night with the locals. It is the experience that counts. Hence Cloud 7's aim to offer not just information about the best places to eat or visit – after all, that's a service that has long been available from really good front desks – but a kind of networking or friendship with locals. "No one wants an anonymous hotel room," says Mr Doucet. "It's all about a sense of place."

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COMMERCIAL FEATURE

SWITZERLAND IS THE PLACE TO MEET

Stage your conference kick-off meeting on a private train carriage as you skirt around Lake Geneva or inspire delegates at 10,000ft in the Alps – Switzerland's rich diversity extends far beyond its breathtaking scenery



From the palm trees of the Italian speaking Lugano, to the spectacular views from the Hotel Pilatus-Kulm in Lucerne, for a small country, Switzerland packs a punch for meetings and events.

Four languages and wide-ranging cultures make Switzerland popular with the international association meetings market. The country regularly occupies a place in the top 20 nations. In 2014, Switzerland was ranked 16th,¹ attracting 226 meetings which meet the stringent qualifying criteria laid down by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA).

As association and corporate meetings increasingly align themselves with a destination's sector strengths, Switzerland's centres of excellence are well placed to take advantage. It is a world leader in clean tech, consistently in the top 20 in the Yale Environmental Performance Index,² while medical and biotech is well catered for as Switzerland is home to the highest density of biotech companies per capita in the world.

Elsewhere, Basel is a huge player in the pharmaceutical market, home to the world research and production headquarters of Novartis. Such is the lure for pharma companies to stage meetings there, UK event management agencies such as WRG have opened offices in the city.³

For automotive, the annual Geneva Motor Show has an undeniable pull, and its location at the 106,000sqm Geneva Palexpo⁴ affords opportunities for beautiful test drives and media launches on the shores of Lake Geneva.

Underground, the world's brightest scientific minds are uncovering the secrets of the universe at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. Here, a new meetings facility will be available this year, the striking Globe, a symbol of science, innovation and sustainable development. Opening in April, the timber structure conceals a 250-capacity auditorium, which can be hired in exchange for a donation to CERN's not-for-profit foundation.

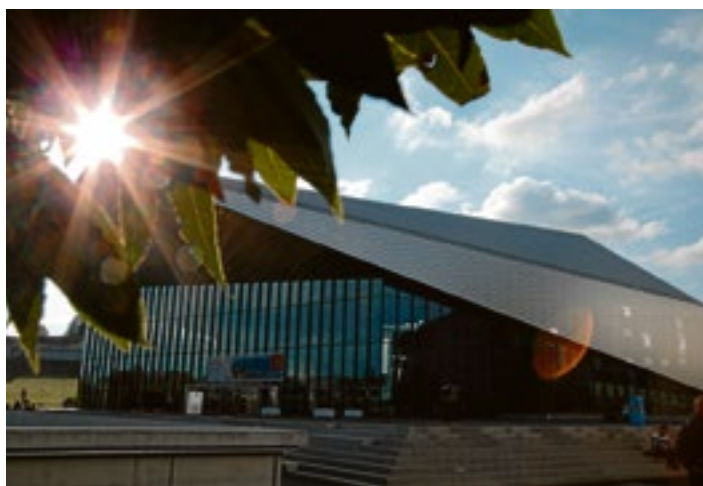
Driven by scientific and medical advances, it is little wonder Switzerland has topped the Global Innovation Index for three years running, ahead of the UK and Sweden.⁵ And with super-sleek conference venues such as the energy efficient – its solar panels generate twice as much as it needs – Swiss Tech Convention Centre, on the campus of the École Polytechnique Fédérale



de Lausanne, the Switzerland Convention and Incentive Bureau (SCIB) is confident of its position as an innovation hub.

It's SCIB's experience in the market that allows it to follow this innovative path. Having celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014, SCIB was the first national convention bureau in the world. In such a mature environment, the meetings landscape in Switzerland continues to innovate. In 2008, the ten largest conference centres in the country pooled resources and increased their marketing power by forming the Swiss Convention Centres association, ranging in capacity from 500 to 4,000, and sharing common approaches to technology and sustainability to inspire and encourage creative thinking. The bureau has also launched an online meeting planner (www.myswitzerland.com/meetingplanner) allowing planners to compile complete conference itineraries from its resources.

A maximum 90-minute flight from London, accessibility is easy through international airports at Basel, Bern, Geneva and Zurich, and even the more "rural" regions towards eastern Switzerland and the Italian border are within two hours of an international airport by train. Here you will find the ski-incentive destinations of the Graubünden, including Arosa and the resort of Davos, which showcases its conference know-how each year when hosting the World Economic Forum.



On the ground, delegates can be moved around with ease. Cheap and efficient public transport on the integrated Swiss Travel System can double as meeting space to brief attendees on route to your destination city, by hiring a train carriage.

"Train drivers even apologise when they are just a couple of minutes late," says Livio Goetz, SCIB's UK and Ireland market manager. "In most destinations public transport is free with a hotel stay and our cities are easily navigable for delegates; Zurich is the largest city with just 400,000 inhabitants."⁶ This, plus at VAT rate of just 8 per cent,⁷ helps explode a commonly held perception of Switzerland as an expensive destination.

One in five of all hotel room nights in Switzerland are related to meetings,⁸

and new hotel developments are keeping pace with demand. There is a particular strength in four-star accommodation, while the five-star Chedi Andermatt is the height of Swiss sophistication. Massive development at the resort will see the addition of a large conference hotel within the next two years.

A raft of new development includes The Circle on the doorstep of Zurich



Four languages and wide-ranging cultures make Switzerland popular with the international association meetings market



ABOVE
Swiss Travel System

TOP LEFT
Hotel Pilatus-Kulm in Lucerne

LEFT
Swiss Tech Convention Centre

Airport. Two Hyatt hotels and a convention centre, with capacity for up to 2,300 people, are expected to open there by 2018.⁹ Also in Zurich, the Kongresshaus Zürich is finalising plans for a CHF240-million renovation, to be completed by 2020. In the south, another large meeting space has opened in the shape of the Lugano Arte and Culturale centre.

Switzerland is well served in alternative venues, too. Chillón Castle on the Montreux Riviera, White Pod in the Valais region, billed as eco-friendly, or the splendour of Bern's 18th-century 700-capacity Kornhauskeller have inspirational meeting spaces to match their beautiful Swiss surroundings.

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¹www.iccaworld.com/dcps/doc.cfm?docid=1789

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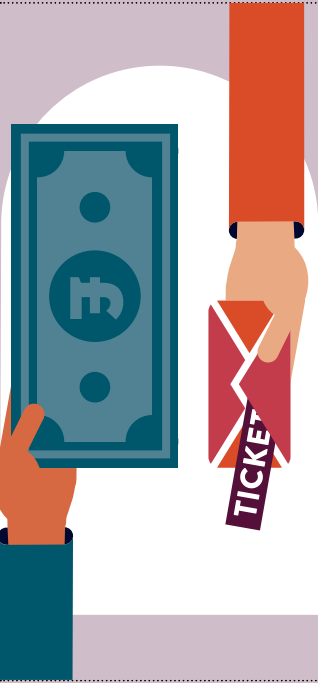
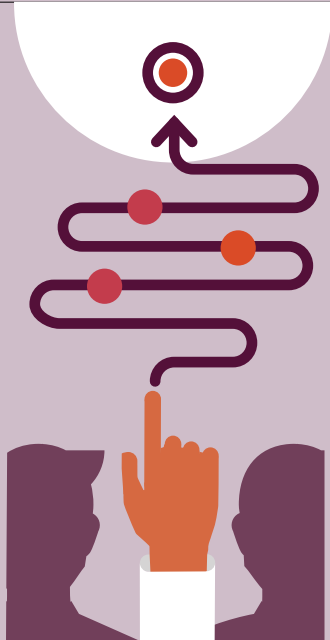


Different ways

A team-building exercise can meld individual even sense of humour. But what's the best

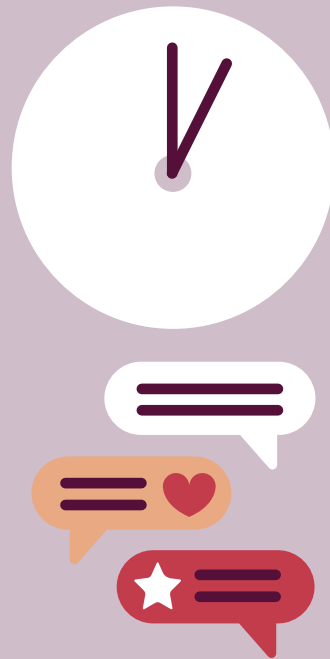
TOP TIPS
CHARLES ORTON-JONES

01 EXPLAIN GOALS
Sarah Bright, head of events at BMA House, has spent a decade looking at the effectiveness of team-building exercises. She recommends being highly explicit about what staff are being enrolled for. "With each task you set it's worth doing what's called 'frontloading' to the employees," she explains. "Frontloading is where you explain exactly what skills they will be developing before they begin. If employees understand why they are participating, they will be more engaged."



02 SPEND BIG
How much should you budget for team-building? It depends on the return on investment. Asset management software company Snow Software spends a small fortune taking all 430 staff skiing if yearly growth targets are met. Matt Fisher, Snow vice president of marketing, says: "We spent between half a million and a million pounds this year, but growth in that past 12 months was well in excess of £10 million, so the return on investment is strong. It is also a key part of our recruitment strategy. It's important that Snow is a place where people actively want to work. The trip is one part of a wider engagement strategy to recruit and retain the best in the business."

03 TRY SPEED-DATING
Elaine Grix helps the likes of PepsiCo and Heathrow Airport build effective teams. Her top tactic is a clever take on speed-dating. "It sounds harsh, but trust me on this," she says. "Everyone in the room says one thing they appreciate about the person they work with and one thing they could do better. They thank each other and they move on to the next team member. Initially people dread this exercise as they presume others will only have negative things to say. When they learn what their colleagues appreciate about them, it can really change a group's dynamic for the better. Some teams I've worked with have found this exercise so effective they've brought it into their regular team meetings and now regularly de-brief with a 'speed-dating' session."



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to build a stronger team

al employees into a cohesive unit with shared goals, strategy and way to do it?

04 GO ABROAD

While the UK has a superlative events sector, there is a whole world to explore. Black Pepper Software organises overseas trips for staff and their partners, with hugely positive feedback. "This year we'll be going to Madrid, having previously visited Dusseldorf, Florence, Copenhagen

and Amsterdam to name but a few," says director Mark Stevenson. To squeeze maximum enjoyment, he uses geo-tagging software to let staff share photos and experiences from the trips. "Although the primary purpose of these events is to relax and have fun, connecting with members



of the team we don't interact with on a daily basis often results in knowledge-sharing and creative ideas being discussed," he says.

05 INTRODUCE COMPETITION

TV's *Great British Bake Off* proved competition can supercharge something as mundane as icing a cake. Venturi's Table cookery school runs similar team-building exercises for the likes of Shell and GlaxoSmith-Kline, and co-owner Bella Blackett says competition adds spice. "Recently one of our clients told us that



their team worked fantastically well together, almost too well. They get on like a house on fire and the client wanted to inject a little competitive

spirit," she says. "So we spilt up the group, pairing some of the best-friend combinations and set them head to head against each other, with time trials on compiling certain dishes, and taste tests at the end judged by one of the Venturi's Table cookery school directors."

06 ABOLISH COMPETITION

One size never fits all. Some companies will feel competition is wrong for their ethos. So why not try something more inclusive, such as music-based team-building? Consultancy Brass Neck runs a variety of day courses based on instruments and musical activities. Clients include the BBC and Jamie

Oliver Food Foundation. The musical work is pure collaboration with zero competition. Mark Grainger, founder of Brass Neck, says: "We find that competitive team-building can leave people deflated if they end up fitting into the 'loser' category. Singling out people's weaknesses can have an adverse effect



and take away from the benefits of the team-building session, so best to leave the school sports team attitude at the door."

07 BE PROFOUND

What is team-building all about? Having fun? Learning each other's quirks? It's much more than that, says Nick Jankel, who runs courses for Nike and Intel. "Unless you are aiming to change hearts and minds don't bother. It's too expensive to do for a jolly," he says. Instead, seek to go deep. "Design the experience



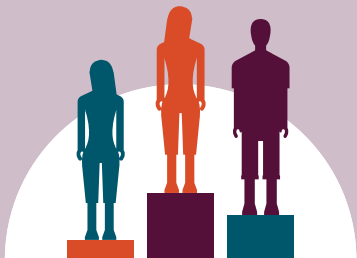
actually to open people's hearts to each other, so they see each other and experience each other in a new way, with a new frame of ref-

erence." Done right, genuine trust can be built. "Trust is gold dust in corporations," says Mr Jankel. "Trust is what provides people with a context to go the extra mile on a project or innovate. Without trust, people are too fearful to risk a change in their status, reputation or income."

08 EVALUATE

Did your event hit its goals? The only way to find out is to survey the participants. For example, computer brand Dell runs a management challenge in the Brecon Beacons. Teams of six compete in a range of sports including a 31km course of mountain-bike riding, running, canoeing and hiking in the first day alone. Tim Griffin, vice presi-

dent and managing director, Dell UK, reports: "After previous Dell management challenges, we have surveyed the participants, and 85 per cent felt their leadership and coaching skills had improved, 95 per cent felt their team work had improved as a result of the event, 84 per cent felt more confident and self-aware, 90 per cent believed they



were fitter and gained endurance, and 82 per cent felt their communication was more effective." The numbers will be used to shape next year's challenge.



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How major global sporting events

As another summer of spectacular sport beckons, what is the business case for hosting a major global sporting event?

SPORT

MIKE FLETCHER

Booking a summer holiday for 2016 is fraught with potential problems. If you opt for any time between the August 5 and 21, you'll be away during the Rio de Janeiro Olympic and Paralympic Games. But if you're keen to get away before the schools break up, there's a chance you'll be watching the 2016 European Championship football final on July 10 from a bar stool in Spain.

Holiday planning logistics aside, this summer promises to be another exciting time for the sporting spectator. But what impact does staging these types of major sporting tournaments have on the host cities themselves? And why do countries place such importance on winning major event bids?

According to Bloomberg Business, Brazil spent \$11 billion on hosting the World Cup in 2014. It was money spent in a push to increase the nation's visibility, consolidate "an image of happiness" and boost the country's tourism potential, according to a government-sponsored preamble.

So is the high cost of staging the world's pre-eminent football tournament worth it? The FIFA World Cup does have a precedent for improving overseas visits to emerging destinations. After hosting the 2010 tournament, South Africa's international tourist arrivals grew at an annual average rate of 7.4 per cent in the three years through to 2013 when it received 9.6 million foreign visitors, the World Bank says.

Brazil hasn't been so fortunate. The flow of tourists remained flat over the 12 months since the July 2014 final.

According to a 2015 joint report by hospitality consultant HVS and advisory service for hotel investment in South America Hotelinvest: "The World Cup's impact on tourism and hospitality in Brazil was fleeting, and its legacy was a little frustrating. Beyond the renovation of a few airports and modernisation of part of the hospitality infrastructure, probably the most lasting milestone was the 7-1 defeat that Brazil suffered at the hands of Germany."

However, it hasn't curtailed hotel groups such as Hyatt, InterContinental and Accor SA from continued opening sprees of new properties across Brazil's major cities.

Hilton Worldwide opened its debut property in Rio de Janeiro in April last year, citing this year's Olympic Games and a combined visitor legacy from both the World Cup and Olympics as key reasons for its decision to expand into Brazil's tourism capital.

The nine-storey Hilton Barra Rio de Janeiro is a stone's throw from the Olympic Park and just 15 minutes to the best beaches in Barra.

"Hotel groups still believe there's systemic growth in the Brazilian mar-

ket, driven by the added halo effect of this year's Olympics, plus a decline in inflation and tentative growth in the Brazilian economy," says David Hornby, founder and chief executive of Why Not, a consultancy business for the sports, tourism and events industry. "It's true that a major event will often act as the catalyst for looking at opening hotels in certain cities, but the longer-term business case still has to stack up."

For the Chinese capital Beijing, which last year secured the 2022 Winter Olympics despite a dearth of natural snowfall in the region, being named as host city by the International Olympic Committee is as much about the global prestige as it is about the local economic and social impact.

That said, however, a key component of Beijing's winning bid was its pledge to tackle the city's air pollution, which was so visible to global television audiences during the 2008 Olympic Games.

Beijing's victory over Kazakhstan to stage the 2022 Olympic event is also seen as a huge boost to China's attempts to build a £500-billion sports industry that would create millions of new jobs.

Closer to home, France's successful bid to host this summer's European Football Championship was centred around developing a modern generation of sports venues for the regions.

Having hosted major international sporting events in the past, such as Euro'84 and the World Cup in 1998, France was able to highlight its experience and expertise. But its stadiums had grown old and tired.

According to official French government figures, building new stadiums and modernising historic grounds, such as Marseille's Stade Velodrome, has cost €1.6 billion (£1.2 billion). But it will result in the biggest-ever Euro Finals come June 10, with 51 games staged in ten different locations, including new stadiums in Bordeaux, Lille, Lyon and Nice.

It's hoped that the new stadiums will bring new impetus to French football, both amateur and professional. The average capacity of French stadiums has now expanded from 27,000 to 35,000 spectators, which in itself should generate €183 million in additional revenue for the clubs.

Gaining a significant national and regional economic return, along with increased participation at grass-roots level, was also part of the strategy for hosting last year's Rugby World Cup in England and Wales.

The tournament was staged across 11 cities and 13 different venues, from Brighton on the south coast to Leicester in the Midlands and Newcastle in the north.

"An Olympics is rarely held outside one city, but the wider geographic coverage of something like a European championships or the Rugby World Cup has helped to ensure the economic benefits can be more broadly

ATTENDANCE AT MAJOR SINGLE SPORT EVENTS (M) ESTIMATED

0.25m
Ryder Cup
2010 Wales

0.7m
ICC Cricket World Cup
2007 West Indies

0.79m
Ashes Series
2009 England/Wales

1.16m
UEFA Euro
2008 Austria/
Switzerland

1.25m
ICC Cricket
World Cup 2011
India/Sri Lanka/
Bangladesh

1.26m
Ashes Series
2006/7 Australia

1.45m
UEFA Euro
2012 Poland/Ukraine

1.47m
Rugby World Cup
2011 New Zealand

3.42m
FIFA World Cup
2014 Brazil

3.38m
FIFA World Cup
2006 Germany

3.2m
FIFA World Cup
2010 South Africa

2.7m
FIFA World Cup 2002
South Korea/Japan

2.2m
Rugby World Cup
2015 England

2.19m
Rugby World Cup
2007 France

1.88m
Rugby World Cup
2003 Australia

£4bn+

foreign investment
in London has been
linked to the Olympic
Games since 2012
Source: London & Partners

1.6m

additional tourists visited Sydney
in 2001 following the 2000
Olympics, spending US\$3.5 billion
Source: Australia
Tourist Commission

€1.27bn

economic contribution
expected to France
from the 2016 UEFA
Euro tournament
Source: UEFA

£102m

economic contribution to
Yorkshire from the Grand Depart
of the 2014 Tour de France
Source: Leeds City Council/TFL/
UK Sport/Welcome to Yorkshire

\$106m

economic contribution to
New Orleans from the 2014
NBA All-Star Game
Source: Charlotte
City Council

£75m

economic contribution
to Liverpool and the Wirral
from the 2014 Open
Golf Championship
Source: Sheffield Hallam University

70k

jobs for unemployed
Londoners were
created at the
2012 Olympics
Source: Cabinet Office

466k

additional tourists visited
the UK during the 2015
Rugby World Cup
Source: EY

\$2.8bn

economic contribution from
Circuit of The Americas in
Austin between 2010 to 2014
Source: Circuit of the Americas

2m

bed nights generated by the
2015 ICC Cricket World Cup in
Australia/New Zealand
Source: ICC Cricket

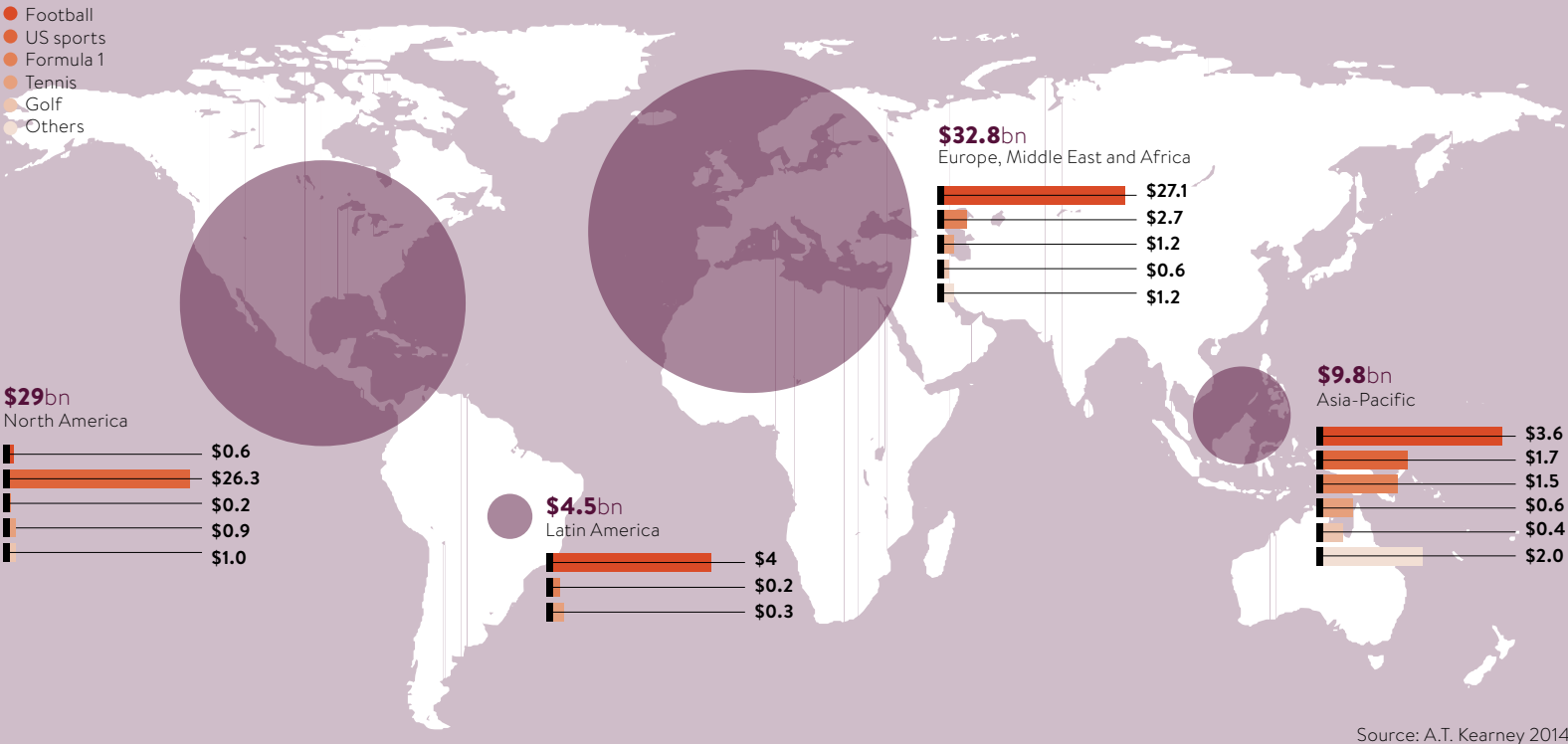
\$719m

economic contribution
to Arizona from the
2015 Super Bowl XLIX
Source: Arizona State University

Events score economic goals

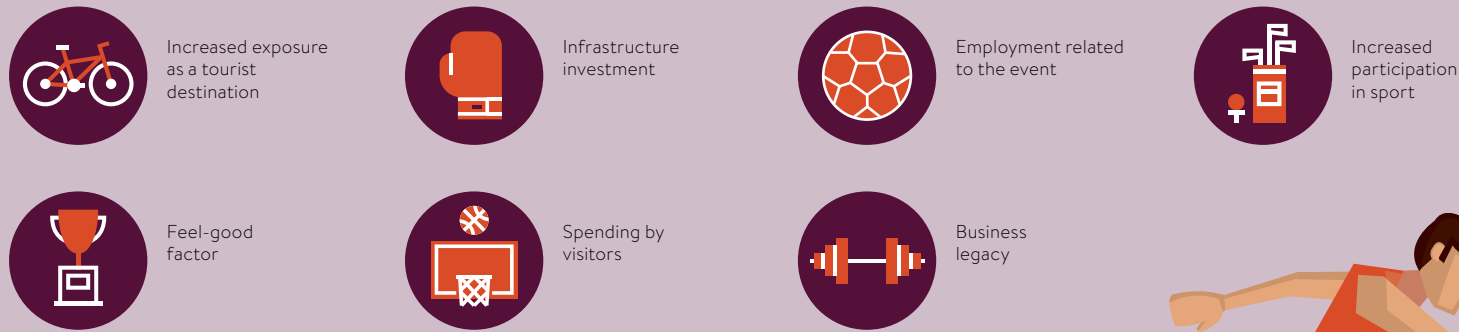
event? Is the investment in stadiums and infrastructure matched by increased visitor numbers and spending?

SPORTING EVENTS MARKET REVENUE



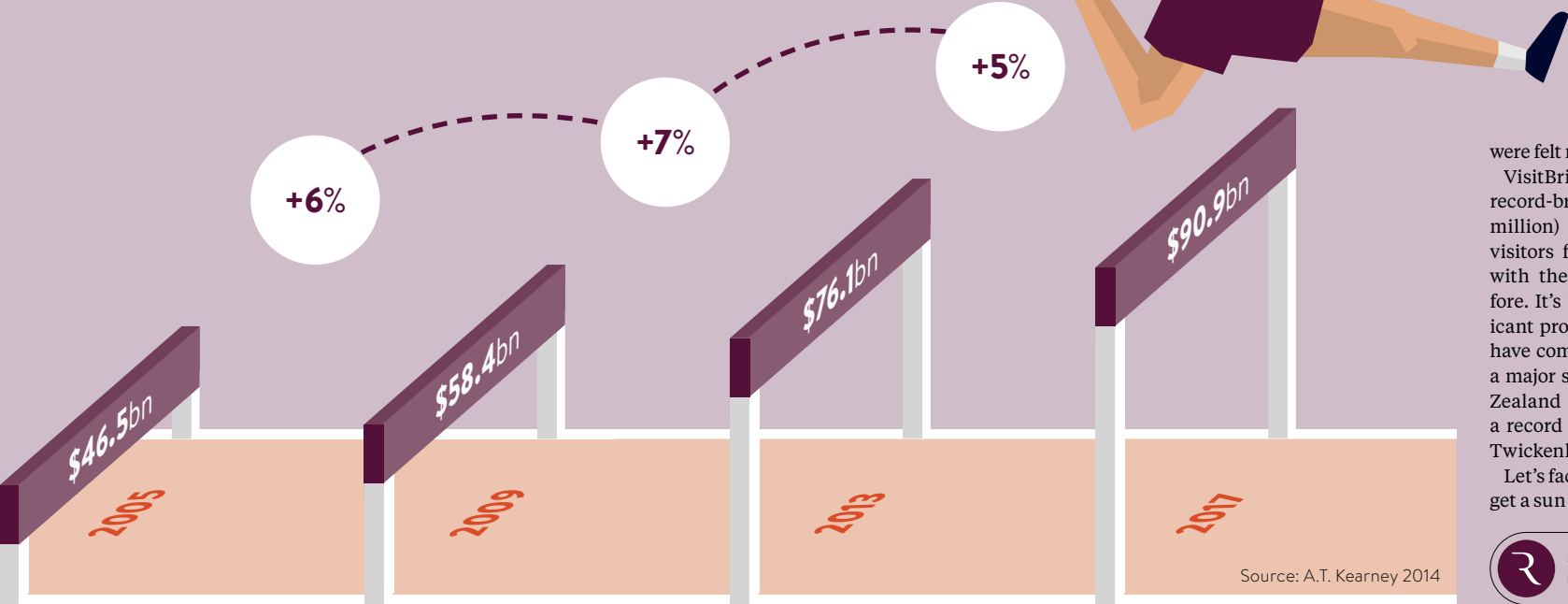
EXAMPLES OF BENEFITS OF SPORTING EVENTS FOR HOST NATION/CITY

INCLUDING DIRECT, INDIRECT AND INDUCED IMPACTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE EVENT



SPORTING EVENTS MARKET

FOUR-YEAR CYCLE



spread,” says Why Not’s Mr Hornby. “Last year’s tournament provided rugby fans across England and Wales with accessible venues to support their team.”

Rugby World Cup 2015 saw record demand for tickets and an estimated extra 466,000 overseas visitors arriving in Britain during the tournament.

Calculating the likely number of international visitors was based upon the total number of tickets available, plus a survey of interest in purchasing tickets among worldwide rugby fans, carried out by the tournament’s database holder Front Row.

EY predicted visitors would spend up to £869 million in host cities during the tournament. While overall, Rugby World Cup 2015 is thought to have generated up to £2.2 billion from ticket sales, stadium spending, infrastructure investment and indirect effects such as hotel stays, restaurant bookings and money spent on the high street.

So were these predictions correct? EY’s economic advisory director Peter Arnold says we’ll have to wait a little longer for the firm’s post-event study which is due out in April.

He says: “What we do know now is that organisers sold 2.4 million tickets, compared with an anticipated 2.2 million, so every game was full. The key indicators for us are how many people came from overseas and how much did they spend. With the tournament achieving everything it set out to do and more, our predictions should be pretty similar to the actuals.”

According to tourism body Visit Britain, tourists who come to the UK for these major sporting events are among the most beneficial to the economy because they traditionally stay for longer, have a propensity to travel around the country and spend more money when doing so.

VisitBritain’s director Patricia Yates says: “The Rugby World Cup drew significant volumes of visitors from Australasia, Africa, North America and Europe, staying an average of 24 nights. And with 48 matches spread across 11 host cities, the benefits were felt right across the regions.”

VisitBritain’s research recorded a record-breaking 12 per cent rise (3.4 million) in the number of inbound visitors for October 2015, compared with the same month the year before. It’s fair to assume that a significant proportion of this figure would have come to experience the thrill of a major sporting event that saw New Zealand lift the Webb Ellis Cup for a record third time on October 31 at Twickenham.

Let’s face it, they won’t have come to get a sun tan.

From Glastonbury to little Lubstock...

Festivals have matured and grown in popularity to the extent that they are now major contributors to local economies, with some people preferring them to an annual holiday

FESTIVALS
REBECCA HOBSON

It's 2am. You're eating Goan fish curry and watching a roving performance of Hamlet. Your voice is hoarse from singing along to Florence and the Machine and your legs ache from dancing to Daft Punk. Still, you feel revived and exhilarated – and you can't wait for tomorrow morning's yoga session and the afternoon banquet.

This is the reality of an independent UK festival. From the massive Glastonbury Festival to the tiny Lubstock in Leicestershire, these summer carnivals have become a riotous extravaganza of music, art, food, theatre, debate and more.

"The last ten to fifteen years have been an incredibly busy time for independent festivals," explains Robert Gorham, aka Rob da Bank, co-founder of Bestival and the Association of Independent Festivals (AIF).

"The independent sector is just so strong now, in every genre and angle imaginable – you've got folk to heavy metal – every box is ticked."

It is this shifted focus to more niche musical programming, as demonstrated by Red Rooster, End of the Road and Download, alongside the integration of fine dining, literature and art, as delivered by Wilderness, Latitude and the Secret Garden Party, that has fuelled the industry's boom over the last decade. According to *The Economist*, there are now more than 250 festivals taking place every summer in the UK, most of which are small, independent events.

So strong is the sector, a 2014 report by the AIF put total spending by festival-goers between 2010 and 2014 at more than £1 billion on tickets, food and drink.

While this may come as a surprise to those whose festival days



01
Paint fight at the Secret Garden Party 2015

02
Brythoniaid Male Voice Choir performing at Festival No.6 2015



evoke memories of dodgy burgers followed by even dodgier tummies, any modern-day festival-goer will tell you that today's events have become veritable meccas for millennial foodies. A fact that organisers are only too aware of, explains Martin Orbach, co-founder of Shepherds Ice Cream and the Abergavenny Food Festival.

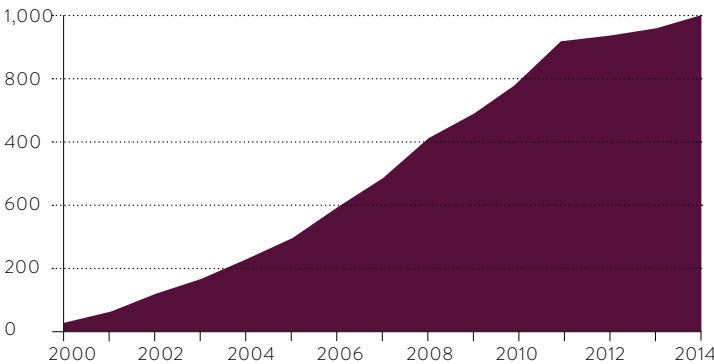
"The catering offer is an absolutely critical part of the festival experience," he says. "Promoters take

it seriously and consequently the quality of food on offer is close to restaurant standard."

Mr Orbach should know as his ice cream vans trade at around 40 events up and down the country every summer. His sheep's milk ice cream includes cardamom and lavender, and mango and chilli flavours, with festivals accounting for a third of his turnover.

"Music festivals suit us particularly well because their approach to ca-

NUMBER OF BRITISH FESTIVALS



Source: eFestivals 2014

tering has always been eclectic and quality focused," he says.

Eclectic is certainly what Gareth Cooper had in mind when he co-founded Festival No.6 in the Welsh tourist village of Portmeirion. Built in the style of an Italian village, the beautiful coastal resort has hosted Festival No.6 every September for four days since 2012.

When Mr Cooper first floated the idea in 2011, he met little resistance. "The tourism there was far from what it could be and it needed a bit of a resurgence. So when we offered to bring 15,000 people to the area, and give it a boost by providing jobs and work, even if temporary, they couldn't really turn it down," he says.

Festival No.6 has brought an estimated £2.79 million annually to the area, while providing publicity for the village.

"We have to know what the economic impact is because the Welsh government contributes financially

to the event," says Mr Cooper. "They pay a sponsorship fee in order for us to put marketing spend behind the festival and promote Welsh culture."

The symbiotic relationship is working; Festival No.6 turns four this year with a host of prestigious awards under its belt, including UK Festival Awards for Best New Festival and Best Line-Up.

"There's a real shift towards combining tourism and festivals," says Mr Cooper. "People who are reliant on boosting their economy, in terms of hotels, bars and restaurants, are looking to festivals now. This is because so many people are going to festivals instead of going on holiday."

His close relationship with the community of Portmeirion is one that Emily Eavis, co-organiser of the Glastonbury Festival, knows only too well. "Benefiting the local area is one of our number-one priorities," she says. "Whether it's local schools, sport clubs, skate parks, church bells – the list goes on."

Of the £2 million donated to charity by the festival, £600,000 is donated to local organisations and charities. "In return, they'll provide us with a few volunteers for the weekend," says Ms Eavis.

Back in April 2007, Mendip District Council in Somerset commissioned an in-depth report into the estimated economic impact of the Glastonbury Festival. The report's findings surprised everyone, estimating that the event contributed £73 million to UK and international economies each year.

And that was nearly nine years ago. Festivals, it seems, have well and truly come into their own.

“There are now more than 250 festivals taking place every summer in the UK, most of which are small, independent events”

CASE STUDY: BESTIVAL



FOUNDERS Josie and Rob da Bank, Ziggy Gilsenan, John Hughes
LOCATION Isle of Wight
DURATION Four days
CAPACITY 50,000
NOTABLE HEADLINERS The Cure, Elton John and Amy Winehouse

The ambitiously titled Bestival careered on to the scene in 2004 – not long after the dawn of the independent festival boom. Events like The Big Chill, Shambala and WOMAD had already proved the model for the boutique festival, but there remained space for another major event.

"I'd only been to Reading Festival and Glastonbury at the time," recalls Bestival co-founder Robert Gorham, who likes to be known as Rob da Bank. "But

I knew we wanted to make it a bit more fun, not just stupid fun, but escapism, imagination and creativity through the site."

This creative focus on escapism has become the hallmark of festivals such as Bestival, the Secret Garden Party and BoomTown Fair.

"So much is non-music related," says Mr Gorham. "There's the Inflatable Church doing weddings, lots of spoken word, the Bestiversity tent which puts on talks and lectures,

a cinema showing cult films in a giant amphitheatre in the woods, the Women's Institute tent – and this year we've got a Mexican wrestling troupe."

It's this dynamic and evolving content that attracts such a large cross section to the festival. He says: "You can have a baby being wheeled along by some dreadlocked dude, through to my mum and dad, with granny and grandpa. It really is a total melting pot."

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COMMERCIAL FEATURE

SHOWING THE VALUE OF EVENTS

Why hold marketing events and why is it critical to measure their return on investment?



After a company’s website, tradeshow and events are the most effective tactic in the marketing mix, according to Forrester Research. Some 25 per cent of the average business-to-business marketing budget is spent on events – and the reasons are obvious.

After an event, three-quarters of attendees have a more positive perception of an organisation, the Event Marketing Institute points out, while the organiser generates leads, engages customers and prospects, and builds the brand.

Whether it’s a user conference, road show or sales meeting, marketing events create multiple touchpoints, offer unparalleled face time with your target audience and accelerate the sales process.

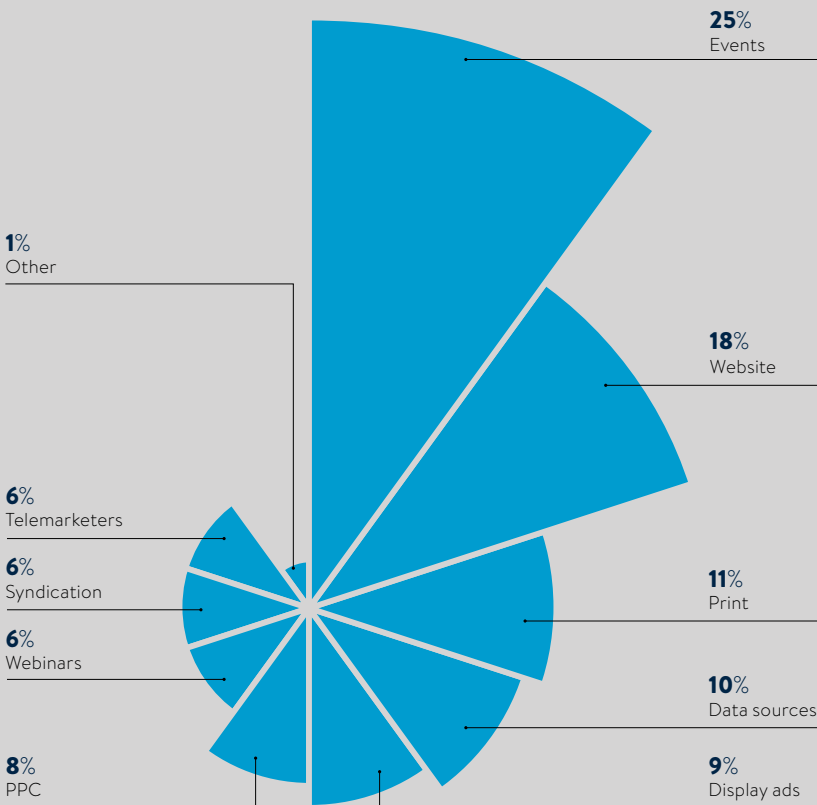
Knowing a marketing programme’s return on investment or ROI allows organisations to gauge its effectiveness; allocate resources to higher performing programmes; compare different marketing channels; and make more informed decisions overall.

According to the *IBM Global Chief Marketing Officer Study*, almost

two-thirds of CMOs believe ROI will be the primary measure of their effectiveness. So the question becomes, how do you accurately measure event ROI?

Tracking event expenses and forecasting revenue is a difficult task, not least because the initiatives generally include stakeholders from several different departments within an organisation. However, measuring the effectiveness of marketing programmes and events is critical. If you don’t know what works, you can’t do more of it.

PERCENTAGE MARKETING BUDGET SPEND BY CHANNEL



Source: Forrester Research

5 STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING ROI OF MARKETING EVENTS

According to the Event Marketing Institute’s *EventTrack* report, event return on investment or ROI is improving. In fact, 63 per cent of companies reported a 2-to-1 or higher return on their events in 2014, up from 55 per cent in 2013, and those organisations seeing a 5-to-1 or higher return doubled. So smart organisations are implementing strategies that help track ROI and give them a bigger bang for their marketing event buck. Consider these five high-level strategies to get started...

ALIGN INTERNALLY

Marketing and sales must be aligned prior to events, as early as the registration path set-up. This will ensure they are sharing resources, leveraging spending appropriately, and maximising the quality leads and pipeline opportunities that result.

What registration information would further qualify an attendee at the entry point? How can session interest, product interest and on-site participation data be better used to qualify prospects and enhance existing customer profiles?

Organisations should have a lead-generation strategy for on-site representatives. For instance, in addition to scanning the badges of interested attendees, what qualifying questions might be asked?

Prior to the event, marketers, planners and sales representatives must know their long-term business objectives. A single, centralised platform can help provide the various stakeholders with increased transparency into the process.

HARNESS THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology can mitigate the cost of staging an event by an estimated 20-30 per cent, according to Aberdeen Group, while Frost & Sullivan say it increases attendance by up to 20 per cent, as well as significantly simplifying the process.

Companies that use event management solutions are also able to leverage e-mail marketing for

recruiting, create customised and dynamic registration processes, set up automated payment processing, connect to social media channels, and more, all from a central platform.

Like content management systems and marketing automation tools, event management solutions should be a staple in every marketer’s tool box.

ENGAGE

Events offer an unparalleled opportunity to engage with, and deliver content to, prospects and customers.

The attendee journey should begin immediately, with marketers communicating every one to two weeks following registration. Content can include background information on key session topics, industry studies, webinars or podcasts with speakers.

Marketers can encourage desired behaviours, such as upgrading to paid registrations, choosing sessions or tracks, promoting one-on-one meetings, downloading the event app and sharing the detail on social media. Keeping attendees interested and involved in the run-up increases the number of people who actually attend.

During the event, incorporating the latest innovations in social and mobile technology adds to the experience. Organisations can compile and project attendees’ social content in real time, while also including their own custom posts to spark excitement.

Follow-up campaigns should thank attendees, ask for feedback, suggest additional resources or events and provide next steps.

dashboard of revenue and expenses across events with key performance indicators or KPIs, such as registration rate, average cost per attendee and attrition rate.

Marketers also get a bird’s eye view of their events, increasing transparency and facilitating better decision-making.

In addition, the turn-around time for reporting key metrics to upper management and other stakeholders is drastically improved with centralised reporting. Best guesses and manual processes are replaced by concrete data.

INTEGRATE

While embracing the previous points brings marketers much closer to measuring and achieving great marketing event ROI, this strategy has an exponential impact.

Specifically, we’re referring to integrating an event management platform with marketing automation systems such as Eloqua or Marketo and CRM (customer relationship management) solutions such as Salesforce. Through this process marketing organisations can:

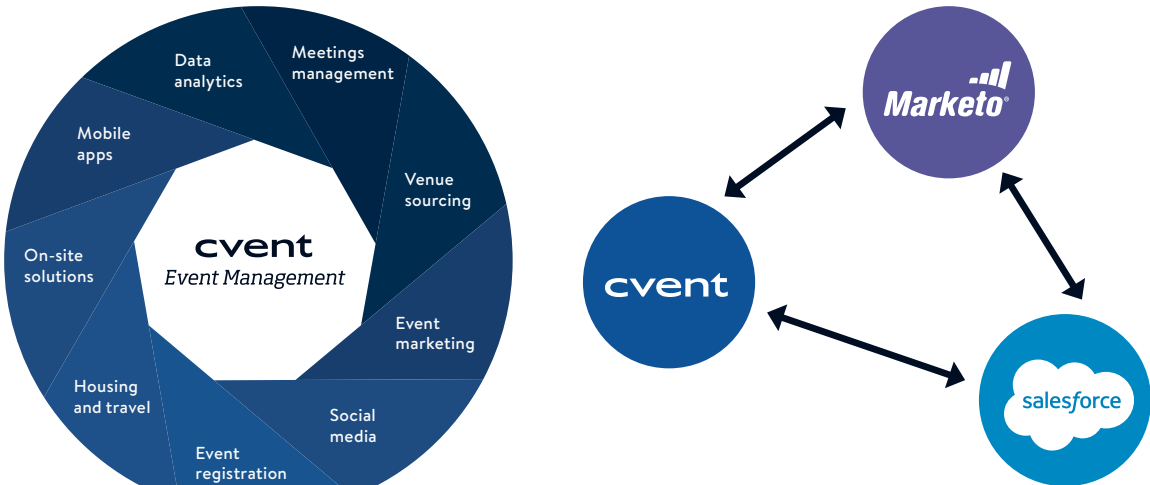
Develop a 360-degree profile of attendees, enabling more relevant and personalised event experiences that accelerate the buying cycle;

Align marketing even more closely with sales, allowing for the capture and scoring of leads on-site, automatically entering prospects into follow-up campaigns;

Incorporate rich event data into existing systems, creating powerful intelligence for determining the impact of events on key behaviours; and

Tie event investments to the revenue cycle, making better comparisons to other marketing channels.

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Mobile apps, tweets and tech are taking over

Technology has revolutionised live events during the past decade and promises further progress in an exciting period for the industry



TECHNOLOGY
JULIUS SOLARIS

Picture this. You are attending a conference in 1976. A single speaker is at the front of the room. All you can do is sit and listen. You quickly skim through the sessions listed in the printed programme to help you decide where to go next. You don't really know who else is attending and the only networking you are able to do is the occasional chit-chat with the people next to you. The conference concludes and that's it, until next year at least.

This pretty much describes the conference "experience" until the

early-2000s, the same format, the same rituals.

Then technology and social media came along, and changed events forever.

The same conference today looks quite different. During the presentation you can see live tweets projected on a giant display screen or on the event mobile app. You can also use the app to ask the speaker questions. The app notifies you of upcoming sessions that match your interests or, based on your location, lets you know which presentation will take place in the room next.

The app shows you who is going to attend within your LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter network days before the event. It also recommends interesting matches with other attendees

based on your profile and interests. You make arrangements to connect with other conference-goers during the event.

There is so much going on at the conference that you find it difficult to keep up, so you rely on the Twitter hashtag of the event to follow the content.

Then, next year's conference arrives and, unfortunately, you can't attend. It is no big deal though because you can follow the live stream online from your office computer and interact with attendees via social networks.

As you may have guessed, technology has changed live events dramatically over the past decade, from the way events are planned and executed to the manner in which business professionals attend and participate.

EVENT TECH TOP 5

01 BEACONS
are Bluetooth-powered devices that interact with compatible apps on smartphones that are quickly becoming protagonists of the most innovative events. Place beacons on your show floor to check in your guests, get attendees to rate sessions or speakers, play scavenger hunts, analyse footfall and crowd movements at exhibitions, send sponsor messages through notifications... the possibilities are endless.

02 THROWABLE MICS
can be safely thrown around by the audience to stimulate highly engaging Q&A sessions. They are a great alternative to having event staff rushing around the room to help attendees with microphones. They are made of soft materials, come in different shapes and attendees can speak into the embedded radio microphone connected to the event sound system.

03 VIRTUAL VENUE INSPECTIONS
through virtual reality tours are starting to enter the events industry. By using systems such as the Oculus Rift, event professionals don't need to leave the office to explore the rooms and set-ups of the venue they are evaluating. Forward-thinking venues are strategically placing virtual reality kiosks at industry events to close sales faster.

04 DRONES
are becoming favourite engagement tools at large sporting events and festivals. Some drones offer attendees the chance to connect with the on-board camera to snap aerial pictures of the event. Participants are able to take memorable images and share them on social networks involving remote audiences and increasing the content around the event.



05 DIGITAL SWAG BAGS
are the perfect alternative to traditional goody bags for environmentally savvy, tech-friendly audiences. They usually consist of a USB stick that collects a selection of offers from event sponsors. They are an effective complement to physical swag bags that make sponsors happy and attendees curious – usually a very powerful combination.



A model that did not change much for decades was turned upside down and transformed by forward-thinking professionals and the incredible growth of smartphones and social media.

Such unprecedented change sparked a new wave of event models that hack the traditional ways of planning events. Meeting design, the art of architecting better events by blending the environment, the performers and the attendees, is living a second life largely thanks to how technology is bringing communities together.

As event technology has emerged, the industry itself has expanded. Events are often referred to as the biggest industry nobody talks about. The value of the industry in the UK is in the range of £42 billion, according to Business Visits and Events Partnership. Mobile apps, social media and event technologies are relied upon to manage and maintain an industry that continues to grow, and audiences who demand more.

Technology is playing a key role in helping event planners engage their attendees. If the book *Engaging Events* by Event Manager Blog is correct, in 2016 75 per cent of event professionals worldwide will purchase an event app to increase engagement at their events. By the end of the year, 86 per cent of events will have an official mobile app, according to *The Momentum of Mobile Event Apps* benchmark study by CrowdCompass and the Event Marketing Institute.

Apps that facilitate interaction between performers and audiences, connect attendees to one another and help remote audiences participate in live events are booming. Hashtags have gone mainstream, with 45 per cent of US Super Bowl ads using them, says *Marketing Land*.

Is it all peaches and cream? Definitely not. While event professionals continue to invest in technology, they also encounter a number of frustrations, from the lack of adoption of apps and devices to the chronic structural inefficiencies plaguing the venues in which they work. The professionals say poor wi-fi is among

“ Mobile apps, social media and event technologies are relied upon to manage and maintain an industry that continues to grow, and audiences who demand more

the biggest frustrations when dealing with venues and among the most pressing concerns in 2016.

Selecting the best event technology is becoming increasingly difficult. The perennial challenge event planners have is choosing technologies that deliver on event objectives while providing real value for attendees. They also have to meet the expectations of attendees who have very precise ideas about what they want from a conference or meeting. They welcome change, but remain wedded to ritual. Planners who succeed in integrating

technology into their events have done so in increments, without disrupting existing processes.

Despite the challenges, there are practical ways technology can immediately bring value to an event:

- Having all event details in a mobile app saves money and reduces waste – paper programmes and event guides are a thing of the past;
- Managing the question-and-answer periods following a presentation with an app saves event staff from having to run through the audience with microphones;
- Connecting with fellow attendees before the event through an app or hashtag on social networks helps reduce the perceived risk of attending;
- Live streaming or what is often referred to as a hybrid event leads to more participants attending the live event in the subsequent year, according to the Chicago-based Virtual Edge Institute.

Of course, technology only adds to a live event if there is a technology strategy in place, which includes:

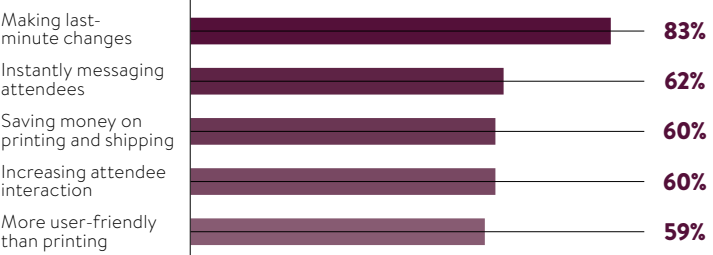
- Clear assessment of how the selected tools help to achieve event objectives;
- Understanding of the audience's predisposition towards using technology during the event;
- Accommodation for the technology infrastructure of the venue in which the event is being held.

Adhering to this strategy is the hallmark of event planners who have mastered technology to speed up the planning process or offer a more meaningful and engaging event experience.

Technology has been the fuel of unprecedented change in this sector and we can only expect more change in what is, without a doubt, the most exciting time to be involved in the events industry.

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TOP 5 REASONS ORGANISERS USE AN EVENT APP



Source: Guidebook 2014

TOP 5 MOST IMPORTANT EVENT APP FEATURES



Source: CrowdCompass 2015

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Terrorist attacks are a constant threat

A new wave of terror attacks is changing the events security landscape as fast-moving, co-ordinated threats become an increasing risk

SECURITY

MAGDA IBRAHIM

The devastating Paris attacks, California shootings and constant terror threats have placed security top of the agenda for event organisers.

But according to a 2016 EventHuddle poll, 93 per cent do not feel adequately trained for an incident. "Marauding terrorist firearms threats are a new dimension," says Steve Cooper, former head of security for the Olympic Delivery Authority during the London 2012 games.

The almost simultaneous November 13 Paris attacks by gunmen and suicide bombers on the Bataclan concert hall, Stade de France, restaurants and bars left 130 people dead and hundreds injured.

Just weeks later, 14 people were killed and 22 seriously injured in a shooting at a conference centre in San Bernardino, California, while Brussels cancelled New Year celebrations after an apparent terror plot was uncovered.

With the Home Office assessing the UK's current threat from international terrorism as "severe", meaning an attack is thought highly likely, event organisers are naturally aware of their vulnerability.

Effective planning is the first line of defence, according to Mr Cooper and his colleague Chris Scott, who worked as head of emergency preparedness, testing and exercising for London 2012.

"Security must be properly integrated, but proportionality is key otherwise you will burn budgets and not be a lot more effective," says Mr Cooper.

Indeed, 48 per cent of events professionals expect costs to rise because of the need for greater security, according to MPI *Meetings Outlook*.

"What the sad events of Paris have done is made people dust off their security plans," adds Mr Scott. "In a Paris scenario, there's no time, so rigorous testing means you can react quickly and there's a good

chance of making the best decisions."

Planning and risk assessment for a large-scale event includes looking at the general political climate, previous threats and hoaxes, as well as collaboration with police, other emergency services and public authorities.

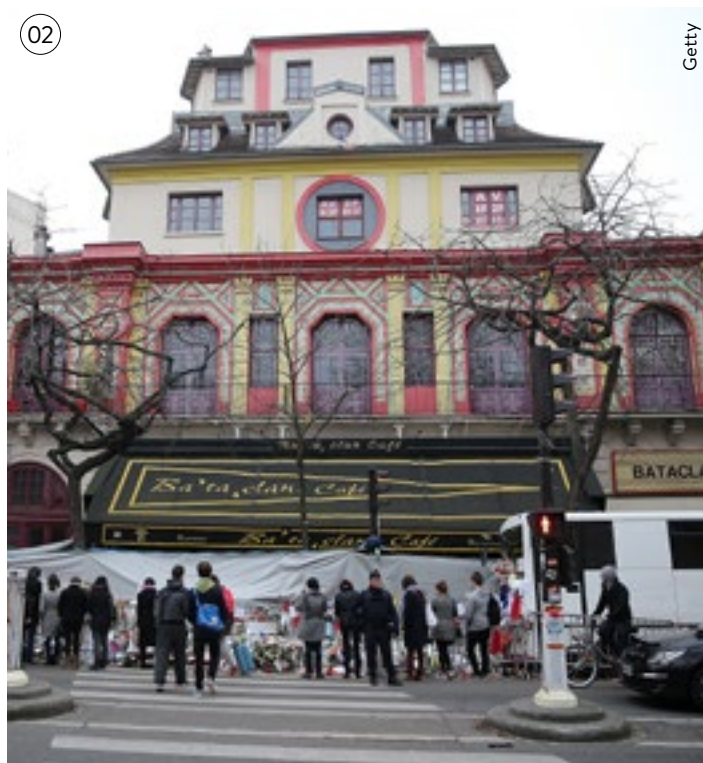
In-depth site visits are a chance to test venues and evacuation routes, whether there is a distinct alarm bell for a terror threat, as well as checking out whether

mobile devices will work properly.

Even for smaller events, best-practice elements, such as a laminated contact list of useful names and numbers, can be simple but save valuable seconds, while close co-operation between the event owner, organiser and venue, as well as other suppliers, is critical.

Ian Cummings, a regional director at global agency CWT Meetings & Events, points out that while security has "shot to the top of the priority list for our clients, it's not a one size fits all". When it's an overseas event, having a team based in the destination providing insider information is valuable for extra insight, he adds.

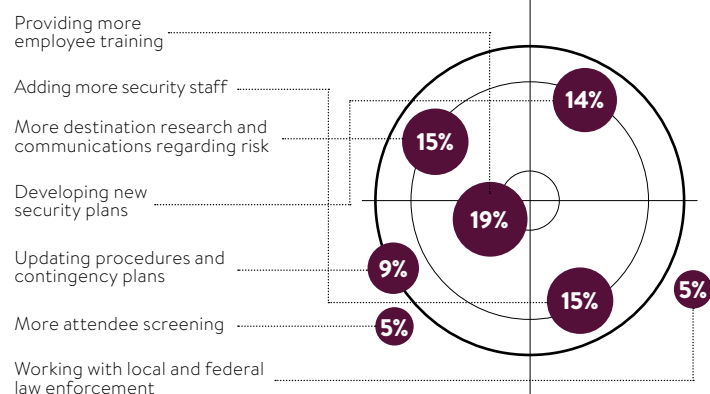
“Planning and risk assessment for a large-scale event includes looking at the general political climate, previous threats and hoaxes, as well as collaboration with police, other emergency services and public authorities



01 Security guard outside the Olympic Stadium during the London Olympics in July 2012

02 People laying flowers outside the Bataclan concert hall in December 2015, a month after the Paris terror attacks

METHODS EVENT PROFESSIONALS ARE USING TO MANAGE TERRORISM RISK



Source: Meeting Professionals International 2016

Clear communication channels proved crucial for Elliott Grant, business director of the Black Tomato Agency, when his team of nine were leading an 84-strong corporate incentive trip in Paris as the November attacks unfolded.

Having a dedicated point of contact as the team worked through its contingency plan meant instructions could be relayed speedily and accurately as attendees were taken to safety.

Grant explains that as he was in the UK, he could debunk any "misinformation they were hearing on Facebook and Twitter", and set up a text alert with verified news, while a crisis management team reorganised travel arrangements.

Despite the terrifying attacks, and those that took place at the Charlie Hebdo magazine offices in January 2015, it's pretty much business as usual for Paris and the rest of Europe.

Nearly half of corporate travel buyers report no change to their company's policy while, according to a Global Business Travel Association poll, 1 per cent temporarily suspended European travel in the days after the November incidents.

Meanwhile, MKG hospitality industry data shows the hotel sector wasn't hit as badly as might have been expected, and the Euro 2016 football tournament being held in France in June and large exhibitions should buoy hotel demand this year.

Events agency DRP's group chief executive Dale Parmenter says: "Paris was dreadful, but I don't think it will have the massive negative effect that occurred after 9/11."

What Paris did show is that unpredictability is the new normal.

Event venues across the UK responded accordingly, with companies such as Live Nation, AEG, which operates Wembley Stadium where England played football against France days after the Paris attacks, and major convention centre ExCeL London ramping up security.

At the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre in Glasgow, director of live entertainment John Langford explains: "Security measures on our campus are reviewed constantly and scaled to each event on a case-by-case basis."

Being heavy handed with security can also be a negative in events, where look and feel is crucial. "Consider what attendees will find appropriate," says Mr Scott.

The technology age has also changed the threat with cyber security a growing concern.

Cyber security expert Jessica Barker says the major worry for events is that the industry lags behind sectors like finance, pharmaceutical or retail.

"Criminals often go for the low-hanging fruit, those least prepared," she warns. Dangers could include a cyber criminal accessing attendees' personal or financial details, or even hacking into venue or hotel systems to override electronic gate or door-locking.

"Anything that runs on the internet can be hacked and potentially used as an attack that can impact on physical safety," says Dr Barker. "That can extend as far as transport disruption and emergency services being able to respond to a physical attack."

However, technology can mean a greater ability to screen attendees and on-site staff as CCTV, biometrics and radio-frequency identification embedded in tickets allow risks to be spotted earlier.

Ultimately, "even in the most effectively policed countries, terrorist incidents cannot be completely mitigated", says David Burrill, director of security agency Burrill Green and former chief of staff for the intelligence and security centre of UK Armed Forces.

"Be aware of your vulnerabilities, be intelligence-led and be driven by a robust risk assessment," Mr Cooper concludes. "And remember, you're running an event, not a security event."

93% of event professionals do not feel adequately trained to deal with a terror incident

Source: EventHuddle 2016

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