# Chapter 9
# Event Management in Social Media

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## ABSTRACT

*This chapter describes how through globalisation and developments in communication technologies, the lifestyle of people has changed and developed as well. Now, events are re-designed with communication tools and are becoming an important part of social life. This study aims to determine and evaluate the factors affecting perceptions of the audience who take part in events realized via Facebook, or on another online platform. Since this study is implemented through a social media communication device, on an on-line platform, it differs from other studies and gives this area a new perspective. Data acquired from questions were prepared to test the hypothesis of the study were analysed by doing factor analysis and regression tests. The acquired results were discussed.*

## INTRODUCTION

Event management is an applied science in which inter-disciplinary studies are used. It is a format that is continuously renewing and developing its practices through technology that is constantly changing and developing. In particular, event practices now cease to be ordinary activities and have become a structure that has horizontal and vertical components through recent developments in communication technologies and multi-functional globalization effects. The base for this is that events are creating their own stories with creative, interesting and transmediatic practices. In relation to this, event management and event marketing caused the rise of a new dimension by using technological instruments in all the sub-elements of the process of "strategical communication management".

Events have appeared in different formats and styles throughout the history of humankind. In the ancient era; wars, occupations, religious celebrations and agricultural harvest seasons were bases for events. Today, formats of events have changed through the developments in communication technologies and effects of globalization. Now, events have gained a new memory, place, and space which are

different from traditional events. Therefore, factors affecting perceptions of the audience have changed and developed.

Every day, thousands of events are held on social media websites that have billions of users today. Social media and the events held on such websites acquired such a vital place in social life that they have become an important research area. There are almost any research in the literature about the evaluation of the events held on social media. Therefore, focusing on pilot studies rather than studies producing hypothesis will be the right thing to do since various dimensions are in question when the audience is evaluating Facebook events and traditional events. This study conducts a pilot study to determine sub-dimensions of audience perceptions about the event on Facebook. This study analyzes yoga and recovery events held by Seçil Tezgel in Turkey on a Facebook page which is created by herself. The participants of the events are people who want to take online yoga courses and to recover through spiritual methods. This study differs from other studies in that the event was held on a social media website. McLuhan (1964) focuses on the fact that mediums change people's frame of mind rather than the message itself by saying "medium is message". Therefore, people's lifestyle and way of perceiving life are directly influenced by the mediums. In other words, social media devices which came into our lives through communication technologies are not only the inventions people use but also the mediums that re-invent people and their lifestyle. Hence, participant's adaptation process to the digital platform is also analyzed apart from their loyalty and satisfaction.

There are scarcely any studies in the literature about the topic. Therefore, focusing on pilot studies rather than studies producing hypothesis will be the right thing to do since various dimensions are in question when the audience is evaluating Facebook events and traditional events. This study conducts a pilot study to determine sub-dimensions of audience perceptions about the event on Facebook. Within this context, this study differs from other studies and is thought to contribute to the literature.

## BACKGROUND

Event is described as a remarkable activity taking place in a specific place and a period of time (Getz, 2007, p.19). Events, from the perspective of the audience, are seen as a medium for recreation and entertainment. Individuals expect to experience happiness and joy-oriented experiences by participating in the events (McLean, 2006, pp.40-41). According to Pira (2004), each event has its own purposes. These purposes might be sustaining social communication or reaching related purposes by creating an environment for the benefit of the institution, affecting the people and carrying the mission and the needs of the event into a general area. However, an event which cannot achieve its aims, even if it is profit-oriented or a charity, becomes insignificant and a loss of resources (Pira, 2004, p.31). Therefore, researching perceptions of the audience in the events is vital in terms of determining sub-factors of participant satisfaction and loyalty.

Event management is the sector that has grown biggest in the leisure industry in the recent years. Therefore, it has been researched exhaustively by both the academicians and experts of the profession (Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). Within this scope, there have been many studies conducted which particularly consider motivation, satisfaction, loyalty, social and cultural effects of participants (Visitors loyalty Gandhi & Shaw 2002; social impacts of event Kim et al., 2010; event motivation Li & Petrick, 2006; building brand image Gwinner et al., 1999; loyalty Gedenk & Neslin, 1999; effects of events Xing & Chalip, 2006). The basis for these studies is to develop communication strategies which will create a

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