

# Economic effect of alternative tourism.

## Events and festivals

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**Abstract** — The analyze of the tourism cities within Albania show that communities as emerged tourism destination offer culture, tradition and events, and also, show us that events and festivals have the capacity to celebrate community identity particularly in multi-cultural events and festivals. The involvement of local community in creating opportunities and furthermore, competitive advantages, is very important for management and marketing of events and festivals, especially in multi-cultural communities. The research investigates the different interpretations of community, the concept of communities and the role of events and festivals in articulating community identity within distinct localities. It is necessary the compilation of a strategic marketing plan which will involve the community in tourism events and festivals, which at last will follow up with sustainability. Drafting perfect marketing strategies is always one side of the management task that should not be underestimated. This task becomes extremely difficult since in many cases a direct conflict exists between the site managers who to keep restricted numbers of visitors for preservation reasons, local people who look the events as a way to generate revenues, and national governments who like to use its image as a marketing device. Heritage and Cultural Tourism is the most important part of the Albanian tourism product and successful element of the national economy. Albania is considered as a new cultural destination in the tourism marketplace, as a Balkan country of dramatic natural beauty, with a wealth of historic buildings and ancient archaeological sites that can compare, for interest and variety with any in the Mediterranean world.

**Index Terms** — Economic effects, alternative tourism, multicultural communities.

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### 1 INTRODUCTION

The analyze of the tourism cities within the country that offer culture, tradition and events, show us that events and festivals have the capacity to celebrate community identity particularly in multi-cultural events and festivals.

We recommend that those cultural and traditional cities within Albania that really are well known and proved by national and international demand and have result successful by potential consumers, must apply some effective marketing communication. So, for example, cities as Gjirokastra, Vlorë, Saranda, etc., must developed a centre piece events for the local economy each year, with local hotels, restaurants, taxis, public transports and small stall traders have planned their business activities around these events. Those cities have shown clearly the effectiveness of particular partnership working between local attendees and communities in creating a range of events and festivals.

Albania is exploring the emergence of a “new and important industry”. What should be done by Albanian managers and market-

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ers in “using” community based events as a tool for tourist promotion.

Insights from case studies of events and festivals within the sub-region of Gjirokastra, Vlora, Saranda, etc., highlight that the positive benefits of community collaboration with public and private organizations, is the promotion and enhancement of community identity. Historically, events and festivals were associated with key calendar moments, linked to particular seasons and heritage sites, but over the last decade they have changed dramatically and now there is a broad and diverse range of contemporary festivals and events taking place all over the world. In the light of these developments there has been a continuous development of community festivals in recent year.

A descriptive community refers to “a network of people who share a sense of belonging to or membership of, that network”, but that there are complex underlying inter-relationships involved. For example, there are social and psychological components to the ‘descriptive community.’ The first is that of ‘territorial community,’ which refers to what people might have ‘in common’, as part of a psychological attachment to their geographical location, such as a town, village or neighborhoods.

There is a lack of studies in Albanian tourism business. Little is known about the roles of tourism, small business, communities and their relationship to Albanian economic development. In fact, we have to note that, there is an absence of studies on small tourism business, even though “the Albanian tourism and leisure industry tend to be dominated by a few large businesses operating alongside a large number of small, independent ones”, or even to much is going to promote by Albanian government. Until the 1990’s, small businesses were simply considered a miniature version of large firms, and differences in business objectives, management style, funding, and marketing were unnoticed. Or furthermore, the concept of marketing in Albanian small and medium businesses is involved both with internet after 1992.

The concept of community has complex social, psychological and geographical dimensions with divergent views as to what constitutes a community. Traditional views of ‘community,’ as defined by the parameters of geographical location, a sense of belonging to that locality and the mix of social and economic activities within that locality have been supplemented with greater dimensions of complexity by analysts. In particular, processes of globalization have undoubtedly led to the dissolution of spatial boundaries, with local and regional boundaries no longer retaining qualities of the distinct demarcation of communities that they perhaps once did.

Secondly, ‘interest communities’ rely not on the focus of place, but are anchored in other characteristics, such as ethnicity, occupation, religion etc. This dimension of community thrives on social networks and social/psychological attachment. Our country has always had some multicultural groups with diverse histories, beliefs and cultures have settled in Albania. This is very interesting! These multicultural communities know play important role in the enhancing the cultural diversity of Albanian’s multicultural communities is spread all over the country.

## **2 FESTIVAL AND EVENTS TOURISM WILL HELP THE SUSTAINABILITY**

The local resources is of an community in maintaining traditional events and festivals within Albania chronicle the range of community based events and festivals that have ancient origins and which continue to act as a catalyst for the expression of cultural and community sustainability in the future.

The cultural events and festivals in Albania should be considered as an important form of community cohesion and expression which are examined within the case studies in this paper.

Not only in theory, not only in developed countries, but also in Albania, it is noted that residents of some communities as Gjirokastra, Vlora, Saranda, etc., are often

encouraged to take greater control of their futures by becoming involved in community planning and thereby influencing decisions about tourist developments in their home areas and protecting desired community attributes.

### 3 FESTIVALS AND EVENTS: ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

In addition to creating community cohesion, festivals potentially give greater economic life to host destinations, by developing employment, additional trade and business development, investment in infrastructure, long term promotional benefits, and tax revenues. Festivals not only generate significant economic benefits, they also provide host destinations with the opportunity to market themselves nationally and internationally bringing people from diverse backgrounds to the destination for the duration of the festival. As a result, they have the potential to provide host destinations with a high-status tourism profile. Some aspects of this role include festivals in Albania as:

- image makers,
- economic impact generators,
- overcoming seasonality,
- contributing to the development of local communities and businesses, and
- Supporting key industrial sectors.

The negative economic impacts can be:

- the inflation of price on goods and services to cash in on the influx of visitors,
- the event could also run at a loss meaning if it were funded by the local authority,
- The deficits would have to make up by local residents through a rise in taxes.

We recommend that:

- Each small tourism business in the country must be examined in terms of the type of the business activity, type of business ownership, motivation of business ownership, financial success, projected growth, business geographical location,

its customer base, and business' level of community involvement;

- The importance of the study is to support for tourism development leads to increased tourism activities and inevitably increased economic benefit to the community;
- Successful planning and management of tourism development benefits a community's residents, businesses, and visitors;
- Building community loyalty to attract more tourists into the community is imperative to the success of any initiative or grass-roots project.

### 4 LOCAL RESIDENTS ORIENT THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FESTIVALS AND OTHER EVENTS IN ALBANIA

Small business and family-owned business are the key factor for events managements, as the festivals, exhibitions, etc. Why? Because they follow up the tradition, they know what special features they have on their proper events; they know how special their festivals are. So the management of festivals should be by both actors: local government and small business.

Small businesses share distinctive characteristics and functional weaknesses that affect the product, operation, and services that they offer identified six categories that distinguish small business firms from large business firms. These include planning, environmental reaction and strategy, business objectives, range of management skills, communication styles, and company performance measures. These features made a big difference between those two actors in knowing, managing the festivals and other traditional events within the community.

Lack of strategic planning, vision, and long-term goals has been identified as a major problem of the role that small business firms can play in events management. Small tourism businesses are notable for being 'product oriented' or 'family oriented' versus 'market oriented' and find it unavoidable to depend heavily on intermediaries. They orient the

tourists to their tradition, to their potential that they have so culture, festivals, events, special products, which at the end made special one community.

All this process needs a very detail marketing program, especially in those destinations which has a considerable tourism supply. Marketing mix serve to general management as a set of tools that may be manipulated to meet specific objectives and attract predefined target markets. It is easy to notice that the fundamental starting point for the creation for a successful marketing mix is to ensure that the target market is clearly defined. If the destinations or small and medium enterprises are successful with its marketing mix, then it has to develop a differential advantage which will distinguish the organization's product from that of the competition. In this way, it has built an advantage which bases upon quality, image and product concept.

## **5 IMPLEMENTING MARKETING STRATEGIES PART OF PROCESS OF EVENT'S MANAGEMENT**

Evaluating the success of a destination which offers special festivals and events, involve not only the evaluating of potentials, the marketing mix, but also the implementing of those strategic marketing that sustain the process of festivals and events management.

Once the strategy is agreed, the next challenge is to implement it through the manipulation of the four Ps and the Marketing Mix. A last but not least criterion of ensuring a successful implementation of the strategy requires that it can be usually converted in short tactical marketing plans covering a shorter period of usually one year thus being easily adopted by those responsible for day to day marketing of the attractions.

These points (market and visitors) represent major sources of implications for management while implementing strategic models for festivals and events developed for tourism. The strategies are implemented through plans and these plans usually base on the

manipulation of the marketing mix which in cases of festivals and other events includes more than four elements (tools). They extend these elements to seven Ps, which according to many scholars are more relevant for heritage attractions. While there are differences between manufactured and service products, the framework of four Ps is sufficient for planning purposes whereas physical evidence, people and processes are part of the category of product and its implementation.

Sustaining by the government and local public of festival and other typical events for the communities will help in doing authentic the Albania's tourism products, while meeting the general expectations of international tourists. International experience, knowledge and best practices generated by the developed of events and festivals, not only will improve the image of Albania in international countries, but should be sought aggressively to inform decisions and plans for the country. However, the products themselves must represent, to the maximum extent possible, an authentic Albanian approach. The most likely outcome will be the adoption and adaptation of strategies and mechanisms from a number of countries' best practices in different regions of the world.

The development of festivals and events as a very important part of whole Albanian tourism product will need substantial involvement of local governments in tourism planning, urban planning, infrastructure development, cultural preservation, environmental protection, among others. While there is considerable local capacity in the larger cities and identified cultural centers, many cities and towns will require substantial amounts of additional support from the central government, Tirana based institutions and international experts.

Albania will seek to position itself as an attractive destination for tourists seeking a unique experience featuring high quality cultural sites and nature destinations presented in a truly "authentic" way. Albania will specialize in attracting educated, independent travelers and specialized group travelers. The principal

target markets will be upper middle income individuals from Europe and North America. This segment represents the demographic segment with the highest willingness to pay for Albanian's unique products, and whose spending patterns will most contribute to advancing development goals.

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