

ABSTRACT

Over the past years, the dissatisfaction with traditional forms of promotion has grown and companies have to strive harder than ever to find new ways to break through the ever-increasing media clutter. This has forced the companies to seek alternative methods to reach the customers. An example of such a method is event marketing. Event marketing has gained popularity as a marketing communications tool in this period. The use of event marketing gives companies a unique platform and many advantages, leading to the purpose of this thesis, which is to gain a better understanding why companies use event marketing as a promotional tool by examining decision factors related to event marketing implementation. Seven decision factors are brand awareness, brand preference, competitive intelligence, customer satisfaction, new member acquisition, product knowledge, and qualified leadership. These seven decision factors have been used to test the relationship with event marketing.

Moreover, the study has further been narrowed down to look upon one specific event company, Index Event Agency Public Company Limited, which mainly organizes events for their customers. In this study, Index's customers are both public and private companies. Index is now one of the biggest event organizers in Thailand and has more than 1,400 customers over the past five years. It is better to start event marketing research with Index which has more than fifteen years of experience in an event marketing business.

In order to reach the objectives, a quantitative study with 356 Index's customers was conducted. The researcher used convenience sampling method from all Index's customers over the past five years. 356 questionnaires were distributed among Index's customers to gain thorough information. The researcher studied the different objectives and target that companies set when applying event marketing. The data collected from these questionnaires were analyzed and then finally used to draw conclusions about event trends in Thailand.

The results of the analysis showed that there is a relationship between all seven decision factors and event marketing implementation. It meant that customers concern themselves about brand awareness, brand preference, competitive intelligence, customer satisfaction, new member acquisition, product knowledge, and qualified leadership when implementing event marketing. In this study, qualified leadership, competitive intelligence, and brand awareness can be ranked as three most important objectives for event marketing

implementation. From this finding, customers were more concerned about how to be a leader in a business. They would like to show their competitive intelligence and increase brand awareness by conducting some events.

The results of this research can be a guideline for event organizers and companies who usually arrange event marketing activities to gain better understanding about why customers would like to arrange some events. If they know what their customers really want from events they have arranged, they can find, adjust, and develop suitable marketing strategies that match the demand and requirements of their customers accordingly. According to the results of this study, event organizers should be aware that most companies would like to be a leader in a business and gain competitive intelligence over their competitors. Consequently, when arranging an event, event organizers should emphasize strong points of their customers that the competitors do not have in order to show their customers' core competencies as a leader of the business.

For better understanding, future study can test the generalization of these findings for one specific industry since the perceived importance of event marketing for customers in each industry might differ across the industries. Consequently, future research should be specified into a specific industry or a specific company in order to understand more exactly which factors have the most relationship with that particular industry or company.