



# A Marketing Framework for Events in Nelson Mandela Bay

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## Abstract

In recent times there has been an increase in the global use of events for marketing and branding destinations. The strategic marketing of events enhances the destination's attractiveness and subsequently draws more visitors in the highly contested tourist marketplace. This study investigates how Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB), South Africa can market events to augment its attractiveness as a competitive destination. The study used a quantitative research method, where questionnaires were distributed to NMB residents. A sample of 3 359 responses were obtained. The findings suggest that the strategic bundling, placement, promotion and positioning of events is critical when proceeding with an event-marketing initiative. The proposed event-marketing framework developed in the study can be used as a blueprint for informing the strategic development of event concepts for NMB. The successful establishment of event offerings will consequently strengthen the destination attractiveness of NMB.

**Keywords:** Social Capital; Event Management; Event Marketing; Destination Attractiveness; Nelson Mandela Bay; South Africa.

## Introduction

Destination marketing has increasingly garnered an extensive amount of attention over the past three decades (Pan, MacLaurin and Crotts, 2007). Regions, countries and cities have realised the importance of marketing and advancing the appeal of their respective localities, given the fact that destination marketing not only gives rise to higher tourist turnover, but also contributes to urban development and improved country positioning on an international level (Singh and Hu, 2008; Dwyer, Edwards, Mistilis, Roman and Scott, 2009). Destination marketing includes fundamental efforts associated with developing and maintaining a particular location's attractiveness. Destinations, because of their growing importance and complexity, are now marketed in the same way as conventional products, through the application of traditional marketing concepts (Hankinson, 2010). The tourism industry is inclined to use events as tools for branding cities as attractive destinations (Wu, 2016; Lee and Arcodia, 2011; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules and Ali, 2003). Event marketing has become one of the most used approaches for promoting and championing products, services and destinations on a global scale (Stelzner, 2013). Several destinations globally are creating event portfolios as strategic schemes to draw tourism and strengthen their respective brands (Mishra and Lenka, 2016; Szromnik, 2016; Trost, Klaric and Ruzic, 2012). Events are also used as a catalyst for urban development and supplement tourism attraction (Getz, 2008).

Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB; also known as Port Elizabeth), is one of South Africa's largest cities and is a destination endowed with immense opportunities and several world-class recreational facilities. Stretching over 15 kilometres along Algoa Bay, the city affords residents access to a



large and warm beach area to undertake various activities. The city is in a malaria free region, which has a wide range of wildlife species including the Big Five. Moreover, established and world-renowned nature reserves, such as the Addo Elephant Park and Shamwari Game Reserve have grown the tourist industry. As a relatively old South African city, whose architecture dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, NMB is also conveniently positioned to attract the much needed tourist attention with its artistic historical infrastructure (Labuschagne, 2013). Complementing the aforementioned factors are the temperate weather conditions (10°C - 28°C) and the residents who are affable, accommodating and generally friendly.

In spite of the apparent tourist potential of NMB, the city's local authorities and management have done little to maximise the benefits and returns that can be generated from investing in these resources. Resultantly, the NMB brand and identity has consequently become weak and inconsistent in relation to its sister cities, Cape Town and Durban. A comprehensive blueprint that informs and guides local event marketers of the direction to take, in order to market their events is required. Over recent years, NMB has encountered a significant number of losses in terms of hosting and managing events. The most recent and calamitous loss, estimated at over R200 million, was the internationally acclaimed International Rugby Board (IRB) World Sevens event, which moved from NMB to Cape Town (Byron, Butler and Collins, 2015). This has led to disconcerted and agitated sentiments across business and tourism leadership locally. Since 2011, the IRB World Sevens Series contributed over R1 Billion towards the local economy. Additionally, the city lost international television exposure to a global audience (Pillay, 2015).

This study proposes a framework for marketing events to provide NMB city marketers with a foundation for developing effective events concepts. The framework could assist marketers with the planning and successful launching of events that are sustainable and responsive to the needs of people who consume them. This should position the city as a formidable and credible competitor and open up more opportunities for successful events, which will ultimately translate to the growth of the local economy.

## **Literature Review**

### **Destination Attractiveness**

Destination attractiveness refers to the appeal that a given location presents towards visitors, businesses and its residents. It essentially entails the degree to which the availability, excellence and administration of tourist offerings meet and gratify the needs of the consumer (Cracolici and Nijkamp, 2009). These tourist offerings are solidified and augmented through the staging of events, thus creating opportunities to promote the destination (O'Sullivan, Pickernell & Senyard, 2009; Yeoman, 2004; Eckerstein, 2003). It is important to evaluate the attractiveness of a destination by investigating the different perceptions that the residents have towards the destination. Research indicates that residents are the most powerful communication medium for marketing a destination to external communities (Sinclair-Maragh, Gursoy and Vieregge, 2015).

### **Events and Event Marketing**

Events have progressed in the tourism industry to become important attractions and motivators of travel to many destinations (Perna and Custódio, 2010). Events serve to draw additional visitors to a given destination of interest (Lee and Arcodia, 2011; Eckerstein, 2003). This has become an



increasingly complex task for event marketers, given the fierce competition to attract tourists amongst a broad range of comparatively attractive destinations and an increase in the sophistication of tourist expectations (Fyall and Garood, 2004).

Events can significantly contribute towards the effective branding of a given destination by aiding the creation and maintenance of a positive image for that location (Todd, Leask and Ensor, 2017; Richards, de Brito and Wilks, 2013; Derrett, 2004). A significant component of the relationship between events and tourism is the nature by which the images that are associated with the event are transferred to the destination, hence confirming the destination's attractiveness (Hernández-Mogollón, Folgado-Fernández and Duarte, 2014; Deng and Li, 2014; Jago, Chalip, Brown, Mules and Ali, 2003).

Literature supports the notion that there is a significant relationship between destinations and events (Richards, de Brito and Wilks, 2013). One of the key drivers of conducting events in a destination is to enhance the awareness of the destination or the destination's image (Rogers and Davidson, 2015; Ezeuduji, 2015; Sung Moon, Kim, Jae Ko, Connaughton and Hak Lee, 2011; Richards and Wilson, 2004; Derrett, 2004; Emery, 2002). Events can also create supplementary demand in the regular season of the destination, thus generating additional revenue (Connell, Page and Meyer, 2015). Furthermore, regular tourists can possibly extend their stay in the destination, awaiting the occurrence of a given event that they may not have necessarily planned to attend (Sotiriadis, 2015, Yang and Zhang, 2015; Dimanche, 2002). The inclination to make an investment in a given destination relies on the attractiveness of the destination, as well as how sufficiently it is branded (Dinnie, 2015; McDonnell and Gebhardt, 2002). Events thus become imperative in positioning a destination as a viable investment alternative, given the notion that the employment of events significantly contributes towards the marketing of a destination (Arnegger and Herz, 2016; Getz, 2008).

Event marketing is a fundamental component of event management, which interacts with several aspects of the organisation. Marketing is crucial to ensure the successful launching and management of events since it focuses on the needs and wants of the end-consumers (Duncan, 2002). Events and festivals that are constructed in the absence of a reinforcing foundation in the form of a marketing plan are unsustainable in the long term (Raj and Musgrave, 2009). Despite the nature of an event, its success is strongly dependent on the event marketer's implementation of the 5Ps of event marketing, which are event packaging, placement, pricing, positioning and promotion (Hoyle, 2002).

### **Event Package**

The event package in this particular instance refers to the actual event on offer including the different elements that are integrated into it which will shape the audience's experience. It could, for instance be a corporate product launch or an arts festival. Xu, Wong and Tan (2016) explain that several experienced marketers attract participation because of their ability to sell the celebratory essence of the event. For instance, "The 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Challenge" asserts the success and esteem of the organisation, while emphasising the pride that comes with being a part of it.

Milohnic, Lesic and Slamar (2016) assessed existing empirical studies and identified leisure, socialisation and the development of new relationships as the most common factors that motivate individuals to attend events. It is thus in the best interests of event marketers to provide adequate



entertainment and develop structures that facilitate and foster the socialisation process for the duration of the event, in order to enable attendees to satisfy their needs.

Tavormina and Won (2016) evaluated the elements that induce individuals to attend events and concluded that participants seek to reunite with their families, gain stimulation, acquire more knowledge and insight and escape from personal pressures. However, Gunlu and Lale (2015) propose a different argument, stating that the motives that event attendees seek to satisfy vary widely according to demographics. Backman et al. (1995) concur with this view, citing that demographic differences were established by empirically evaluating the US Pleasure Travel Market data. This study suggested that excitement is not likely to be the motive that senior and married event attendees aim to fulfill when they partake in events. It was also concluded that lower income groups chiefly attend events in order to socialize.

Mohr, Backman, Gahan and Backman (1993) investigated a hot air balloon festival and observed an identical cluster of motivation subscales, with, however, a different order. It was established that motivations were a function of visitor types. Major differences were identified between repeat and first time visitors. Specifically, repeat visitors to the air balloon festival, who barely attended other events, were largely motivated by their need for stimulation while they were minimally motivated by the novelty of the event. However, there were no significant differences that were discovered with respect to demographic variables. The consumer's perceived value of the product is an aspect that requires careful evaluation when preparing to launch a given event (Getz and Page, 2016). Marketing an event requires that a marketer emphasise how the participant will benefit from their attendance (Tanford and Montgomery, 2015).

Advances in the experience economy religiously drive forward the motion that the sophisticated, contemporary consumer demands exclusive, personalised and memorable experiences. This is particularly prevalent in the hospitality, tourism, entertainment and event sectors (Getz, 2012). Furthermore, the post-modern consumer, on top of demanding personalised experiences also desires to be heavily involved in the experience creation (Xu, Wong and Tan, 2016). This is known as customer co-creation. Event marketers need to become more experienced designers and co-creators. In many cases, the nature of events permits event marketers to design events that can permit customer co-creation (Getz, 2012).

Davidson and Rodgers (2007) argue that it is crucial for events to be highly interactive and engaging. Event participants should be rewarded with discounts and incentives in order to allow them to have pride in their attendance of the function. It is imperative that the product on offer is perceived to be of high quality by consumers in order to gain acceptance (Rogers and Davidson, 2015; Getz, 2007). For services, quality can be communicated by other tangible attributes such as smart dressing by event ushers for instance (Verma and Boyer, 2013). Elements that event marketers should focus on in the process of developing sustainable event offerings include the popularity associated with the name of the event and the socialisation, customer involvement and merchandising (Campos, Mendes, Valle and Scott 2015; Van Zyl, 2015).

It is concluded that the strategic packaging of events positively influences the dependent variable, Destination Attractiveness. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between event packaging and destination attractiveness.

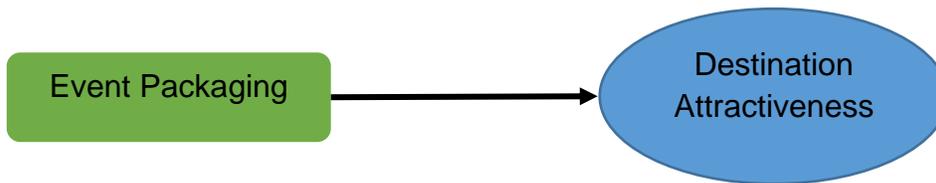


Figure 1: Influence of Event Packaging on Destination Attractiveness

### Event Pricing

Hoyle (2002) argues that it is imperative for event marketers to understand the corporate financial philosophy adopted for a particular event. This is instrumental in informing their pricing decisions. Some events are developed for profit-generating motives while others are strategically created to break even financially. The sale of tickets should be considered as a primary contributor to an event's revenue streams. However, event marketers should also consider other indirect income such as those earned from concessions and the sale of products as well as unearned income derived from donations, sponsorships and grants (Riley, 2002).

Event marketers should also consider the financial demographics of the target audience. It is crucial to determine the ability of the market to pay for the service or event (Hoyle 2002). Moreover, it is important to note that the cost that patrons incur when attending a performance exceeds the actual cost of purchasing the tickets (Riley, 2002). For instance, expenses such as those for parking and eating out are met during the process of experiencing the performance and form part of the attendee's calculation of the value of the utility derived from participating in the event. Progressive and enterprising event marketers could thus create packages that bundle these sundries, making the event consumption more convenient to purchase for consumers.

Event Pricing has been identified and proposed to have a positive relationship with the dependent variable, Destination Attractiveness as depicted in Figure 2.

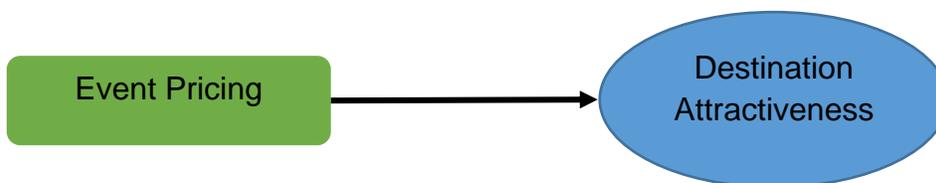


Figure 2: Relationship between Event Pricing and Destination Attractiveness

### Event Placement

Event Placement in the case of this study refers to the location where the event occurs. The location of the event can determine not only the attendance but also dictates the personality and character of the event (Hoyle, 2002). The event site itself may be strategically employed to be the most attractive feature that attracts and influences consumers to attend the event. Gelder and Robinson (2013) discovered curiosity as a motivating factor to partaking in event activities. However, curiosity was more pronounced amongst first time visitors who would not have experienced the event before compared to repeat visitors, suggesting that curiosity of repeat visitors can be induced by creatively alternating an event's overall setting and structure. This will prove instrumental in maintaining and retaining repeat visitors' interest.

Van Zyl (2005) summarises four primary attributes that are of importance in developing an optimal placement for an event offering. These include the setting and location where the event will take place; the ambience or atmosphere that characterises the venue; the features of interest to the target audience within the selected destination and the availability of support services such as tourist information desks. The time that the event takes place is also of importance (Ström & Pöysti, 2015).

Hoyle (2002) states that the decision to select a location to conduct an event should not only be based on the appearance of the facility but should also consider the audience and its profile. Hoyle (2002) also mentions other important place related considerations that must be assessed in event marketing, namely:

- Availability of parking for commuting participants;
- Proximity to prospective participants and the ease of travel;
- Surrounding attraction and the infrastructure available for complementary activities;
- Extent to which the location suits the nature of the event;
- Security and safety of participants; and
- Accessibility to transport and infrastructure, e.g. airport.

Event Placement has been identified to positively influence the independent variable, Destination Attractiveness. Figure 3 displays the proposed relationship between the two variables.

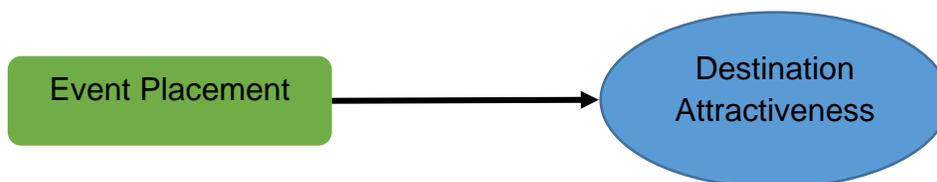


Figure 3: Relationship between Event Placement and Destination Attractiveness

### Event Promotion

Event Promotion, in this context refers to the activities involved with increasing the presence and visibility of the event. It also entails communicating positive messages about the event in order to capture the interest of the audience (Hoyle, 2002). The proliferation of social media has played a significant role in driving the current success that events enjoy. The strength of social media particularly lies in its ability to command a global reach of audience almost instantaneously (Berthon, Pitt, Plangger and Shapiro, 2012). Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can be effectively employed as event promotion vehicles. Street posters and billboards are one of the most preferred outlets for communicating messages. However, their wide use tends to impair their effectiveness as they have to compete for the attention of readers at the same time.

It is important for event marketers to establish and maintain long-term relationships with media houses in order to gain access to the masses under their coverage. Newspapers and city authorities can be leveraged in order to improve the credibility of event-related communication. Moreover, the message must suit the audience that it is intended for as well as the strategy of the event (Hoyle, 2002). Several factors such as demographics should be determined in order to establish the suitability of the message being communicated towards the target audience.

Event Promotion has been identified to positively influence the attractiveness of a destination. Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between Event Promotion and Destination Attractiveness.

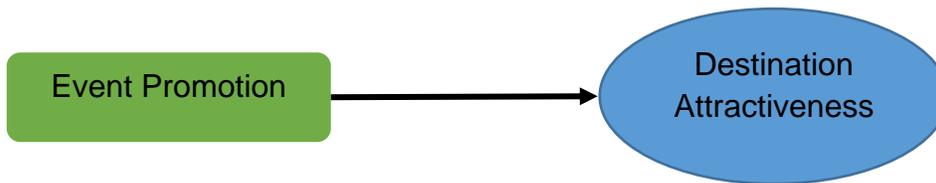


Figure 4: Relationship between Event Promotion and Destination Attractiveness

### Event Positioning

In destination marketing, positioning refers to the process of creating and sustaining a unique place for a destination that potential visitors and travellers perceive to be superior and suitable to consume relative to competing offerings (Baker and Cameron, 2008; Ibrahim and Gill, 2005; Hankinson, 2005; Walker, 2004).

Factors that motivate people to participate in events vary depending on the event category in question (Van Zyl, 2005). Schofield and Thompson (2007) propose that potential patrons' motivation to attend events has significant implications for the positioning and marketing of different events. Their perspective on positioning is that effective positioning involves developing strong customer perceptions, explaining the benefits of consumption and distinguishing the brand from competitive services.

The essence of positioning is to develop a unique place in the minds of the end-consumers. However, event marketers should emphasise the specific positive elements that differentiate this category from the other categories (Van Zyl, 2005). For instance, in developing an arts event product, the event marketer should focus on those art event attributes that distinguish it from another event and portray it as the event that will meet the consumer's needs (Chacko, 1997).

Events can be successfully positioned through tailoring them and incorporating elements that enhance their ability to blend in with the current environmental context (Dimanche, 2002). Events can also be adapted to fit the context of a specific target market, as well as to suit the contemporary trends, fashions and needs. An event can, for instance be easily modified to comply and align with the sustainability phenomenon, which is currently one of the most discussed global concerns today. In this regard, it becomes effortless for consumers to identify, relate and engage with the concept.

In the process of developing a product position, it is crucial to distinguish the offering in terms of the attributes that are of significant value to the consumer. It is of no benefit to focus on product elements that have no meaning and value to the end-consumer (Hernandez, Wright and Ferminiano Rodrigues, 2015). Destination Attractiveness is thus influenced by Event Positioning. Figure 5 displays the proposed relationship between these two variables.

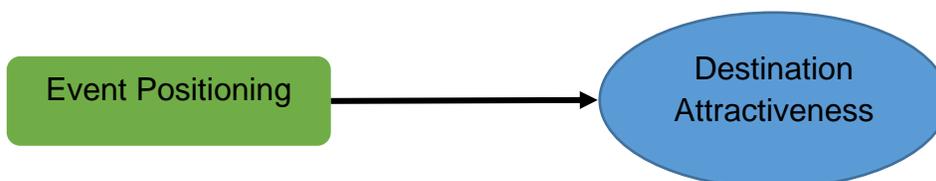


Figure 5: Relationship between Event Positioning and Destination Attractiveness

## Conceptual Framework

Following the analysis of the literature, a conceptual framework that outlines the position from which this study will be approached was developed as depicted in Figure 6. It is comprised of five independent variables namely *Event Packaging*, *Event Pricing*, *Event Placement*, *Event Promotion* and *Event Positioning* that are expected to improve the *Destination Attractiveness* of NMB.

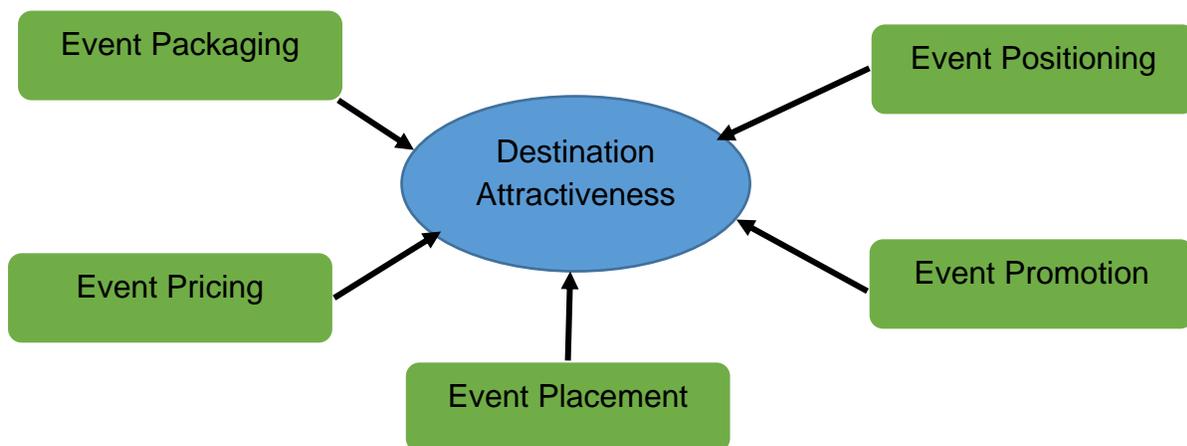


Figure 6: Conceptual event marketing framework

## Methodology

This exploratory study was approached from a positivistic perspective. It sought to measure the cause and effect relationships that exist between the dependent and independent variables effectively in order to ascertain the degree to which the independent variables influenced the dependent variable. The study made use of a survey, using a questionnaire to evaluate the developed conceptual event marketing framework. The questionnaire was constructed using a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Information derived from the literature study was used to develop the questionnaire. A panel of experts was consulted to measure the face validity of the questionnaire. The survey was conducted with residents from the different areas of NMB. The online questionnaire was distributed through the Nelson Mandela University survey platform. In addition, field researchers were trained and tasked to physically distribute hard copy questionnaires, given the fact that not all participants had access to Internet facilities. The use of field researchers also retained the anonymity of respondents. The hard copy questionnaires were subsequently returned to the researchers upon completion. The data were captured and cleaned in order to discard errors and inconsistencies. Statistical analysis was performed using the Statistica statistical package in collaboration with the NMU Statistical Unit, in order to extract information and obtain the relevant statistical results.

## Results

The primary data were assessed through the application of univariate and multivariate analysis respectively. Univariate analysis involved conducting descriptive statistics to analyse individual variables without investigating how they relate to other variables. Conversely, multivariate

analysis was used to investigate the relationships between variables. The multivariate analysis conducted in the study provided cross tabulations, which were used to explore the relationships that existed between pairs of variables. In order to determine relationships and trends, inferential statistical techniques were used to evaluate the relationships between the dependent and independent variables in the proposed framework.

### Demographics of the respondent profile

A total of  $n = 3\,359$  respondents participated in the study and from these, 52% ( $n = 1\,917$ ) of the respondents identified themselves as male while 48% ( $n = 1\,742$ ) were female. Generally, survey participants ranged from the age of 18 to 50 years, given that this range comprised of an aggregate 84% ( $n = 3\,078$ ) of the respondents. Xhosa, English and Afrikaans were the most spoken home languages, constituting a collective 80% ( $n = 3\,359$ ) of the respondents (Figure 7). The most common ethnic groups (Figure 8) were Black (61%,  $n = 2\,237$ ) and White (25%,  $n = 935$ ) while the least common ethnic group was Asian (1%,  $n = 32$ ).

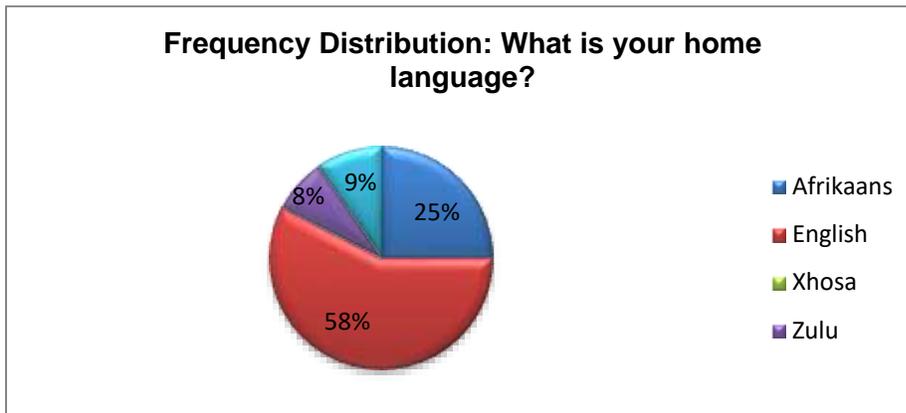


Figure 7: Frequency distribution of respondents' home languages

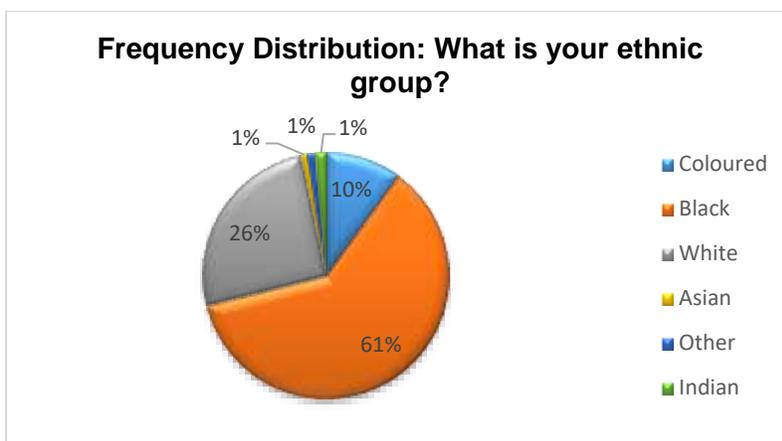


Figure 8: Frequency distribution of respondents' ethnic groups

### 4.2 General Event Trends in Nelson Mandela Bay

This section summarises the outcome of the analysis performed on the collected data, primarily focusing on the variables that provide the most relevant and actionable insights about the patterns

and trends of event marketing. Most of the results were extracted by pairing variables together in order to gain a more intimate understanding of the event consumer characteristics and patterns of the NMB residents.

### Media

Facebook was the most used online platform in NMB. The majority of the respondents (67%, n = 2 452) had an active Facebook account, compared to any other online social networking platform, followed by 29%, (n = 1 061) respondents being Twitter users. It was noted that the marketing of events on Facebook could be more effective for female users compared to male users. Responses to the statement “*I attend events I read about on Facebook*” showed that females ( $\mu = 3.07$ , n = 1 742) were more likely to attend an event they read about on Facebook, compared to male respondents ( $\mu = 2.75$ , n = 1 912).



Figure 9: Frequency Distribution of respondents' status of Facebook accounts.

The Herald newspaper was identified as NMB's most widely read newspaper (39%, n = 2 121), followed by The Weekend Post (14%, n = 757) and PE Express (12%, n = 662). The least read newspaper was Die Burger. However, tastes in newspaper readership varied across age groups. All age groups preferred to read The Herald above any other newspaper. The second and third newspapers of choice alternated between the PE Express and the Weekend Post across the age groups as shown in Table 1.

It was further noted that an affinity to read newspapers generally increased with age. The results indicated that 34% (n = 184) of the respondents in the 18 – 21 years age group stated that they did not read any newspaper at all. The percentage of non-newspaper readers reduced to 19% (n = 164) in the 22 – 25 years age group and further reduced to 15% (n = 158) in the 26 - 30 years age group, 10% (n = 112) in the 31 – 40 years age group and 9% (n = 80) in the 41 – 50 years old age groups respectively. This is possibly because the younger age groups are exposed to a wide range of options from which to obtain information such as social media platforms, while most respondents within the older age groups still rely on newspapers. Given this information, it becomes important for event marketers to select a newspaper that matches the age groups that they are targeting in order to access them and promote their events on that platform.

Which newspapers do you read? (n = 3659)									
Age	Herald	Die Burger	Son	Weekend Post	Algoa Sun	PE Express	None	Other	Total
<18	40%	0%	6%	4%	2%	13%	23%	12%	100%
18 - 21	28%	0%	4%	8%	1%	9%	34%	17%	100%
22 - 25	39%	0%	5%	10%	2%	9%	19%	15%	100%
26 - 30	41%	0%	8%	11%	1%	10%	15%	13%	100%



<b>31 - 40</b>	41%	0%	6%	13%	3%	13%	10%	13%	<b>100%</b>
<b>41 - 50</b>	40%	0%	3%	18%	5%	15%	9%	11%	<b>100%</b>
<b>51 - 60</b>	40%	0%	2%	21%	5%	14%	6%	13%	<b>100%</b>
<b>61 - 65</b>	38%	0%	3%	24%	5%	14%	4%	11%	<b>100%</b>
<b>66+</b>	39%	0%	2%	22%	6%	17%	7%	8%	<b>100%</b>

Table 1: Cross tabulation of “age” and “Which newspaper do you read?”

### Event Preference

Table 2 summarises the event preference proportions of ethnic groups collected in the study. Music is the most common event of choice within the Asian demographic given that 66% (n = 21) of Asians specified that they would attend events of this nature. Business events (59%, n = 19) are the second events of choice. In spite of the general popularity of sporting events amongst most ethnic groups, they were the second least popular events in this ethnic group after performance arts, with only 28% (n = 9) stating that they would attend this event category.

Music events were also the most common selection within the Black ethnic group (66%, n = 1 480), followed by sporting events (61%, n = 1 362) and then cultural events (47%, n = 967). The least common event category was religious events (24%, n = 528). The Coloured ethnic group preferred music events to any other event category (69%, n = 365). The Coloured ethnic group’s second event of choice was sporting events (62%, (n = 365). Performance arts and business events tied as the third most preferred event categories (44%, n = 365).

The Indian ethnic group mostly favoured music events (73%, n = 224), followed by business events (60%, n = 224). There was a tie between performance arts and sporting events (58%, n = 244). It is also important to note that this ethnic group’s event preference is the most evened out across all event categories, given that it has the lowest standard deviation of 0.07. Although there were preferred events, they were not distinct as was the case with other ethnic groups. As such, Indians appear to be generally attracted to all event categories.

Music was the most popular event of choice within the white demographic, as supported by the fact that 75% (n = 935) the white respondents stating that they would attend music events. Sporting and Business events followed with 63% (n = 935) and 57% (n = 935) of the respondents in this ethnic group specifying that they would attend them.

Event Preference	Ethnic Groups (n = 3 659)				
	Asia	Black	Coloured	Indian	White
<b>Business</b>	59%	37%	44%	60%	57%
<b>Cultural</b>	47%	43%	43%	56%	38%
<b>Educational</b>	47%	34%	42%	53%	32%
<b>Music</b>	66%	66%	69%	73%	75%
<b>Performance Arts</b>	22%	26%	44%	58%	56%
<b>Religious</b>	34%	24%	33%	49%	24%
<b>Sport</b>	28%	61%	62%	58%	63%

Table 2: Cross tabulation of “What ethnic group do you belong to?” and “I would attend the following events?”



### Regularity of Event Attendance by Marital Status

Table 3 illustrates the feedback of respondents within the different marital status categories with respect to whether they attend events regularly. All marital status categories mostly responded negatively to the statement, hence implying that they are not frequent attendees of events. It was identified that the “Widowed” respondents attended events most regularly, more than any other marital status category, given the aggregate 34% (n = 23) who positively responded to the statement. This was followed by the Divorced marital status category which had an aggregate 30% (n = 68) who stated that they attended events regularly. The Single (25%, n = 931), Living together (25%, n = 278) and Married (23%, n = 560) categories followed thereafter.

I attend Events Regularly	Marital Status (n = 3659)				
	Single	Living Together	Married	Divorced	Widowed
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	15%	15%	11%	18%	21%
<b>Agree</b>	10%	10%	12%	12%	13%
<b>Neutral</b>	20%	20%	32%	26%	29%
<b>Disagree</b>	17%	20%	25%	19%	13%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	37%	35%	20%	25%	24%

Table 3: Cross tabulation of “Marital Status” and “I attend events regularly”

### The Impact of Pricing on Event Attendance

The study investigated the influence that an event’s entrance fee has on each of the ethnic groups (Table 4). Most respondents within all ethnic groups strongly agree that entry fees to events affect their decision to attend events. As such, it was concluded that all ethnic groups are generally price sensitive toward event offerings. However, following a deeper inquiry, it was discovered that Coloureds are the most price sensitive ethnic group, given the fact that they had the highest percentage (69%, n = 527) of respondents who strongly agreed that entrance fees affected their decision to attend events. The Black ethnic group followed second with 66% (n = 1478). The White (65%, n = 612) and Indian (65%, n = 36) ethnic groups had similar proportions of respondents who were price sensitive towards event offerings. The least price sensitive group was the Asian demographic, who had an aggregate of 59% (n = 19) of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed that entrance fees affected their decision to attend events.

The effect of entrance fees on event attendance was also measured across gender categories. On a scale of 1-5, the average impact that entrance fees had on event attendance for the female category was  $\mu = 3.83$  while the male category measured at  $\mu = 3.79$ . Although there was a marginal difference, it was concluded that generally, entrance fees have more weight in affecting the decision to attend events for the female audience in NMB, while the male attendees appear to be less price sensitive towards events. Event organisers should thus consider this constraint particularly when targeting a female audience because the decision to attend is more affected by the entrance fees that is charged for the event.



Entrance fees affect my decision	Asian (n = 32)	Black (n = 2237)	Coloured (n = 365)	Indian (n = 55)	White (n = 935)
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	25%	16%	10%	5%	8%
<b>Disagree</b>	3%	5%	7%	2%	8%
<b>Neutral</b>	13%	13%	14%	27%	18%
<b>Agree</b>	25%	12%	25%	20%	31%
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	34%	54%	44%	45%	34%

Table 4: Cross Tabulation of “Ethnic Group” and “Entrance fees influence my decision to attend events”

### Empirical evaluation of the proposed event marketing framework

This section discusses the empirical evaluation of the proposed event marketing framework, in order to accept or reject the hypotheses that were compiled. Prior to this evaluation, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of each construct was calculated in order to ascertain the reliability of the constructs (Table 5).

Construct	Cronbach Alpha
Event Packaging	0.724
Event Placement	0.723
Event Promotion	0.751
Event Pricing	0.346
Event Positioning	0.714
Destination Attractiveness	0.632

Table 5: Calculated Cronbach alpha for each Construct

Given that the *Event Pricing* construct’s Cronbach Alpha was below the acceptable value of 0.7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994), it was deemed unreliable and accordingly removed from the framework. No further tests were performed on this construct. The internal reliability of all other measuring instruments was deemed sufficient. Their values were higher than the minimally acceptable value of 0.6 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The framework was thus presented as shown in Figure 10.

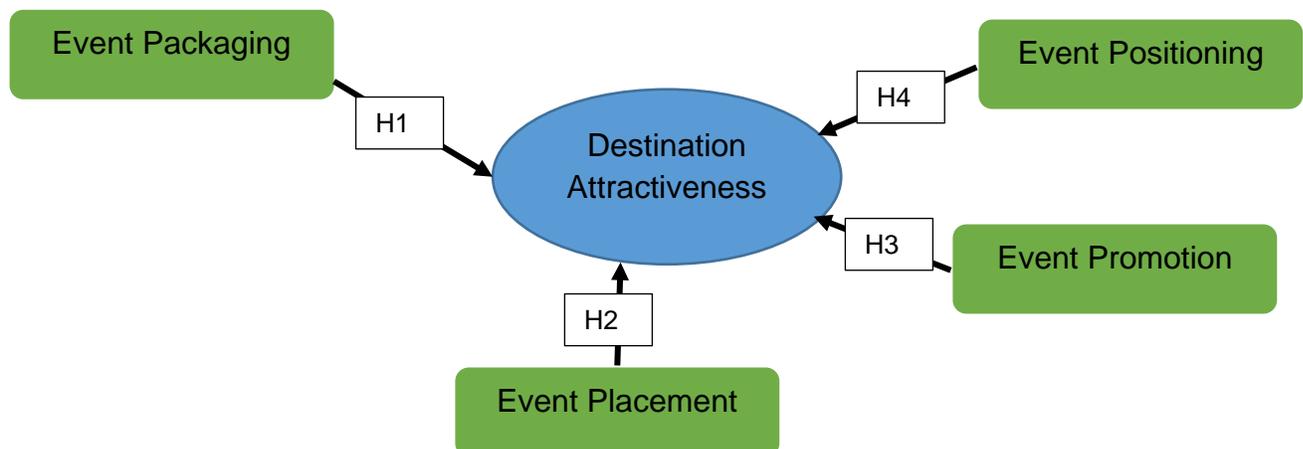


Figure 10: Proposed Event Marketing Framework

The conceptual framework was used to deduce the relationships between the dependent variable, *Destination Attractiveness* and the independent variables, *Event Packaging*, *Event Placement*, *Event Promotion* and *Event Positioning*. Hypotheses formulation were conducted in order to accomplish this. Tables 6 displays the hypotheses, the relevant chi- squared test statistics ( $X^2$ ), the degrees of freedom (df), the p. values and the decisions to reject or accept the hypotheses. The following tests were done at a 0.01 level of significance.

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Description	Chi Square	df	p. value	Hypothesis Rejected or Accepted
H <sub>1</sub>	There is a positive relationship between Event Packaging and Destination Attractiveness.	389.788	12	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>2</sub>	There is a positive relationship between Event Placement and Destination Attractiveness.	577.381	12	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>3</sub>	There is a positive relationship between Event Promotion and Destination Attractiveness.	69.274	12	0.000	Accepted
H <sub>4</sub>	There is a positive relationship between Event Positioning and Destination Attractiveness.	541.577	12	0.000	Accepted

Table 6: Chi square test for independence between the Dependent variable and each Independent variable

Table 6 displays the results of chi-squared tests for independence conducted in order to establish whether associations exist between *Destination Attractiveness* and the independent variables, *Event Packaging*, *Event Placement*, *Event Promotion* and *Event Positioning*. All tests were carried out at a 99% level of significance. Given that computed p values in each test were less than 0.01, the respective null hypotheses were rejected at a 99% level of significance and it was hence concluded that a relationship exists between *Destination Attractiveness* and each of the independent variables, namely *Event Packaging*, *Event Placement*, *Event Promotion* and *Event Positioning*. Figure 11 displays the hypothesised event-marketing framework for NMB.

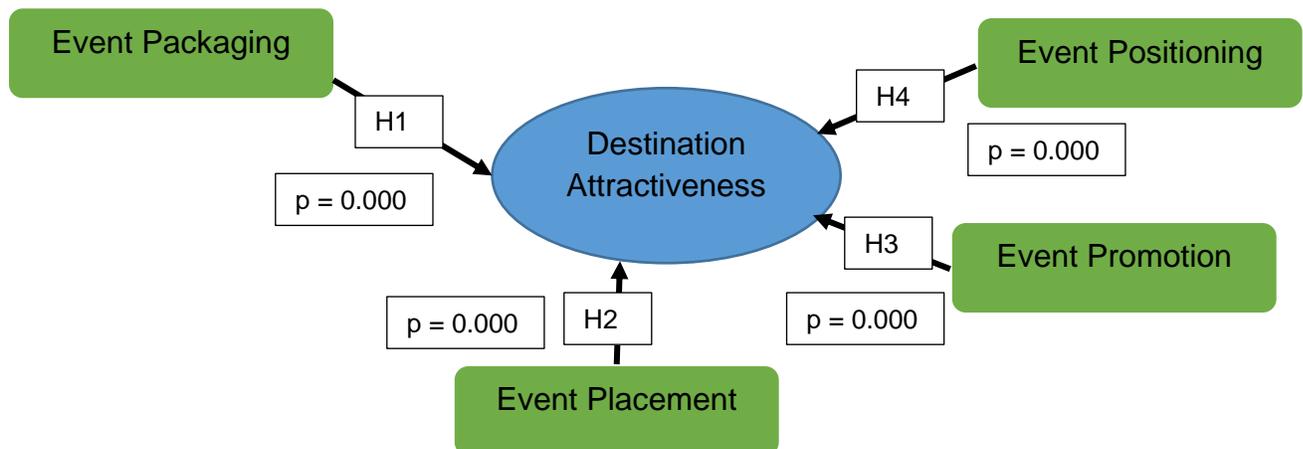


Figure 11: Hypothesised framework for Event Marketing for Nelson Mandela Bay



## Conclusions

The proposed relationships as suggested by the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 5 have been successfully validated. It can thus be concluded that a relationship exists between the dependent variable, *Destination Attractiveness* and the independent variables, *Event Packaging*, *Event Placement*, *Event Promotion* and *Event Positioning*. This framework identified the following factors as having an influence on the event-marketing endeavour:

- *Event Packaging* (adequacy of cultural shows, adequacy of live shows, adequacy of performing arts, adequacy of leisure activities, availability of business resources and a wide range of sporting activities);
- *Event Placement* (sufficiency of infrastructure for hosting cultural events, sufficiency of infrastructure for hosting business events, sufficiency of infrastructure for hosting sporting events and the location of the event);
- *Event Promotion* (The use of the Facebook social network to promote events, the use of Twitter for promoting events, recording and posting events via the YouTube platform, the use of billboard messages as a communication medium, the involvement of the metropole authorities in nurturing and promoting events via traditional media and social media platforms); and
- *Event Positioning* (The creation of a unique and strong sporting events portfolio, carefully locating the events, the creation of job opportunities, the use of food and other facilities, the introduction of an international convention centre).

The findings obtained from the analysis indicated diversity with respect to event preferences amongst the residents of NMB. Expanding the event offering will allow events to reach a broader audience and consequently trigger and accelerate the event-marketing endeavour in its entirety.

It is recommended that event marketers commit resources and efforts to comprehend the motives of their target audience. Motive has been described as an internally driving factor that stimulates, propels and integrates an individual's behaviour (Griskevicius and Kenrick, 2013). Given that different event attendees have different motives, understanding the needs of a target audience is a prerequisite for the packaging and integration of the appropriate components in to an event product. It is however important to note that motives, particularly those of the contemporary consumer are constantly changing (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005), and as such, the quest for event attendees motives is not once off, but is a continually progressive effort that event marketers must consistently commit to as part of their work.

The empirical study affirmed that a wide range of communication platforms could be used to reach NMB residents for event promotion purposes. As such, event marketers should employ communication channels that are relevant to the audience that they are targeting. For example, it was established that newspapers are the most viable communication platform for accessing older age groups in NMB, while it was less effective for the younger age groups. Facebook was also identified to be more effective for advertising events to female event attendees.

The successful construction of a strong and solid event-marketing endeavour is expected to reinforce and advance the success of events in the metropole. Consequently, through the growth and pervasion of events, the attractiveness of NMB as a viable destination is expected increase. The limitations of the study included the fact that the distribution of the online questionnaire via electronic platforms such emails limits the degree of control that the researcher has over the



response rate. Moreover, the number of questions posed in the questionnaire had to be kept to a minimum in order to retain the respondent's attention and interest in participating in the survey.

A future research endeavour that supports and confirms this exploratory research can be pursued utilising exploratory factor analysis. An elaborate and in depth study could be performed to establish why some residents are not proud to live in NMB and why they do not identify with it. An in-depth research study could be performed in order to evaluate the viability and feasibility of developing an International Convention Centre in NMB, given the widespread enthusiasm for this establishment amongst the NMB residents. Future research can be conducted by applying the proposed event-marketing framework in other cities.

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