Marshall Events Web site: 
A Look into the Events World

An Honors Thesis (Honors 499)

by

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Abstract

The "trip into the event world" is divided into two main sections. The project begins with a look into the events management industry through secondary research and is followed by the Marshall Events Web site. Topics of discussion include the profession, characteristics of event managers, and education and growth in the industry. These topics examine the profession as a whole, which includes how large it is, what an event manager does, and closely related fields. Then it switches to how to succeed in the event management field through characteristics needed and continued education opportunities through conferences, organizations, and certification.

The second part of the project includes information on starting an event management business. Marshall Events is a fictitious event management company. Topics discuss include the name of the company, services offered, and the target audience of the Web site. All of this was used to create the Marshall Events Web site, which is the final creative piece made from Dreamweaver software.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks are due to Pam Farmen, my thesis advisor, for her role throughout this creative and design process. She assisted me in learning the Dreamweaver software, and helped in producing the finished designed Web site. I would also like to thank my husband, Jordan Marshall, for his help in the finishing touches and publishing of the Web site.
A gala fundraiser, employee dinner, basketball game, and wedding are all events that require extensive planning. In past years, different men and women within the organization or company handled these events, but what they lacked was experience and knowledge of how an event is executed and evaluated.

**Event Management Profession:**

The event planning field has been around for decades, but it is now coming to the recognition as a profession. In order to qualify as a profession, it must meet the following three characteristics:

1. The profession must have a unique body of knowledge.
2. The profession typically has voluntary standards that often result in certification.
3. The profession has an accepted code of conduct or ethics (Middleton, Trager, and Chamberlin, 73).

The event management field meets all of these qualifications. The profession of event management is more complex and intricate than ordinary planning of an event. The profession is defined as “requiring public assembly for the purpose of celebration, education, marketing, and reunion” (Goldblatt, 7). An event manager is responsible for researching, designing, planning, coordinating, and evaluating events (Goldblatt, 3-4).

Throughout each of these phases in the event process, an event manager has three resources to manage: time, money, and people. These elements need to work in harmony to produce a well-organized event that achieves its objectives and meets the client’s expectations (Malouf, 3).

Less than 50 years ago, the modern profession of public relations and advertising became an accepted tool in American commerce. These two professions are the ancestors to the event industry. Today, the event or celebrations industry includes tens of thousands of hardworking professionals (Goldblatt, 7).

According to the 2002 survey conducted by Event Solutions magazine, there are an estimated 10,000 planners and producers in the event industry. Some closely related fields include caterers (20,000), event rental (20,000), entertainment (20,000), technical support (20,000), and event sites (60,000). These numbers explain how the estimated total industry
size is $389 billion, with $19 billion from planners/producers ("How Big is the Event Industry," 10).

Some key facts about event planners/producers include:

- Average number of years the companies have been in business is 12.6
- Average number of employees is 18
- 76.9% have their own Web site
- 22.3% have Web sites in which customer can order directly
- 17.8% operate international, 29.6% national, 28.6% regional, and 23.9% local.
- 65% female and 35% male
- Age: 20-33 (6.6%), 31-40 (36.3%), 41-50 (36.8%), 51-60 (18.8%), over 60 (6.1%)
- Total gross income 0-$250,000 (33.1%)
- Average lead time (in weeks) for event preparation 15.4
- Education 54.2% bachelor's, 15.4% master's, and 1.8% Ph.D.

("Planner/Producer," 26-32)

Other subfields within the event industry include civic events, expositions, fairs and festivals, hallmark events, hospitality, meetings and conferences, retail events, social life-cycle events, sport events, and tourism (Goldblatt, 9-14).

Characteristics of Event Managers:

To determine if a person is suited for a career in the event planning business, the Professional Career Development Institute provides a checklist from the School of Bridal Consulting:

- Are you a reliable and well-organized person?
- Do you get along well with all kinds of people?
- Would you enjoy making important decisions?
- Can you see projects through to completion?
- Do you have a positive, upbeat personality?

If yes is the answer to three of the five previous questions, a career in event planning might be ideal ("Train for an exciting career in bridal consulting," pamphlet).

Other characteristics needed to be a successful event leader include integrity, confidence and persistence, collaboration, problem solving, communication skills, vision, and
flexibility (Goldblatt, 148-153). In order to be successful in the industry a person must also have vision, energy, and commitment in a position of responsibility and authority.

An event manager plays a myriad of roles including project director, personnel supervisor, art director, executive, accountant, facilities expert, public relations director, and more (Devney, 3). A study conducted by the International Special Event Society (ISES) showed that only 50 percent of event managers' work time was invested in the management of events (Goldblatt, xviii). For this reason, in order to succeed as an event manager a person needs to have basic knowledge in a number of areas, and then be able to find an expert in a particular field when they are unclear about certain skills.

Education and Growth in the Industry:

After a person decides to become an event planner, numerous resources are available to aid them in joining or starting a business. These include people, organizations, schools, books, and more (Devney, 4). To ensure future success and career advancement, an event manager must embrace these resources and view the technological advances in the industry as an opportunity not a challenge.

Over 140 institutions of higher education offer educational opportunities related to event management, according to a study conducted in 1999 by the Council for Hospitality, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (CHRIE) (Goldblatt, 18). Through these programs, the fastest growing delivery is through distance learning programs. The George Washington University has over 4,000 annual registrants through the certificate program in the event field. They also offer distance learning master’s degrees to students in 24 countries around the world (www.gwu.edu).

Becoming certified is not a necessity in the event planning business, but it is highly recommended. Most corporations or individual clients want a certified professional to handle their memorable events. One of the most highly regarded certifications in the industry is the Certified Special Event Planner (CSEP) that was started in 1988 by ISES. In order to obtain the certification a person must accumulate points through experience and service, begin a study program or group, and take an exam consisting of an essay, objective questions, and portfolio review. (www.ises.com). Another certification from Meeting Planners International (MPI) is the Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) honor (www.mpiweb.org).
The event industry has hundreds of related professional organizations to aid in furthering education. The largest two in numbers related to the planning and producing aspects have already been mentioned: MPI and ISES. Other organizations include: Association of Bridal Consultants (ABC), Association of Destination Management Executives (ADME), International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), and more. These organizations offer monthly meetings that feature speakers on event topics. They also hold annual conferences such as the Conference for Professional Development (CPD) held by ISES.

Another way to stay educated on current trends within the industry is to subscribe to industry trade publications and books. These publications include Special Events Magazine, Event Solutions, The Meeting Professional, and more. These magazines also sponsor two of the largest conferences in the events industry The Special Event and the Event Solutions Expo, which are regarded as two of the most instrumental educational experiences.

**Marshall Events**

An “entrepreneur” is described as “a person who organizes and manages a business undertaking, assuming the risk for the sake of the profit” (Webster’s New World Dictionary). When starting a business, a person needs a vision statement, goals, and objectives (Pat Price presentation).

The vision statement involves getting input from all stakeholders to determine a plan of action that will transforms abstract concepts or business ideas into clear and attainable outcomes.

The goals should include levels of gross sales, net income, share of market, rate of growth, and the timetable for expansion of the product line. Personal goals should be balanced and integrated into the professional goals. These include level of annual personal income, recovery of capital, and time spent with family (Goldblatt & Supovitz, 18-19). Finally, the objectives are how these goals will be placed into workable terms for the business.

The business process is much more in-depth than covered in these few paragraphs, but that is a general overview. Intertwined into these would be to outline strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis), and do a situation analysis of the industry, competitors, and the target market.
The fictitious company Marshall Events would need to follow all of these steps and legal assistance before becoming a company. However, for this project I outlined only briefly the name of the business, services provided, and development of the target audience. These all pertained to the Web site itself.

**Business Name:**

The name process was hard to come by. I wanted a name that would display what the company does because I felt it was important to increase brand awareness of a new company. Second, I wanted it to be short so it was easy to remember. The Marshall Events name chosen reflects the owner of the company and the basic service they provide: event management.

**Company Background and Services:**

Marshall Events is a company I would some day like to open, so I picked services that I wanted to include in my overall business in the future. Marshall Events was established in 2002 to provide corporate and social services to an expanding marketing, meeting, and event management industry. The professionals at Marshall Events provide experience, attention to detail, creativity, and dedication to every event.

The professionals at Marshall Events can organize a company’s grand openings, employee dinners or picnics, press conferences, meetings, conventions, conferences, fundraisers, fashion shows, golf tournaments, concerts, festivals, or more. In addition, the professionals can organize individuals’ weddings, showers, reunions, birthday parties, CD launches, bar or bat mitzvahs, parties, or more.

Marshall Events customizes its services to provide the company or individual exactly what they need or desire. They can organize the event from beginning to end, provide suggestions in the planning process, or just be on-site for the day of the event.

Some of its services include event and meeting concept design, program management, on-site coordination, entertainment services, destination management, transportation logistics, creative themed events, full event production, complete activity coordinating, publicity, and consolidating billing and budgeting proposals. These services are utilized to meet motivational, budgetary, creative, and logistical needs of the client.
Marshall Events provides event services nationwide from its corporate offices in New York. The professional staff includes 10 active members of the International Special Events Society (ISES) and Meeting Planners International (MPI). The company’s president and CEO is Emily Marshall.

**Target Audience:**

The Web page will target mainly potential individual or corporate clients. The individual clients will be looking for an event planner for a wedding, anniversary, or other social events. While the corporate clients will be holding events such as grand openings, conferences, employee celebrations, award dinners, general company parties, city festivals, and more.

The average clients will be young decision makers from 25-45 years of age, who are familiar with the Internet. They prefer to receive information and proposals in a concise and quick manner, and are often seeking a visual tool in which to view the company. They are often extremely busy individuals and are inexperienced in planning events, which is why they are seeking professional expertise. These individuals may be located through the United States and other countries, but the majority will be in the New York metropolitan area and surrounding cities.

**Finding the Web site:**

There are three main target audiences of potential clients that will view the Web site: people that have contacted the company about planning an event, people that have been referred to the company and its Web site from direct contact with other individuals, and those that are searching and trying to find information on an event planning company, which includes referrals from other Web sites.

The sale’s executive will refer the potential client that has contacted the company to the Web site. These contacts can be made over the phone, in the initial interview for potential clients, or through talks at trade shows and bridal expositions. For this target market the Web site will serve as a visual tool to view the company’s background information and portfolio of past events. The Web site will be listed on all promotional material including letterhead, business cards, and information packets. The Web site will be used to highlight and reiterate
information in the promotional packets, as it is one more tool that will allow the potential client to learn more about the company. It must appeal to the senses because pictures found on the Web site are going to be one of the main selling points of why a client will pick the company over a competitor.

The target market that has been personally referred to the company may have been done so by someone who has used the company in the past or by other event professionals such as florist, caterers, and entertainment specialist. The ability to network with other event professionals comes through membership in professional organizations such as International Special Events Society, Meeting Professionals International, International Festival and Event Association, International Meeting Professionals Association, Association of Destination Management Executives, and more.

The target market that is searching for an event planning professional will find the Web site through Internet search engines such as yahoo or google, and professional Web pages and associations such as www.ises.com (International Special Events Society), www.mpiweb.org (Meeting Professionals International), and local Convention & Visitors Bureaus. In addition, the Web site will be advertised in all magazine ads placed in event specific medium vehicles, such as Event Solutions Magazine, Special Events Magazine, Agenda, and Corporate Meetings and Incentives. The Yellow pages will be used to advertise the Web site along with the phone number, because it is still one of the most widely used resources for finding event planners. The main reason is because most individuals planning social or corporate events are very inexperienced in knowing what is available to them in the event planning industry.

*Evaluating the Web site:

Each client will be asked formally how they found out about our company, to see if the Web site is an effective marketing tool, and that way the Web site can be changed and advertised more depending on responses.
Works Cited


George Washinton University Web site. www.gwu.edu


International Special Events Society Web site. www.ises.com


Meeting Planners International Web site. www.mpiweb.org


Web site
Rough Drafts
Welcome to Marshall Events

(then switch to heading of each page)
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Marshall Events

Home  Services  Clients

Services
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Events

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Welcome to marshall Events
Web site
Site Map
Marshall Events
Web site
www.soncured.com/events
Welcome to Marshall Events. Your single source event management company. From start to finish, we create perfectly orchestrated events around your wants, needs, and Our extensive experience in event planning and management can turn your next conference, wedding, gala dinner, or product launch a success.
Marshall Events is an acknowledged leader in the special event design and planning industry. As one of the most prominent full-service production companies in the world, our event planners provide unparalleled service to corporations and social individuals around the country. At Marshall Events our business philosophy is to provide a high level of organization, attention to detail, integrity, communication, and personal care, so the only thing you have to do is sit back and enjoy your event. The difference is in the details.

Meet Emily Marshall, President/CFO
President and CEO: Emily Marshall

Emily graduated with a bachelor’s degree in advertising from Ball State University and a master’s degree in tourism administration from George Washington University. She founded Marshall Events in 2002 after planning over 200 events for non-profit and corporate clients. Emily’s commitment to education and growth can be seen through her active involvement in the International Special Events Society, Meeting Planners International, and Public Relations Society of America. She has received 5 Gala Awards for her event work from Special Events Magazine.
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Permits/Contract Negotiations
Event Evaluation/Risk
Management

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Nissan North America
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Sony Pictures
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