THE IMPACT OF EVENT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE ON THE STANDARDS OF PRACTICE WITHIN THE EVENT MANAGEMENT SECTOR IN CAPE TOWN

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DECLARATION

I, Anneke de Klerk, declare that the contents of this dissertation represent my own unaided work. In accordance with the agreement between Hochschule Wismar, Wismar, Germany and Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa a variation of this document will be submitted to both institutions for examination and no part of this work has been published yet. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Signed **Date**

ABSTRACT

Event management is a very competitive field; therefore, event managers must work hard to distinguish themselves from other event management companies. One way of doing this is by using event management software to provide a holistic service which allows for better efficiency in the workplace. Technology is constantly changing; therefore it is imperative to keep abreast of trends in technology in order to improve one's business and services. As an event manager, one should also consider what it takes in order to organise a successful event. The internationally accredited Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) has identified several areas that are crucial for an event manager to constantly control and manage in order to create an exceptional event, and these domain areas encompass a set of guidelines to ensure successful event projects.

However, one should determine if the software is able to assist event managers with all the necessary features and functions required to organise a successful event as per the outline from EMBOK. The research aimed to analyse the software in terms of its capabilities and compare it to the EMBOK guidelines. The aim of the study was to further identify whether the software is able to complete all the tasks outlined by EMBOK and if not, what else would be needed to fill the gaps. The research also reviewed what impact the software has on events, that is, how it assists or improves tasks conducted or how it does not assist or becomes problematic in accomplishing the various phases and tasks.

Qualitative research was selected as the appropriate method in order to gain an understanding of the events managers' point of view with regards to the software. The research required detailed descriptions and narratives of the software as well as the experiences and opinions of the user. For this reason it was determined that qualitative research would best suit the needs of the research. In order to get detailed answers a semi-structured in-depth interview guide was used and the answers transcribed in order to analyse and get results.

The software was selected based on its international usability and because of its use by South African government departments such as the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). The Cape Town-based individuals from the software's client list were contacted and selected to participate in the study. The research was conducted with five representatives with previous experience

of the software in the events industry in Cape Town. The interview guides were compiled with Likert-scale questions and open-ended questions. The questions were carefully compiled to link the functionality of the software and the criteria as identified by EMBOK. The answers were recorded and transcribed to analyse and determine the opinions of the representatives on the functionality and comprehensiveness of the software to be used for event management.

The interviews established that the move towards technology is preferable as it creates efficiency in the workplace. The software assists in alleviating the workload of event managers; however, the interviews also indicated that the software does not always fulfil the requirements for all the tasks. Several tasks required the use of combinations of software; in some instances, the manager preferred to do the task manually. It was concluded that the software does not provide the level of flexibility required in event management, which is a vital criterion, owing to the field's changing nature.

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DEDICATION

For my family, for their continued support and patience.

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GLOSSARY

Terms/Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition/ Explanation
EMBOK	Event Management Body of Knowledge
DIRC	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
SEMP	Summit Event Manager – Pro
ISES	International Special Events Society

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction and rationale for study

Event management is a diverse field which includes numerous operational elements that need to be considered and observed, in order to manage and execute event projects successfully. If certain elements are overlooked, such as catering requirements, for example, where the event organiser is not informed of allergies or staff requirements, it could result in financial loss (Oxton, 2010e). Lack of careful management could affect the company and the event manager's credibility in the industry, thus affecting any potential future business negatively. Allen *et al.* (2005:279) state that events have to be carefully managed in order for mishaps not to affect the company negatively; in support of this, Allen *et al.* (2005:279) identify areas that are imperative to manage carefully: financial management; the manner in which risks are handled or minimised; the manner in which the event is planned; as well as the design controls. Event managers need an effective tool to assist in managing all the smaller, but important details in order to have an efficient work place as well as a successful event.

Technology has become increasingly popular in event management as it encourages innovative solutions during the planning and actual management phases (Fink, 2012a:4). SuccessFactors (2014) agrees and stated that if companies look to the future, they are able to create innovative ideas in order to raise the performance level of the company. This could include obtaining extra help closer to the event or looking at new ways of managing events, such as event management software (Oxton, 2010c). Technology is constantly changing and new programmes are developed to suit the needs of the user (Bergmann, 2012). However, some software is deemed costly, therefore it should be determined whether using it can be regarded as value for money, that is, will the software purchased ensure no aspect of the event project is overlooked and that it is beneficial in managing events (Peters, 2007:125).

It is essential to determine the effectiveness of the software and what impact it could have on the event. Should the potential buyer omit reviewing the functions of the software prior to purchase, this could be detrimental if the software cannot accomplish the tasks for which it was purchased. Bartholomew (2002:29) states that not all industry members are using software that could enable them to complete all the tasks they require more effectively. For this reason, there is a need to evaluate and determine what elements are still missing in software, or what should be improved in order to make the product more desirable for all

industry members. There is a need to attract the consumers' attention, as their expectations of technology are constantly increasing (Durcan, 2012). Technology is in a constant state of change; it can evolve and adapt to any task, and thus it could influence the manner in which future events could be organised (Bergmann, 2012).

Volberda *et al.* (2011:15) state that keeping up to date with the latest technology trends could provide an event managing company with a competitive edge. Therefore it is expected of managers to exercise a higher level of detail when managing events and gain as much expertise as possible to stand out from other competitors (Bergmann, 2012). There are numerous events taking place and the event attendees will be inundated with information. Therefore, they will be looking for an event that sets itself apart from the rest and provides something different compared to the norm. The event manager is expected to find innovative ideas in order to stay ahead of the company's competitors (Volberda *et al.*, 2011:15).

EMBOK is a set of standards and guidelines pertaining to the work of event managers (Silvers, 2003). EMBOK is supported and collaboratively established by several internationally acclaimed event managers such as Joe Goldblatt, Janet Landey, Julia Rutherford Silver, and William O'Toole, to name a few (Silvers, 2007).

1.2 Research problem

There is a clear trend on the move to using technology in event management (Fink, 2012a:4); however it is still a slow trend as there is confusion on what would be the best suited technology to be used (Oxton, 2009b). Event Management Body of Knowledge (EMBOK) has been designed for the industry as a means of a checklist when organising an event (Silvers, 2003). This is used as a guideline for the industry and should also be visible in the software the manager uses. Summit Event Manager – Pro has been identifying their software as a 'total solutions provider' (Summit Software, n.d.); therefore it is important to determine if the software is fully complying with the guidelines set by EMBOK.

Therefore it is important to ensure that the software is able to perform all the functions that the internationally acclaimed industry individuals identified as being important in organising a successful and safe event. The research identified the reasons why some event managers prefer not to use the software, or preferred using it in combination with other software. It is essential to determine which functions event managers, who are familiar with the software, can identify that could possibly improve the software.

1.3 Research question

To which extent does the functions of SEMP comply with the structure and process set out by EMBOK for the event manager which contributes towards best practice?

1.3.1Research sub question

- Does the software's function satisfy each domain in EMBOK, thus completing all the tasks required?
- Does the use of the software impact on the time, cost or quality of an event?
- Does the use of event management software have an effect on the success or failure of an event?
- Does the use of event management software allow the user to work faster and more efficiently, thus providing a better event practice?
- How can the events industry benefit from implementing event management software?

1.4 The aim and objective of the research

1.4.1 Aim of the research

The aim of the research is to identify to what extent the software can perform the functions that are required by event managers and if it is able to cover all the areas in event management as identified by EMBOK. The research will also attempt to identify how the software is able to impact the management of an event. It can then be determined what the industry members' perceptions of the software are, and the possible shortfalls of SEMP resulting in reasons for other managers choosing not to use it. The research will determine whether SEMP covers each element from EMBOK that is required for a specific event or if any detail could be improved.

1.4.2 Objective of the research

- To determine to which extent the software is able to perform all the functions of organising an event as stated by EMBOK.
- To which degree does the software impact the time, cost and quality management of the event.
- To what degree does the software have an impact on the outcome of an event.
- To determine whether the software assist in improving the event practice as a whole and to what point.
- To determine the impact the software has on the events industry.

The research wants to identify whether SEMP supports the event manager's work in every aspect as identified by EMBOK or if any areas or functions are lacking in any way. This will allow the researcher to determine if the software ensures work is conducted efficiently, or if it is seen as a possible wasteful expense. By analysing the users' needs as identified by EMBOK, together with the features provided by the software, the researcher can determine what is lacking or if the software is regarded as 'value for money'.

1.5 Research methodology

The main reason for using the software was due to its preference by government departments, as per the Summit Software client list; also as SEMP states, it is able to cover every genre of events (Summit Software, n.d.). The research evaluated event software, conveniently available to the researcher, known as Summit Event Manager – Pro (SEMP). The software was selected as it is nationally recognised by events companies as well as universities and government departments such as the DIRC and the DTI (Summit Software, n.d.).

Qualitative research was conducted using SEMP software and the guidelines from EMBOK. The rationale for the chosen software is due to its convenience to the researcher and its availability at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa. Lecturers currently use it to train National Diploma Event Management students. Also, as per the Summit Software website, the software is used nationwide as well as by some government departments (Summit Software, n.d.).

Qualitative research was selected owing to its ability to create interpretations of the experiences, emotions and opinions of the participants during the interview (Myers, 2000). This is corroborated by the Education Centre, Hillingdon Hospital (2006), that the observable and interpreted information gathered could be used for future research or as a basis for future theories. Figure 1.1 illustrates the reason for the chosen method by means of a word cloud. It illustrates the aspects used for gathering information (Al-Busaidi, 2008).

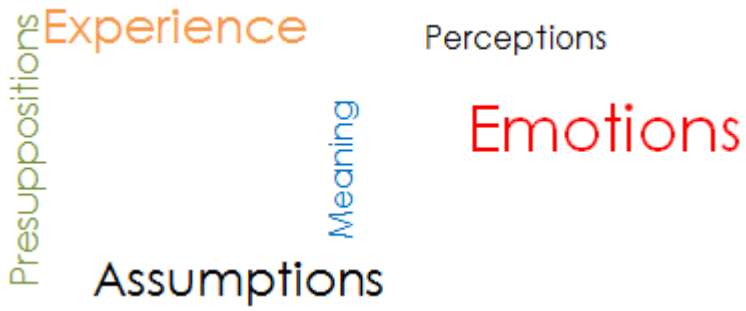

Figure 1.1: Factors influencing the decision for choosing qualitative research (Al-Busaidi, 2008)

The Education Centre, Hillingdon Hospital (2006) indicates that there is no known rule for sample size but that 6 – 8 people should be acceptable. Russell & Gregory (2003) agree that as long as they meet the criteria of the research to answer the interview guide, there is no limit to the size of the sample.

Five participants were selected to participate in the interview and their responses were recorded and transcribed. The study relied on qualitative data, and an interview guide which assisted in gathering professional opinions from those with experience of the software. The interview guide was used as supportive data to assist the researcher in analysing how the EMBOK criteria are covered by the software or if professionals are of the opinion that certain functions are further required or are still lacking.

The population sample was selected by identifying Cape Town-based event managers who have experience with the software. The client list from Summit Software was used to identify the companies situated in Cape Town that have used the software (Summit Software, n.d.). Summit Software company indicated that they are the 'total solutions provider'; this translates to that they are able to fix every problem encountered, and also that they are able to assist in every genre of event (Summit Software, n.d.). Therefore, the research selected individuals who have experience with the software as respondents. These individuals would be able to determine, from their experience, if the software were able to provide the necessary service required by event managers.

The research was sourced from the following references:

- *Primary*
  - Interview guide compiled by the researcher and completed by participants.

- *Secondary*
  - Event management journals.
  - Event management books.
  - Past research conducted on event management.
  - Past research conducted on event management software.

1.6 Research limitations and delimitations

- *Limitations*

One limitation the researcher should consider is the veracity of the respondents. The participants could respond to the questions in order to appear more professional. As the researcher is focusing the research on a representative sample of events industry professionals in Cape Town, it does limit the available sample.

- *Delimitations*

A delimitation that could occur is that the research's sample population is limited to Cape Town. The events industry is relatively large and different cities/provinces organise various types and sizes of events which might require different planning methods that would include software. Processes deemed necessary and important in Cape Town might be regarded differently in another city.

1.7 Ethical considerations

- Confidentiality of information or data collected from event management companies will be kept.
- All of the parties who agreed to part take in the interview have been briefed on the study and formal consent has been given.
- All parties who will participate in the interview have been ensured of their confidentiality in any information provided to the researcher.
- Participants are guaranteed against harm.
- No manipulation of any information provided will be imposed by the researcher.

1.8 Chapter summary

The research determined if all the management aspects and process suggested by EMBOK which is required to organise an event if performed by SEMP. It determined to which extent it is able to perform those functions and if anything is lacking. Event management is a complicated field with many aspects to it, as suggested by EMBOK. Therefore, using software could ease the workload and provide a more efficient work environment. The research aimed to identify if SEMP covers each of the aspects that EMBOK suggests is required in order to organise a successful event. The research was conducted using an interview guide to gauge respondents' opinions of SEMP. The results could assist event managers in identifying relevant software functions when deciding on which software to purchase. It will also assist in future software development, by identifying the features that should be included in the software, that is, the features event managers' desire or require.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to event management

Event management is defined as the process by which one organises, plans, manages, controls and produces an event (Silvers, 2003). Tassiopoulos (2010:53) identifies event management as a profession that still needs to achieve an official status as a vocation. Owing to the event industry's being considered a 'new profession', keeping records of all the events is done voluntarily, and this makes it difficult to gather statistics on events throughout the country (Tassiopoulos, 2010:29). In order for event management to be recognised, the Body of Knowledge needs to be accepted throughout the industry. In South Africa, the government noticed that there was a need for training of event managers and are now attempting to transfer skills across the industry (Tassiopoulos, 2010:29). Allen *et al.* (2005:53) agree, and state that in developing countries it is important to obtain government support to assist in the expansion of the events industry.

Oxton (2010e) states that one common issue between event managers is the number of processes and tasks that need to be completed to organise an event. For that reason it is imperative that event managers are organised, and have the ability to work under pressure as well as perform several tasks simultaneously (Oxton, 2011b). These traits become an advantage for managing events as they assist in the team's identifying their position in the industry, as well as fulfilling the expectations of the managers. This saves them time, as managers do not have to explain the situation repeatedly (Bowdin *et al.*, 2001:67).

2.1.1 Event management field

According to Beloviene *et al.* (n.d.:7), the event management field is seen as relatively new. As cited by Abdullah *et al.* (2010), the field entails fine organising skills, detailed plans, creativity, and the ability to problem solve as well as control. Prior to 2000, there was relatively little research done in the area (Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.:7). Allen *et al.* (2005:18) expand on the above statement and indicate that prior to 2000 most of the events were handled by a large number of volunteers. Since then the industry has experienced a tremendous growth, and individuals started using skills and expertise from their own industries to assist events (Allen *et al.* 2005:18). However, one cannot only rely on volunteers' skills, or the use of individuals' skills from their own field, as user demands are constantly changing and their needs and requirements increasing. Bowdin *et al.* (2006:27) agree that not enough research has been done in the events industry to determine what skills, attributes or knowledge areas are required in order to organise a successful event.

However Bowdin et al. (2006:27) also cites the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, which has identified skills needed by an event manager:

1. Administration.
2. Event planning and management.
3. Marketing.
4. Risk management.
5. Human resource management.
6. Professionalism.

The events industry started experiencing a sudden growth owing to the growing expectations of governments and industry and their increased demands. At this point it was determined that there was a need for skilled professionals to assist the industry in meeting their clients' requirements and to be able to do so professionally and safely. This change saw the emergence of training and education for the field (Allen et al., 2005:19). Bowdin et al. (2006:26) agree - they state that governments have increased their budgets, and, concomitantly, their demands have grown, thus making them more complex; these have all been factors that have facilitated the growth of a professional industry for events. This required individuals to gain sufficient training in the field.

However, during the early stages, knowledge areas were identified in order for individuals to understand what was needed to organise a successful event. This was used before professional training and certified education were made available to individuals, and it was a way to assist them in this complex field by giving them the skills and knowledge areas that would be required to complete their task at hand. Table 2.1 indicates the knowledge areas required to organise a successful event (as cited by Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.:8*).*

Table 2.1: Knowledge areas

Knowledge areas of Perry, Foley & Rumpf, 1996 (As cited by Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.)	**Knowledge areas of Harris & Jago, 1999 (As cited by Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.)**
Project management	History and meanings of festivals, celebrations, rituals and other events
Budgeting	Historical evolution, types of events
Time management	Trends in demand and supply
Relating to media	Motivations and benefits sought from events
Business planning	Roles and impacts of events in society, the economy, environment and culture
Human resource management	Who is producing events and why?
Marketing	Programme concepts and styles
Contingency management	Event settings
Obtaining sponsorship	Operations unique to events
Networking	Management unique to events
	Marketing unique to events

The above table indicated two points of view from researchers in the field; however they seem to vary significantly. The knowledge areas of Perry *et al.* are very short and to the point, but those of Harris *et al.* seem to be more extensive. This indicates confusion as to what knowledge areas exactly are required to organise a successful event. The aim of the recently compiled EMBOK was to identify detailed and accurate knowledge areas to serve as a framework in order to meet the needs of the user (As cited by Abdullah *et al.*, 2010).

However, Getz and Wicks (as cited by Bowdin et al., 2006:27) identify their own knowledge areas they deem important for including in the training for event management. Their list is very similar to that of Harris and Jago (as cited by Beloviene et al., n.d.). It describes the requirements of individual in more detail. It clearly identifies the knowledge areas they will require which will assist them in organising a successful event.

Table 2.2: Knowledge areas required for training

Knowledge areas required for training **Getz and Wick (1994:108-109)** **(As cited by Bowdin *et al.*, 2006:27)**
The understanding of the history of the event: whether it is a festival, a religious event, or a cultural one.
The understanding and identification of the genre of events as well as their historical evolution.
The ability to identify trends in the industry, especially in relation to the demand and supply in terms of clients' requirements and needs.
The ability to substantiate the need for the event and identify all the benefits it could bring to the community or area.
The triple bottom line: the impact of events financially, socially and environmentally.
Identifying why events are needed.
Designing and compiling the event programme and creating the event experience.
Creating the event theme and concept.
Determining the operations required for the specific event being organised.
Having the ability to successfully manage and control the specific event.
The ability to advertise and create awareness for your event.

Each researcher has attempted to determine the skills they feel are required by an event manager to assist them to organise any form or type of event. However, on closer examination, all the researchers evinced similarities, whether an understanding of the nature of the event or the ability to market the event. Finally, once all the identified skills or knowledge areas required are combined, one discerns EMBOK has adopted the same criteria in a much more detailed form for event managers to use today.

Allen *et al.* (2005:20) indicate that training can be provided by industry associations or by any tertiary educational institution. The industry association is involved with certification programmes or normal training sessions in the form of workshops, seminars or conferences. Bowdin *et al.* (2006:28) indicate that the industry association is used to assist in providing formal and professional training to increase the shortfall of trained professionals in the events industry.

Shone and Parry (2004:6) also note that in terms of organising special events, it was more difficult in the past, as not many had the required training. However, for small-scale family events, it would not always be necessary to have a specialist to assist. The events field has always played a large and complicated role in society. It brings financial benefits to the community or area, but it is very large industry and this makes is very difficult to estimate the value of the industry (Shone & Parry, 2004:20). As mentioned earlier by Allen *et al.* (2005) and Beloviene *et al.* (n.d.), not much research has been conducted in the field, which is what makes gathering statistical data very difficult. The data that is gathered is very unreliable, as it is only provided by a few sources, and even that data is not gathered on a regular basis (Shone & Parry, 2004:21).

2.1.2 Types of event genres

Events have been assigned categories or genres in order to differentiate them from one another. There are several types of events and each requires different planning methods, therefore the categorisation assists in identifying what is required for each type of event. Shone and Parry (2010) state that by using the typologies, one is able to understand the range of events and their context within the industry. They state that the typology assists us in differentiating one from the other. Allen *et al.* (2005) concur that events should be classified in groups, and they suggest that they be classified in terms of their scale or in terms of their size. However, they also contend that there is no exact classification and that their differences can be hard to identify.

Beloviene *et al.* (n.d.:7) cites Arcodia and Barker's categorisation of the events field. It was determined by Arcodia and Barker that there are only three groups (Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.:7):

- Business events (these consist of conferences and trade fairs)
- Cultural events (these comprise any cultural festivals or exhibits)
- Sporting events (from major events to even smaller sporting events)

However, Tassiopoulos (2010:10) disagrees with the above categorisation, and cites Getz, who suggested a more detailed typology of the events field. Figure 2.1 illustrates Getz's categorisation of the types of events.

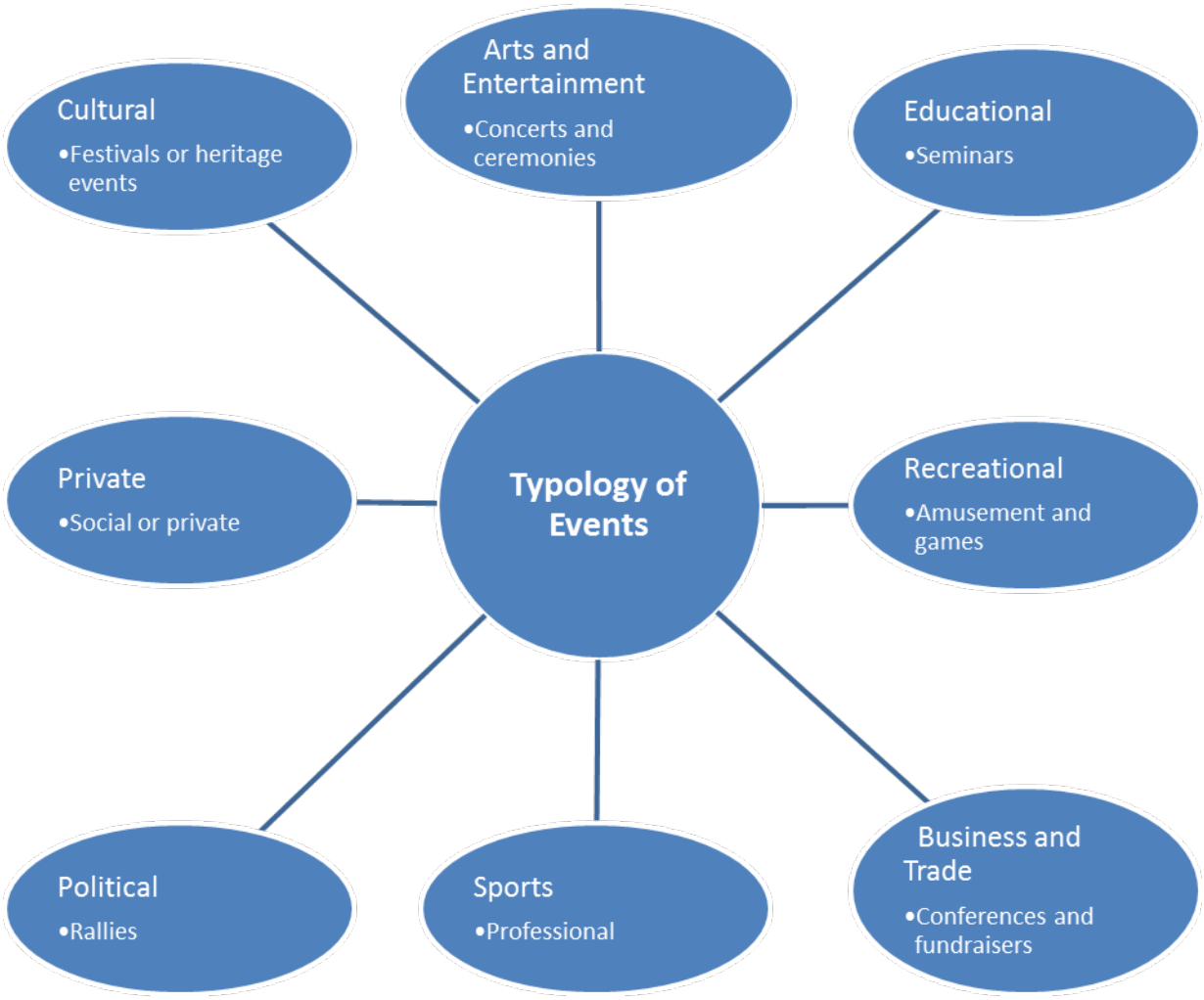

Figure 2.1: Getz's typology of events (As cited by Tassiopoulos, 2010:10)

The figure from Getz provides considerably more categories in order to be able to identify the types of events more clearly, compared with the categorisation of Arcodia and Barker. This could positively assist future research conducted in the field of event management, as well as assist event managers in identifying the type of events they are organising.

Goldblatt (2011:11-16) has a similar view for the typology of events. His view is also very detailed but uses a different classification (Goldblatt, 2011:11-16):

- Civic events (religious and cultural celebrations).
- Expositions and exhibitions (such as trade shows).
- Fairs and festivals (public events and community events).
- Hallmark events (international events or major events).
- Hospitality (hotel events).
- Meetinegs, conferences and seminars.
- Retail events (promotions and launches).
- Social life-cycle events (private events such as birthdays and weddings).
- Sports events (professional sporting events).
- Tourism (historical re-enactment events to attract leisure tourists).

2.1.3 Global growth in event management

One of the first events known to man is that of the Olympic Games held in 776 BC in Ancient Greece. Numerous events followed, such as cultural and religious events, and festivals (Johnson, 2007: 5). Events began with small-scale events such as celebrations, personal events or cultural ones (Shone & Parry, 2004:2). The event management field has grown globally, and assists in the economic development of a country. Getz indicates that the event management industry has the ability to create jobs, improve the social development of a country and provide educational growth (Abdullah et al., 2010). Shone and Parry (2004:2) emphasise that the events industry has a large impact on society and the environment. Goldblatt agrees that the growth of the events industry also positively impacts other areas, especially the academic domain (as cited by Beloviene et al., n.d.: 7). Events have been used as a new form of tourism, a means to gather more visitors to an area and bring economic benefits (Shone & Parry, 2004:2).

Event management was only recognised as an actual profession in the USA in 1972, while the International Special Events Society (ISES) was established several years later, in 1985. However, owing to unrest and political constraints, the South African chapter of ISES was only established in 1995, when the profession started to grow (Johnson, 2007:5).

The Malaysian government concurs with the assertion of Abdullah *et al*. with regard to events having the ability to improve the lives of the community. The government stated that activities and events contribute to a healthy lifestyle and an improvement in the quality of life experienced by the citizens of a country (Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006 – 2010:468). Silvers concurs with Getz (as cited by Abdullah *et al.*, 2010) with regard to events growth in the

global market having been significant. She indicates other governments which have also discerned its importance – the United States of America's White House even has its own events department specifically dedicated to the function and activities of the government. Allen *et al.* (2005:278) explain that the growth of the events industry globally could be as a result of the shift in modern business; the shift has caused business practices to be managed and run as projects in order to cope with the change.

The figure below illustrates some of the highlights in the event field over the past 60 years (Bowdin et al., 2006:9-12).

	Cultural celebrations became popular for South Asian and West Indies cultures
1950s and 1960s	The latter period had in increase in festival culture such as the Jazz festivals and hippy festivals
	Increase in music festivals such as Bath Blues Festival and Isle of Wight Festival
1970s and 1980s	More multipurpose venues were erected and implemented by local authorities
	Exhibition space and indoor arenas were established next to multipurpose venues
	With use of new developments, events could grow; this was assited by funding from various associations
	Governments used the venues to increase community events and to improve the areas

	Events from this period set the standards for events as we know them today
	It was discovered that organising major events could provide major economic benefits
1980s and 1990s	Increase in the use of international sporting events
	1985 was when the telephon events were introduced, especially for charitable purposes
	Local authorities saw the potential of the arts in increasing tourism
	1995 celebrated commemorations of the Second World war anniversaries, parades and celebrations
20th Century	The return of charitable events became popular to assist relief programmes, such as LiveAid, NetAid, etc.
	LiveAid was watched by over a billion people thanks to the technology available today

Figure 2.2: The growth of events over the years (Bowdin *et al* 2006:9-12)

The events industry has seen tremendous growth over the past few decades, and Bowdin *et al.* (2006:441) have attributed these to:

- The increase of financial stability and time pressures within the working environment resulted in the need for professional and exceptional event experiences.
- New strategies developed by government owing to their realisation of the benefits events have to their communities and development.
- Organisations realising the positive impact events can have on their target markets: they assist them in creating awareness for their product as well as improving employee morale with training or employee events.

2.1.4 The link between project management and event management

Several definitions of a project exist, but all of them have several terms in common; uniqueness, time, cost, quality and a temporary endeavour (Radford, 2007:6). O'Toole (2000) believes that event management is linked with project management, as it tends to use a lot more of the processes used in the project management field. A common impact in both fields is the impact that time, cost and quality have on the project (O'Toole, 2000). Bowdin et al. (2006:266) describe project management as the management before the start of the event, the implementation itself and the closing after the event. This description could also be used to describe the process through which the event manager has to go to organise an event. Baguley (2010:10) also indicates that a project is something that requires execution, or a proposal to be implemented.

A project usually consists of several phases it has to go through in order to be completed successfully, as seen in Figure 2.3. The figure illustrates that once the planning stage is complete, the project phases simultaneously into the execution and control step, allowing for a loop between the steps if required, meaning if there is a problem during the execution, then the team can go back into the planning phase to resolve the problem to ensure a successful closing. This process allows a loop in order to cater for any disruptions to be fixed during the process.

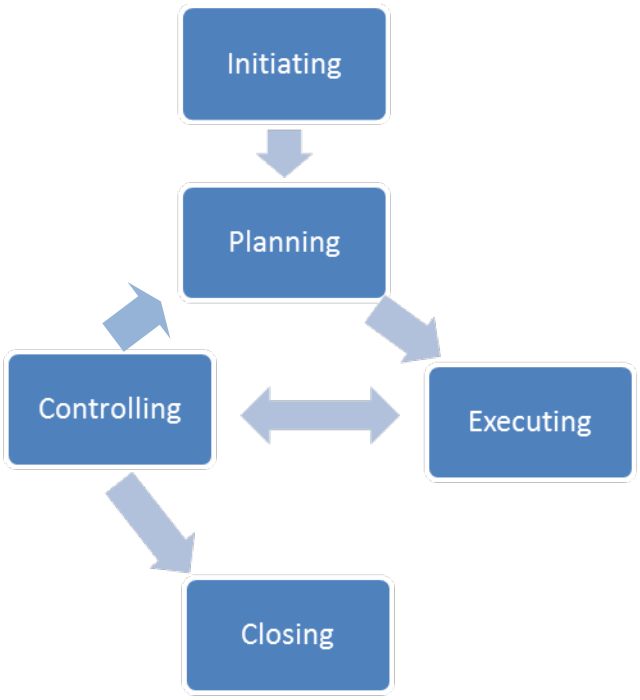

Figure 2.3: Project phases (Radford, 2007:11)

However, the events process designed by Watt, as seen in Figure 2.4 is more linear; it also accounts for a loop to enable the manager to go back in the process to ensure a successful outcome (cited by Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.:16).

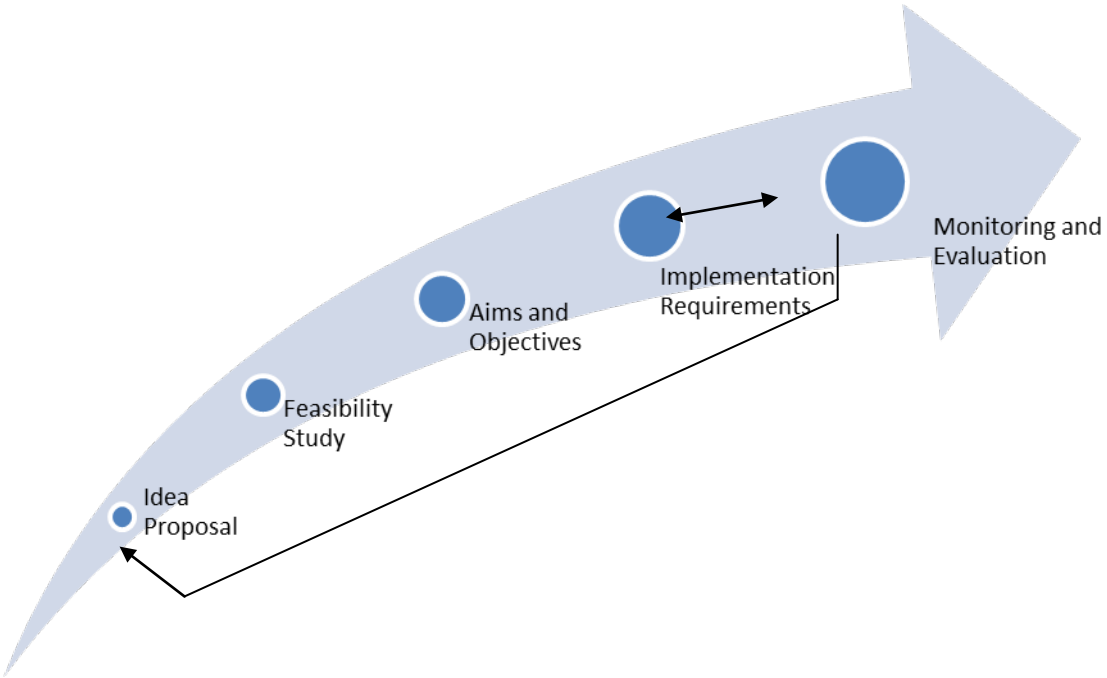

Figure 2.4: Event management process (Beloviene *et al.*, n.d.:16)

Baguley (2010:15) indicates a similar process for project management as in the above two diagrams; the same phases can also be attributed to the process of an event project. He indicates four phases in the project management cycle (Baguley, 2010: 5-16):

1. Feasibility phase: during the feasibility phase, the project objectives are identified and the concept of the project is formed. Important factors such as the time required, cost of the project and quality of materials are also determined.
2. Planning and design phase: this phase determines the roles and responsibilities of the team members; the time schedule and cost management are redefined.
3. Production phase: this phase requires careful monitoring and control procedures.
4. Termination phase: this phase is the closing of the project, where everything is audited and broken down.

Bowdin et al. (2006:266) describe how event management comprises several management areas, whereas project management integrates all of them at the same time. The areas are:

- Planning
- Leading
- Marketing
- Design
- Control
- Budgeting
- Risk
- Logistics

Another important link with event management is that of project management and planning. Baguley (2010:67-68) indicates that a project is a chosen event, whereas the plan assists in the implementation of the project. Shone and Parry (2004:81) state that owing to the complex nature of projects, a plan is crucial in order to implement them successfully. It is crucial for the plan to be flexible and have the ability to adapt to outside forces that could cause unplanned changes to a project (Baguley, 2010:68). However it is also important to note that an organisation can get stuck in the planning stage and never progress to the implementation, which then culminates in project failure (Shone & Parry, 2004:81).

Baguley (2010:68) notes there are three important factors to consider when compiling a plan: who will be responsible for various tasks, the time allocation of each task, and the resources available and/or required in order to complete the task. Verzuh (2008:94) agrees that planning is an important component of project management, as it is able to assist in various aspects:

- The plan enables one to carefully compile and control the cost of the project, the time management of the project, and the quality of materials to be provided.
- The plan is used to monitor the event and its schedule to ensure everything is running smoothly according to the strategy. Shone and Parry (2004:81) agree with this statement, namely, that a plan is used in order to gauge the progress of the project.
- The plan is able to assist the team in determining what would be the best course of action to take in order to ensure a successfully implemented project.
- The estimations made in the plan could be used for the entire company's' resource allocations.

An important part of planning is setting the right objectives whether it is for an event or any other project. One common way of doing so in both fields is using the SMART formula as seen in figure 2.5.

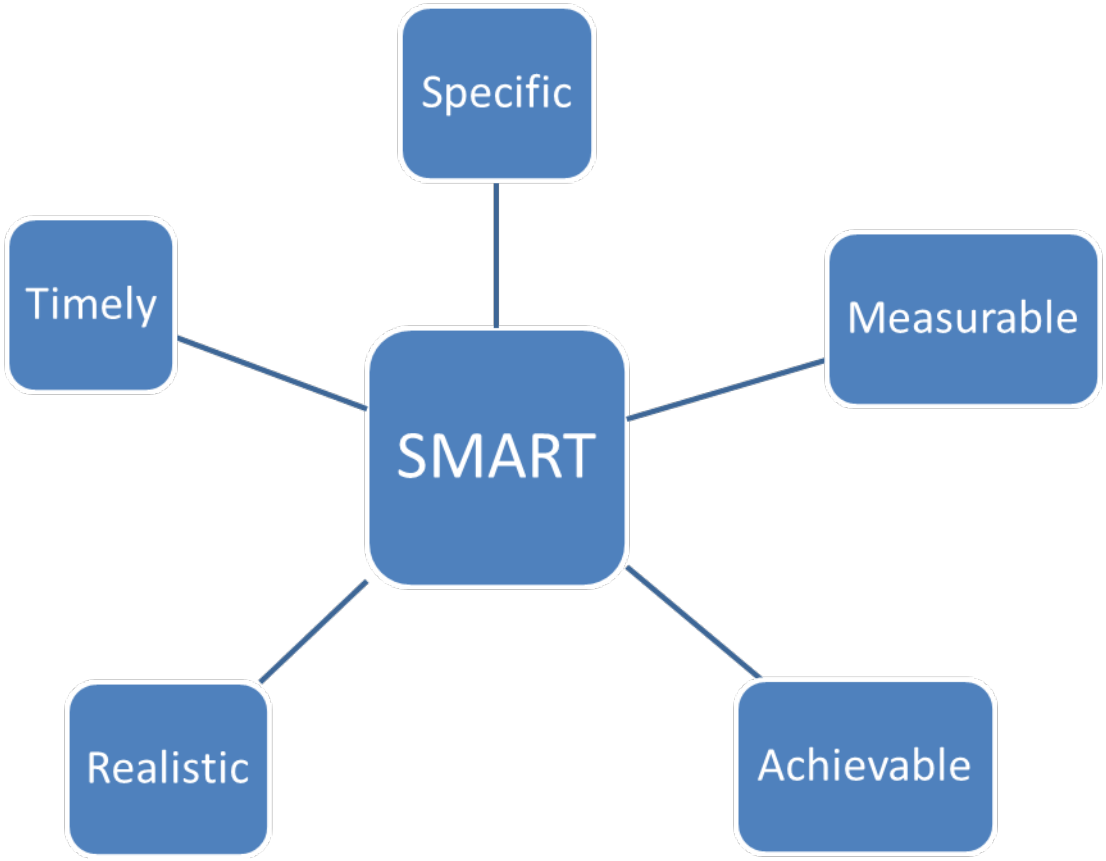

Figure 2.5: The SMART formula (Shone and Parry, 2004:165)

Verzuh (2008:93) suggests one of the greatest challenges of a project is that it should be implemented correctly; otherwise it could have drastic implications. One manner of accomplishing this is by creating achievable objectives in order to plan the event. The SMART process suggests that your objectives require several aspects in order to be reachable (Shona & Parry, 2004:165):

- Specific: by being specific it illustrates a clear road map for the team to follow in order to understand the expectations of the individuals as well as what to expect.
- Measurable: the objectives should be measured to track the progress of the project and achieve its objectives.
- Achievable: it must be able to be linked with the expectations of the event and keep in mind any limitations that may arise.
- Realistic: an important factor for the objectives is to be realistic, even if the client has unrealistic requirements, the event manager should be able to consider them achievable.
- Timely: the team must ensure that the objective will be accomplished given the time constraints of the project.

Similar to event management; project management assists in the development of society by creating and improving our means of living. Initially project management was associated with the construction industry, but more recently the methods and processes of project management have been used in most industries around the world as they provide a structured and systematic way of planning. (Burke & Baron, 2007:29). Shone and Parry (2004:81) indicate that the plan is used to strategise for the future of the project, as it will assist in identifying possible risks as well as potential opportunities. It is therefore important to note common project success factors, as well as factors that could result in failure, in order to create a successful plan.

Some of the potential benefits one can gain when using project management skills for events processes could be (Bowdin et al., 2006:267):

- The process is a logical form that can assist in improving future events.
- The process requires teams and a systematic process requiring planning, monitoring and controlling every task throughout the event, thus increasing the success of the event.
- The process provides responsibility to all the stakeholders, a management area very important in project management.
- It can assist in future development of the team; this process provides a system that can be used to train them.

- It can be used time and time again for any project of any magnitude; it is a form of a framework or checklist for future projects.
- It provides common terminology used in all areas of management, thus making communication a lot simpler when conducting business with stakeholders.

Verzuh (2008:7) also notes several factors that can impact the success of events as a result of the use of project management processes:

- When the project team and the stakeholders all agree and understand the plan and the objectives of the event.
- When the roles of responsibilities are clearly defined and the project plan shows the course the project has to take in order to be successful – a process that must be carefully managed and monitored.
- When there are clear lines of communication throughout the project.
- When there is a clear scope of the event which is carefully monitored by the team.
- When there is support from the entire management team.

Even though the project management processes do provide several benefits to the events field, the team should keep in mind what causes project failures to put counter-risk processes in place. Some of these failures include (Baguley, 2010:221):

- When the users are not giving their complete attention to each of the tasks that are required to complete the event.
- When the objectives of the project are continuously changing, and when there is no stability in the project.
- When the team does not get sufficient support from senior management.
- Lack of careful planning, that is, when they are not organised enough to think of every aspect of the event, resulting in an inadequate project plan.
- When the team does not have the required skills needed to complete the project.
- When there is a lack of communication within the team; that means that no one is informed what their tasks are or the tasks are not sufficiently delegated to the required or skilled persons.

2.2 The planning process: a literature review

2.2.1 Explanation of the use of the planning process

The planning process is defined by Bowdin *et al.* (2001:67) as establishing where the company is right now and where it would like to be, and identifying what it would take in order for the company to reach that position, such as the work required. However, Tassiopoulos (2010:109) defines the planning process differently and identifies the process as the stage which assists in the event concept and shape by allocating resources and tasks in order to fulfil the goal and objectives of the event. Therefore, one could combine the two definitions and explain the process as establishing where the company is and what its goals are, and determine what resources are required to attain the goals.

Planning can also be seen as an integrated decision-making process brought together to form a new plan of action (Bowdin *et al.*, 2001:67). The basis of the planning process is to create a strategy, or a plan of action, and communicate it to the rest of the project team and organisation; once everyone is aware of what the plan is they can then bring everything together and implement it (Bowdin *et al.*, 2001:67). Bender (2010:25) agrees, and states that during the planning stage every step, goal and resource required to reach the outcome should be outlined. By thinking strategically about the plan and the information gathered, the event manager can identify what is still outstanding and what is required (Whiteling, 2008).

It is a common misconception that, when working with a plan, it limits the possibility of any flexibility. On the contrary; with a plan the manager can clearly identify the working environment. A plan allows for change; it gives the manager the chance of initiating a fast solution (Bowdin *et al.*, 2001:68). Mallen and Adams (2008:29) differ; they believe intuition (not a plan) plays a large role during this process as it helps the manager act on her/her feet and adapt when necessary. Burke (2006:144) concurs, and indicates that one's own actions, successes and failures assist in analysing one's future to improve on the next project; that if a manager makes a mistake once then he/she will learn from it in the future and plan to avoid making the same mistake again. Oxton (2009b) has the same opinion as Bowdin *et al.* (2001:68), that by having a concise plan, it could ensure the running of a successful and well-organised event. This would include from pre-event, that is, the planning process, up to the event itself, as well as post-event feedback and follow-up. Oxton (2009b) also states that the plan is used as a guide to help the manager keep on track with the objectives set out for the event.

In order to plan successfully, the manager should be able to think strategically and think accurately about the information required (Whiteling, 2008:35-36). Therefore, breaking the process into steps will ensure every element in the process is considered. Mallen and Adams (2008:26) identify the event-planning phase as consisting of four smaller phases: developmental, operational, implementation, and evaluation. However, Tassiopoulos (2010:110) proposes a series of steps as shown in Figure 2.4. It is described as a series of steps that must be continuously managed and reviewed, and adapted where necessary. If the steps are correctly followed, Tassiopoulos (2010:109) believes that the event vision will be successfully followed. However, the website DavisLogic Inc. (2005) deviates somewhat from Tassiopoulos' process, and claims that the manager's commitment and leadership skills play a key role in the success of an event. DavisLogic Inc. (2005) uses a simpler planning process, in the form of three steps, which does not deviate much from Tassiopoulos' extensive model illustrated in Figure 2.6:

1. Organise an event team.
2. Conduct a thorough risk assessment.
3. Review and develop plans.

Figure 2.6: The event planning process (Tassiopoulos, 2010:110)

If an event is poorly planned, organised and managed, it will result in an unpleasant event experience. This could result in delegates questioning whether or not they should attend future events, which could result in the organisation's gaining a substandard reputation (Oxton, 2011b). Oxton (2011a) identifies stages that are required to plan an event, as illustrated in Figure 2.7. This is similar to the model of Tassiopoulos in Figure 2.6; however Oxtons' model is more focused on a specific task, whereas Tassiopoulos' model is more focused on a general phase the manager has to go through in order to organise an event. However, when one considers the three steps DavisLogic Inc. (2005) proposes, it seems that both ideas are similar, but the latter suggests a less complicated process than that of Tassiopoulos or Oxton.

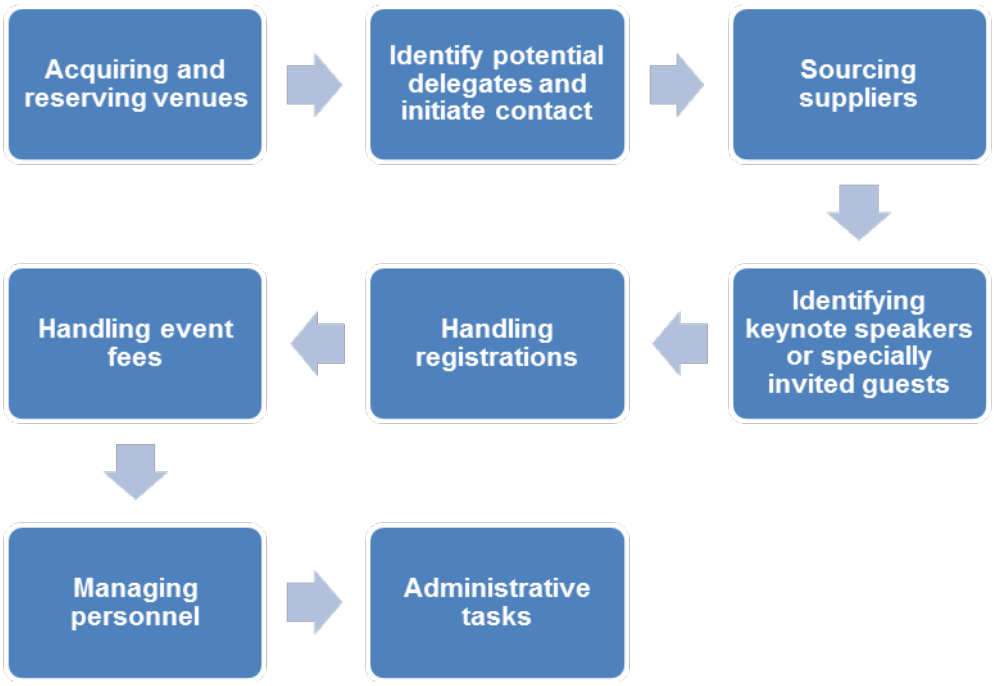

Figure 2.7: Stages required to plan an event (Oxton, 2011a)

2.2.2 The benefits of using the planning process in event management

Planning allows the manager to identify any potential problems that may arise and develop an appropriate contingency plan (Bowdin *et al.*, 2001:67). Biba (2007a) believes that with planning and managing every aspect of one's event, one can use the data for auditing and evaluation purposes to assist with future events. Using a project plan, the manager can perceive a greater sense of control over the project in terms of identifying what should still be completed, by when it should be completed, who is responsible, and how it should be completed (Jenkins, 2005:23).

Tassiopoulos (2010:109) states that the ultimate advantage of having a plan in place is its assistance in organising all the activities to be conducted into a set vision for the team to follow. DavisLogic Inc. (2005) concurs; in order for the manager to protect his/her event, thorough plans should be in place. Allen et al. (2005:115) have an alternative view of what the planning process is. It is described as a process which is more concerned with the end result of the event and what it would take to achieve it. Allen et al. (2005:115) state that the planning process holds several benefits for events. The benefits include: providing the event with alternative strategies when needed, providing solutions to problems, and providing an event with a competitive edge.

A plan is needed in order to execute a successful event; the plan identifies the goals and objectives of the event, the resource plan and allocation and also a risk management plan (Bender, 2010:25).

2.3 Event management body of knowledge (EMBOK): a literature review

2.3.1 The development of EMBOK

EMBOK is used as a framework for event managers by which events are organised (Silvers, 2003). It was collaboratively established by several internationally acclaimed event managers, among others, Joe Goldblatt, Janet Landey, Julia Rutherford Silver, and William O'Toole (Silvers, 2007). A body of knowledge is described by Burke (2006:16) as the 'sum of knowledge' for a particular field. EMBOK is regarded as a set of standards that outlines every aspect to be considered to organise, manage, control and host a successful event. Tassiopoulos (2010:54) claims it can assist in organising a successful event by gathering data; this is then used to identify the full scope of the event and responsibilities of the members. Silvers (2008:12) concurs that EMBOK is useful in viewing the full scope of the event and each of the responsibilities to be assigned.

EMBOK comprises various knowledge forms and is used to manage and organise profitable events. The knowledge areas have been identified as technical and specialised skills, ethical standards to pursue a task, and situational and experiential knowledge (Silvers, 2003). The domains provide us with a scope of the event which is used to put together a concise plan of action (Silvers, 2003). Tassiopoulos (2010:54) notes that EMBOK could also be beneficial in analysing the event and its outcomes; this is useful information for future events.

EMBOK improves event management, as it is able to analyse the need for the event and possible opportunities and challenges it may encounter (Tassiopoulos, 2010:54). It is seen as the acknowledged practices in a field; the preferred method of practice (Burke, 2006:16). According to Tassiopoulos (2010:54), EMBOK could also be used to suggest possible specialisations within event management, as well as providing a basis to develop possible academic programmes or courses. A body of knowledge is generally comprised of industry competencies as identified for industry certification (Tassiopoulos, 2010:54). As noted by Tassiopoulos (2010:54), EMBOK was compiled by industry professionals and transformed into a framework for the events management industry.

2.3.2 The needs of EMBOK

During the event-planning phase, EMBOK identifies several tasks to be completed to organise a successful event (Silvers, 2003). The tasks are divided into five domains: administration, marketing, operations, risk and design (Silvers, 2007). Event management also consists of the functional areas, as well as several phases, core values and processes (Silvers, 2008:10).

Silvers (2008:12) established a process consisting of five steps:

a. Assessment
b. Selection
c. Monitoring
d. Documentation
e. Communication

The event manager is advised to start with the process system; it is identified as an iterative system which assists in the completion of an event. While the event manager follows the five processes, the phases followed throughout the project will become apparent. The phases include (Silvers, 2008:13): initiation, planning, implementation, the event, and finally, the closing. It is important to note that while going through the phases and following the processes, the event manager should abide by the core values for each decision to be made. The values include: continuous improvement, creativity, ethics, integration, and strategic thinking (Silver, 2008:14). The processes, phases and core values, along with the domains, serve as a functional framework for event managers to work by (Tassiopoulos, 2010:54). The applications of EMBOK are illustrated in Figure 2.8.

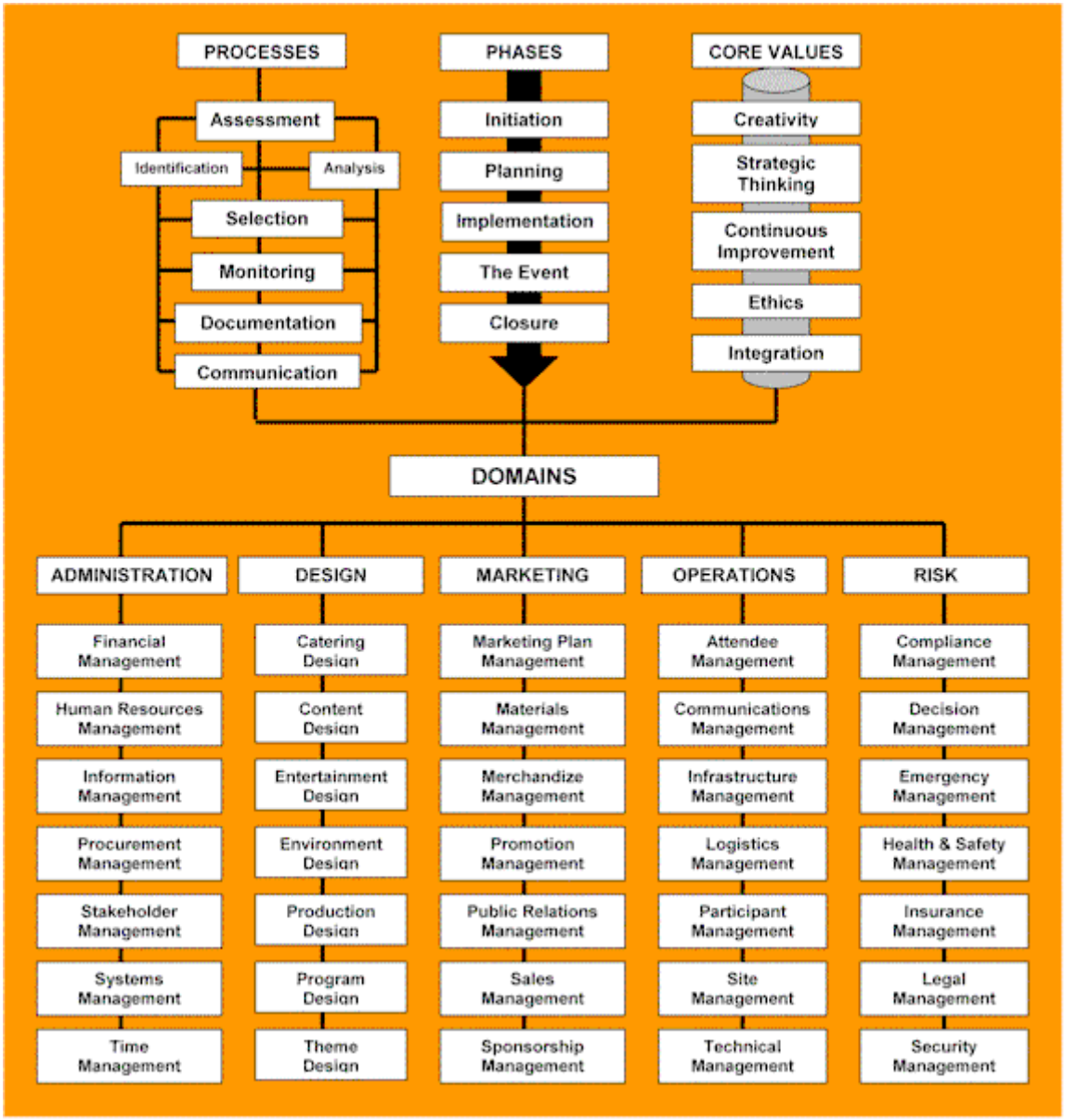

Figure 2.8: EMBOK structure (Silvers, 2004)

A detailed discussion of the EMBOK structure from figure 2.8 will follow in the analysis of EMBOK section.

2.3.3 Analysis of EMBOK

The EMBOK structure was adapted in 2004, from four domains to five domains, which should be considered alongside the five processes, phases and core values. This comprehensive model now assists in thorough management, risk assessment and control of the event in order to organise a successful event (Silvers, 2004). Each of the five domains needs to be carefully analysed to determine which areas of activity would be required for the specific event (Silvers, 2008:14). Table 2.3 illustrates a comparison of the definitions of each domain between Silvers (2008:14) and Tassiopoulos (2010:54).

The administrative domain consists of several management areas: financial, human resources, information, procurement, stakeholder, systems, and time management. These seven management areas cover the entire administration process used in planning an event. Within the management areas there are several task areas that should be considered, where applicable to the specific event (Silvers, 2006). As illustrated by figure 2.8 the management areas for this domain include:

- Financial management (such as cash flows, inventory control and financial reporting).
- Human resource management (such as hiring, conflict resolutions and volunteers).
- Information management (such as communications planning, record keeping and database management).
- Procurement management (such as contract management, procurement and quality control).
- Stakeholder management (interacting an managing stakeholder such as VIPs, sponsors or authorities).
- Systems management (such as decision making systems, booking systems and procedural manuals).
- Time management (such as critical path analysis, gantt charts and duration estimation).

The design domain is responsible for the creation of the environment or the atmosphere that the manager wants to emphasise during the event. The aim of the domain is to create an experience for the audience and for them to leave satisfied and amazed (Silvers, 2008:15). As illustrated by figure 2.8 the management areas for this domain include:

- Catering management (includes menus selection, quantity estimations and beverage control).
- Content management (includes presenter selection, programme management and topic/theme management).
- Entertainment management (includes sourcing entertainment, recreational activities, and control of entertainment programmes).
- Environment management (includes sourcing decor and signage systems).
- Production management (sourcing and selecting the required audio-visual and lighting materials).
- Program management (includes formatting and designing the programme).
- Theme management (includes developing and implementing the planned theme for the event).

The marketing domain is aimed at gaining support for the event and creating a positive image for the public about the event (Silvers, 2008:15). As illustrated by figure 2.8 the management areas for this domain include:

- Marketing plan management (consists of branding requirements, market research and image enhancement).
- Materials management (consists of awards or prizes, brochures or media kits).
- Merchandise management (consists of brand management, logo wear and packaging).
- Promotion management (consists of advertising, giveaways and displays).
- Public relations management (consists of media relations, photo opportunities and publication articles).
- Sales management (consists of merchandise sales, sales techniques and coupon redemption).
- Sponsorship management (consists of sponsorship kits, in-kind donations and image management).

The operations domain consists of the tasks needed to be completed in order to manage and facilitate certain services required for the event. It manages people, their roles, what responsibilities they may have, and any logistics required to have a successful event (Silvers, 2008:16). As illustrated by figure 2.8 the management areas for this domain include:

- Attendee management (involves crowd management, access controls and admissions systems).
- Communications management (involves announcement protocols, debriefings or briefings and public address systems).
- Infrastructure management (involves emergency services, waste management and traffic control).
- Logistics management (involves checklists, task monitoring and installations or dismantles).
- Participant management (involves, exhibits, competitions or performer management).
- Site management (involves sit plans, temporary structure and storage areas).
- Technical management (involves technical rehearsals, special effects and staging requirements).

The risk domain is concerned with legal obligations, managing decisions and safety regulations – all to ensure that the event runs smoothly without anyone getting injured (Silvers, 2008:16). As illustrated by figure 2.8 the management areas for this domain include:

- Compliance management (entails liquor laws, permits and licenses).
- Decision management (entail documentation control, risk plans and contingency protocols.
- Emergency management (entails medical services, civil disorder and disaster preparedness).
- Health and Safety management (entails fire safety systems are in place, necessary certifications are in place and protective equipment are ready).
- Insurance management (entails liability exposures, legal requirements and property loss or damage).
- Legal management (entails confidentiality agreements, contract management and keeping informed on any laws that could be applicable to the event).
- Security management (entails surveillance, law enforcement and command centre).

The five domains consist of several management areas and can be interpreted differently by different people, even though their outcome remains the same. Below is a comparison between Silvers' and Tassiopoulos' definition of the EMBOK domains. The comparison of the two authors is required to illustrate how two professional and educated members can both see the same domains but not use the same definitions. This comparison is used to show that individuals can refer to the same criterion, or in this case domain, but do not necessarily agree on how it is viewed. Through each person's own experience and education, opinions or descriptions may be formed. This is important to note when researching individuals' views on the software's capabilities. It is also important to understand the theoretical grounding behind information systems.

Table 2.3: A comparison between the definitions of each domain of EMBOK

Management Area or Domain	Silvers' (2008:14) definition	Tassiopoulos' (2010:54) definition
Administration	The management area refers to the correct administration of the event's resources as well as control of it. The management of the resources has to be carefully monitored as it could reduce or impose risk to an event.	The management area refers to management of all the resources required for the event, whether personnel or information or time.
Design	The management area refers to the manner in which the designer interprets the goals and objectives. It is used to create an event experience for the delegates to admire and remember.	The management area refers to the image of the event such as the theme and what content or entertainment could be used to emphasise the theme of the event.
Marketing	The management area refers to being able to gain support for the event as well as a positive image with the event's target market, ensuring a need for the event is created for its customers.	The management area refers to the management of promotional or marketing items, and creating more awareness of the event through public relations or sponsorship.
Operations	The management area refers to the management and control of logistics to produce the event.	The management area refers to the coordination of logistics from the customers to equipment and communication.
Risk	The management area refers to the legal issues, opportunities and requirements associated with the event. These areas are affected by every decision made for the event and must be carefully monitored.	The management area refers to any decision to be made by the personnel and how it could affect the event, as well as any compliance issues or legal problems that may arise.

2.4 The importance of technology in event management

2.4.1An understanding of theoretical grounding

Technology Acceptance Model

The technology acceptance model anticipated tolerability of information systems for the user (Edutechwiki, 2012). Chuttur (2009) agrees and states that increase in the use of a system is proportionate to the increased motivation of the user. This proposes the idea that should the user be satisfied with the system they would be motivated to increase the use of that system. Research was conducted to discover why there is a negativity towards the use of technology and therefore attempted to find new methods to design systems according to the needs of the user (Morris *et al,* 1997). The technology acceptance model assists in identifying areas of improvement in order to make it more pleasing and preferred for the user (Edutechwiki, 2012). Chuttur (2009) suggested that motivation is increased by the ease of use of the system, its usefulness as well as the users' attitude regarding the system. Areas considered to be useful in identifying modification are the alleged usefulness as well as the identified ease of use (Edutechwiki, 2012).

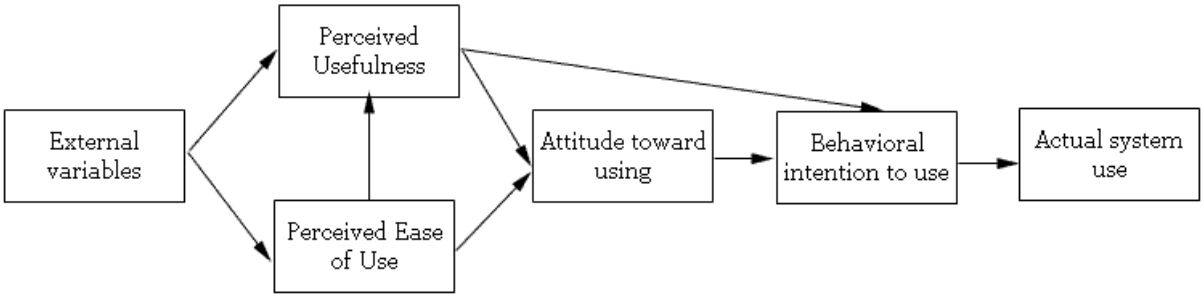

Figure 2.9: Technology Acceptance Model (Edutechwiki, 2012)

The perceived usefulness is described as the users' belief that the system will be able to increase their job performance. Whereas the ease of use is identified as the degree to which the use of the software or system will seem uncomplicated (Edutechwiki, 2012). Figure 2.8 displays the technology acceptance model.

Scientific Management Theory

The scientific management theory was developed by Frederick Taylor, and aimed to determine the work performance and the effect on productivity (Mindtools, n.d.). Laegaard (2006) agreed, his research suggested that using experiments and analysis of the work one could optimise the productivity. According to Taylor maximising work was not the best method for efficiency, but that one must optimise the methods and processes by which work is conducted (Mindtools, n.d.). Taylor emphasised that jobs specifications should become more precise and workers' trained for their specific task (Robinson, 2005). This theory

assisted by increasing the productivity and ensuring lower levels of energy is used as well as resources (Laegaard, 2006). It was identified that simplifying the specific task would increase the workers' productivity (Mindtools, n.d.). The scientific management theory could be regarded as a guideline for technical procedures (Laegaard, 2006). By following the four basic principles the organisation could ensure maximum productivity (Enock, 2006):

- Determine the exact specifications for each task.
- Identify the precise process and time taken for each task.
- Ensure that the worker is only focused on their job specification and remove all unnecessary tasks not required for them to do.
- Provide sufficient training for the worker.

However, with keeping in mind the theoretical grounding one must also keep in mind trends within technology. Keeping up with trends is important in order to keep a competitive advantage.

2.4.2 An analysis of technology trends

Event managers are increasingly turning to technology in order to complete everyday tasks, whether it is an object, software or tool (Oxton, 2010f). Bergmann (2012) states that technology for events is increasingly evolving, and could ultimately change the future of events. Biba (2007a) agrees that consumers expect information immediately, and as a result technology must adapt in order to fulfil their needs. Individuals have become focused on having the best and the latest, therefore, the information technology community is constantly creating new and improved products. These could range from simple software needed to support the event team during the planning phase to actual equipment required on the day (Whiteling, 2008). Van der Wagen (2007:12) agrees that the event industry's use of technology is so diverse that in every aspect of organising an event some form of technological equipment is required.

Wilson (2002:244) identifies four trends for the future on how information management could improve or change. These trends are improvements made in technology, cheaper equipment such as computers, manual labour becoming more expensive and constant change. Therefore, with the assistance of software, the manager can ensure that he or she is able to adapt to the changes and turn them into positives for their future projects (Biba, 2007a). In order to become more competitive in the industry and stand out from the rest, the manager should be able to follow the trends to the best of his or her ability. Allen *et al.* (2005:202) explain that service delivery plays a very important factor in the success of the event, which means that any expectation, given to or made by, the event goer, should be satisfied

completely. Whiteling (2008:37) agrees, and states that in order to gain a competitive advantage, one must think strategically and identify what is needed in order to satisfy the audience.

Goldblatt (2005:459) also identifies several trends in technology:

- Technology is constantly changing and can now be custom tailored to the needs of the user.
- Owing to its availability, it is becoming more affordable to the user.
- Because of the increase in competition, technology is becoming more user-friendly.

Costa (2011:4) finds it imperative for the event industry to keep up-to-date with technology as it improves communication abilities as well as management abilities. This is preferable to managers as it means they are not confined to their offices and can conduct business on the go. Biba (2007a) concurs that software can assist in making strategic decisions when the manager is able to view real time data while not in the office.

Views have been expressed that this could remove the personal aspect pertaining to events (Costa. 2011:4). Biba (2007a), however, disagrees with Costa (2011:4) and considers it important to combine the online functions with those of face-to-face moments. Bergmann (2012) has the same opinion as Biba (2007a), and indicates that moving online should not be seen as a threat to the personal aspect of event management, but rather as an opportunity to move forward with technology. Bergmann (2012) argues that since one will require people to attend the event, technology will assist in improving the process to get them there, and therefore one should weigh the options and determine which has more benefits. Matthews (2008:71) also concurs that event managers should keep up with any possible trends, as it will provide them with a competitive advantage.

Kaandorp (n.d.) identifies several reasons for implementing technology in the workplace:

- To effectively communicate with other colleagues as well as improve sharing of information.
- To network with stakeholders more efficiently.
- To diminish any repetitive work that could be seen as valuable time wasted.
- To confirm that all the data is stored and collected accurately to avoid mistakes.
- To reduce all the unnecessary work and time wasted, since this will provide a return on your investment.

As noted by Fink (2012b), Europe and the United States have already introduced event technologies in their industry in various forms. These could be registrations, applications for mobile devices, making use of social media during and before events, live streaming, and many more. However, South Africa and the rest of Africa have only slowly approached this technology wave within the industry either to gain more support from international partners or become more widely known as an international destination (Fink, 2012b:5). It is now expected that conferences will use advanced technology, since it is more accessible (Botha, 2007).

2.4.3 How technology may benefit event management

Whiteling (2008:35-36) believes that technology should be seen as a competitive advantage that a company could gain within an industry. Technology assists in reaching a wider market; it identifies potential viewers or in an events case, potential delegates. Technology gives the manager a means to communicate faster, more efficiently and in a manner that is both acceptable to the delegate as well as the manager. As cited by Fink (2012a:4), technology is used by and impacts almost all industries. This benefits the events and tourism industry as it helps provide a more innovative manner of doing business efficiently during every phase of the event.

Van der Wagen (2007:195) contends that spreadsheets and word processing could also be used for event administration. There are numerous software packages available to organise or manage events other than events software, such as Microsoft Excel. Oxton (2010a) identifies several problems associated with Excel, such as duplication of information, being able to keep all the information up to date when multiple users need to access the file regularly, and losing data when the document become too large to maintain. However, some of its benefits are that it is user-friendly as well as free to use (Oxton, 2010a). Corbin Ball Associates (2010) contend that it is preferable to use online-based software compared to program-based software. The reason for this is that the manager can access the data anywhere and anytime, and should the server crash, the likelihood of losing data can be reduced (Corbin Ball Associates, 2010). However, using event software has many benefits, one of which is it can manage large amounts of data, thereby reducing mistakes, preventing loss of data or coping with unmanageable data. Event software can handle any amount of data, depending on the type of software the manager uses, and ensures efficiency in the workplace as well as a return on investment (Oxton, 2010c).

Technology has the ability to impact on three important factors deemed important for the events industry. The factors include that of time, cost and quality of the work done, or their impact on the work to be completed.

- *The impact of time*

Efficiency in the workplace could be improved by the use of event management software. It allows for several processes to be automated and managed from one software when planning an event (Oxton, 2010c). The software is seen as a beneficial tool as it reduces time spent doing the work manually as well as cost involved to fix any mistakes (Oxton, 2010e). Automation of tasks reduces the chance of human error negatively impacting the event's reputation as well as its financial outcome. Ladika (2007:62-66) also agrees that making mistakes is not an option, even if the mistakes were unintentional. The manager or his/her team cannot afford to make mistakes or miss deadlines, or simply forget to complete a task; therefore planning the event to the finest point is imperative. Fox (2008:127) agrees that technology can assist a manager in managing his or her time more effectively, by the use of reminders, creating a timeline and monitoring any activities to be completed.

Some of the technological equipment that is used by the events industry is listed below (Van der Wagen, 2007:13):

- Event planning software (such as SEMP).
- A booking system to source and reserve event venues.
- Registration facilities.
- Security management systems.
- CAD design software to create stages or designs required by the event.
- Broadcasting systems to communicate with the attendees or between staff.

New software technology has the potential to give us an update on our event in real-time, whether it is in the planning phase of the event or on the actual implementation day. It automatically updates the information that is required by the user and illustrates it in an understandable and usable format. This provides the manager with more flexibility when organising events, because when any changes need to be made the software will automatically update everything else, thus reducing the effort of changing everything manually (Biba, 2007a).

- *The impact of cost*

If the reason for not moving towards software is financial, Peters (2007:125) suggests managers should look at using basic software that is inexpensive; as the requirements from the software increase, the manager can look for software that provides more flexibility and includes more functions for the user. According to research conducted by DeLisle (2009:270) in the USA, a leading developed country, it was found that 41.4% of event organisers make use of event database software as illustrated in the pie chart in Figure 2.9. This shows a growing trend of managers' preference to use the latest technology to reach their market faster.

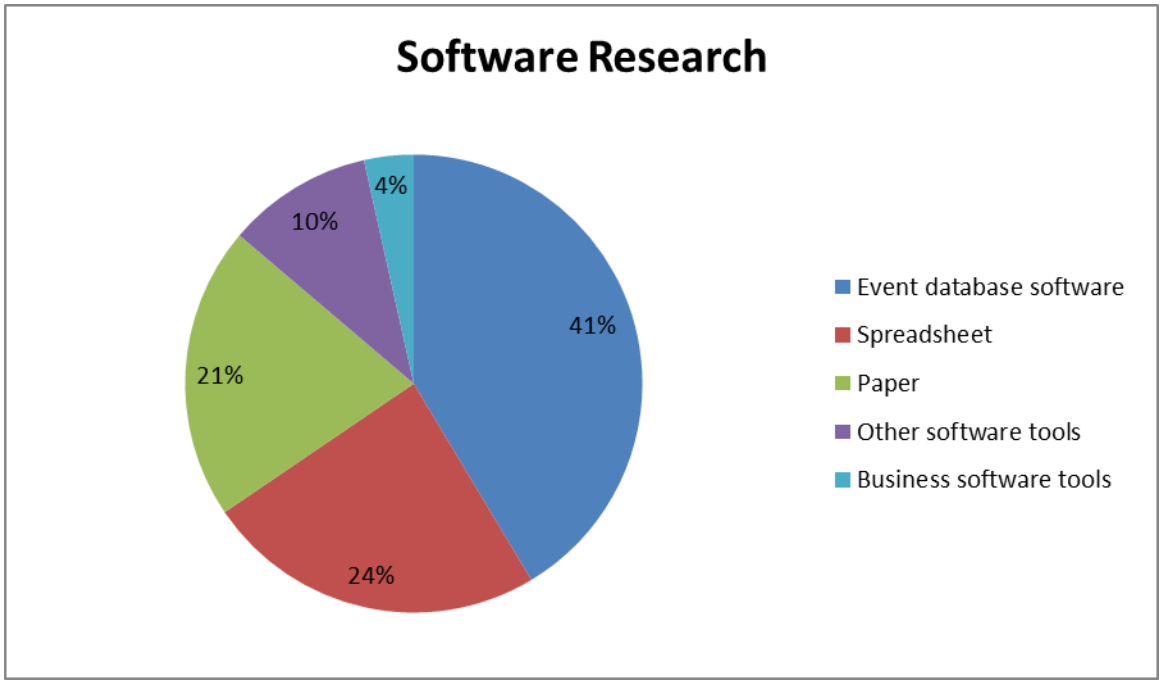

Figure 2.10: Software research in the USA (DeLisle, 2009:270)

- *The impact of quality*

Oxton (2010b) believes that one should not look only at data and figures to determine one's plan of action, but should consider all the practical applications provided by the software to ensure the right information is sent to the right destination. These could be simple actions completed by the software, such as integration of the event website, registrations and payments conducted online, making use of templates, etc. Event software will show the manager all the data in real time so that he/she does not have to rely on figures to determine how to proceed. Managers will have a holistic view of where the event is, how it is progressing, and what further action to take, enabled by event software.

Oxton (2010c) believes that event software is a very important tool, and is essential in running and maintaining a successful event. Especially in view of the economic crisis, research has indicated that numerous event managers have turned to software as a way of

reducing their internal costs and running more profitable events. The automation of tasks is seen as a great return on investment for companies, as work is completed faster and more efficiently. Biba (2007b) states that using software for events provides the manager with a holistic approach when organising or planning events. It provides the data in real time so that necessary changes can be quickly identified and made. The manager can access the data at any time and in any place, and is not bound to the office. Oxton (2011b) identifies several ways in which event software reduces cost in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: How using event software reduces cost for a company (Oxton, 2011b)

Ways to reduce expenses
1. With most of the tasks automated, it helps in staff cost reduction.
2. By accomplishing most of the tasks electronically, it minimises the use of paper in the office; this also reduces costs, makes for a clean working environment and also ensures valuable documents do not go missing.
3. Finances can be thoroughly monitored and managed.
4. By having it integrated with the organisation's business systems, it can save a lot of time and extra expense to change systems, e.g., emails and websites.

As technology is constantly changing, it continuously improves and amends the way we conduct our business. Because of technology's' transformation, it can become quite intimidating for users to decide which technology would be best suited to their needs (Goldblatt, 2005:27). Other general features that are seen as necessary in event software (Oxton, 2010d) include:

- Integrating your website with your software to allow for online registrations.
- Online payment.
- More efficient communication – being able to send information to certain groups via email.
- Fewer errors when in details such as having all the delegates' names on a list.

Goldblatt (2005:28) also identifies a process to assist individuals in choosing the right technology for their organisation:

- Determine what their needs are for their organisation.
- Look at various reviews for the chosen technology to determine which the right fit is.
- Determine the manner of implementation at the organisation.
- Ensure there is a training schedule in place for each member of the company to get sufficient training.
- Monitor the progress and impact of the technology to determine if any additions are required or if the technology at hand is sufficient for their needs.

2.4.4 Summit Event Manager – Pro and its features

The SEMP may be regarded as user-friendly and very detailed in its assistance at conferences and events (Summit Event Manager – Pro Product Information, n.d.). Some of its functions can be seen in Table 2.5 (Summit Event Manager, n.d.).

Table 2.5: Functions of Summit Event Manager – Pro (Summit Event Manager, n.d.)

Area of Domain	Function
Administration	
	By having its interfaces with Microsoft products such as Word, Excel and Access, it has the ability to easily export or import required data to any format required by the manager, in order for them to make use of the information on the software.
	Manages tasks and 'to do' lists. By using the organiser it allows the input of details in respect of the content of the tasks, and allocates a responsible individual with deadlines by when the task must be completed. The software will then manage this and send reminders.
	Has a safe interface which allows for online payments into the event's bank account.
	Can assist the manager in doing the work faster by selecting a button called 'the usual' – this means if it is a group with the same details it will automatically update all the delegates information.

	Creates letters which can be stored as templates in order to save time for future events.
	Controls and manages finances.
	Creates invoices.
	Creates budget for the event.
	Creates profit-and-loss statements.
Design	
	Assists in setting up event's programme electronically.
	Designs a website which is linked to the software.
Marketing	
	Manages exhibitors' and sponsors' requirements.
	Assists in allocating exhibition space and any preferences or requirements exhibitors might have.
	Badges and event tickets can be designed or used from templates available.
Operations	
	It can produce a running sheet on a daily basis indicating the information that has already been uploaded.
	Helps to arrange seating for delegates and also indicates their dietary requirements where necessary.
	Makes correspondence easier with ability to email a group or just an individual.
	Allows for online registrations: any updates to delegate's online profile can be sent to the manager's system in-tray.
	Manages logistics such as flights and accommodation.
	Can make multiple or individual bookings and allows for any specific requirements the individual might have.
	Has the facility to block book the rooms, flights or any transportation that is required.

	Creates itineraries.
Risk	
	Keeps records of all promises made between sponsors, advertisers and managers.
	Inputs designated country's taxes to incorporate into the fees or expenses.

2.5 Chapter summary

The chapter identified the constantly changing or growing nature of the events industry and how important it is for technology to keep up with it. In order to gain a competitive advantage a certain level of professionalism is expected from the event managers; technology can assist with this regard as it is able to provide the manager with instant access to information when required. There is a variety of technology to choose from to implement in the event planning or organising stages; the manager must determine which form of technology would be best suited for their type of work.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 An overview of the study

The purpose of the research was to determine to which extent the SEMP software is able to fulfil the requirements of EMBOK to ensure a successful event. This relates to the impact of the software on events: whether a positive impact, no impact at all or a negative impact. The research attempted to identify the reasons why managers do not utilise the software in Cape Town and for those who do use it; is it able to satisfy all the areas required to organise an event as suggested by EMBOK. It also attempted to discover what software criteria or functions are lacking compared with those identified by EMBOK as necessary tasks to be completed when applicable to the type of event being organised. Businesses rely mainly on technology in order to stand out in the industry (Durcan, 2012). The events industry uses numerous forms of technology during the planning stages, such as email, websites, online registration, etc., as well as during the event, such as lighting, audio and visual, ticketing, and many more. The importance of the research was to identify if the use of SEMP satisfies the needs of the event manager or if the software does not consider the framework set out by the events industry, that is, EMBOK.

The qualitative research and interview guide assisted in the managers' expression of their opinions and their experience of the user friendliness of the software. This was useful in determining the impact the software has on events, as well as why it is not readily used due to the nature of qualitative/thick data (Myers, 2000).

3.2 Research design

There are various forms of research design available: qualitative, quantitative, experimental, and quasi-experimental. The design chosen for the basis of this research was qualitative design. The reason for this is that the researcher requires actual opinions and detailed answers in respect of the users' experience in order to gather the data required to fulfil the aim and purpose of the study (Shuttleworth, 2008). Hale (2011:359) agrees, stating that qualitative research is used when the researcher attempts to reach an understanding of an area. The research used narrative analysis in order to analyse the results from the interviews. Narrative analysis refers to the perspective one has of a particular area of expertise in order to make sense of it (The Education Centre, 2006). Hatch (2002:28) agrees that individuals use story telling or narratives in order to make sense of things. In this case, the aim was to understand if SEMP is able to fulfil all the requirements, as identified by EMBOK, which are needed in order to organise a successful event. This required detailed

explanations and descriptions of the software from the experience of the user, which would be the interviewees in this research.

Several benefits of a qualitative research design have been identified. Using a qualitative research design allows a broader scope for the researcher to work from (Shuttleworth, 2008). Also, the research design is not reliant on the size of its representative sample as the researcher can gather meaningful results from a smaller sample as well (Shuttleworth, 2008). For the research topic, a descriptive representation of the software was needed to determine if it is suitable for the chosen field of study, or if recommendations can be made as identified from the primary source, the event managers.

Qualitative research is selected, as it assists in gathering the required information; in this area there is there is little known about this research method (Education Centre, Hillingdon Hospital, 2006). However, some criticise qualitative research because it still remains "poorly understood" and "underdeveloped" in the events field (Myers, 2000). But one must keep in mind the nature and goal of the research to be conducted. This research required opinions, emotional feelings, and especially the experience of the participants. Therefore, owing to qualitative research's ability to interpret meaning from the "subjects' own frame of reference" (Siegle, 2002), it was selected as the preferred research method.

One benefit of qualitative research is that the information gathered is rich in detail and there is considerable depth in the descriptions in order to create understanding of the data collected (Myers, 2000). Qualitative research uses thick description, although the concept is often misunderstood (Ponterotto, 2006), it states that there is great detail about the individual to understand and to put into context (Ponterotto, 2006). It looks at understanding the individual's actions, behaviours, thoughts, opinions and feelings, which will be interpreted in the research findings (Ponterotto, 2006). Wise (2011) agrees that one must have thick descriptions in order to put the research into context. That means to understand the background or experience of the respondents, and thereby to gain "external validity" (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). For the research, in-depth data was gathered on the respondents (their background, experiences, etc.), as well as the interview guide (using a comprehensive list of questions on EMBOK).

The research used the phenomenological approach, as it aimed to gain an understanding of the experiences, thoughts and feelings of the respondents (Russell & Gregory, 2003). Al-Busaidi (2008) agrees that this approach considers the experiences and/or meanings given by the respondents to these experiences. According to the Education Centre, Hillingdon

Hospital (2006), this approach also attempts to interpret these experiences. Siegle (2002) suggests that research must be continued until data saturation is achieved. This means that it should be evident that there is no new information that could be discovered.
The phenomenological approach does not require a large sample in order to come to a conclusion (Russell & Gregory, 2003). Al-Busaidi (2008) agrees that there is no specific rule on sample size of this approach; instead it must be determined by:

- Depth of the research.
- Duration and length of interview questions.
- Aim of the research.
- Time and resources available to the researcher.

However, potential drawbacks of a qualitative design have been identified, as the researcher has to be more careful when managing the data in order to maintain complete accuracy (Shuttleworth, 2008). The researcher should understand that the information derived from the research is solely a judgement or assessment, rather than a result (Shuttleworth, 2008).

The main section of the interview guide comprises open-ended questions in order to understand the functionality of the software and user preference; quantitative research would be too mathematical an approach and the researcher would not gather relevant or appropriate answers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:148). Quantitative research is too rigid to satisfy the objective of the study, since its *modus operandi* is analysing information expressed in numerical data. As the qualitative approach is able to provide an insight into the thoughts and opinions of the interviewee (Merriam, 2009), it provides the appropriate methodology for this study.

3.3 Variables

There are two variables: using event management software will result in a safer event environment and better event practice. The variables relate to whether or not managers make use of event management software and what impact its use has on the event environment and event practice. That means, whether the software covers every aspect of the event to assist in creating successful events, that is, better event practice, which also means a safer event environment as a result of no aspect's having been overlooked.

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Representative sample

Ajjawi (2013) indicates that the more data or depth the research has, the smaller the sample may be. Marshall (1996) agrees that if the data is able to answer the research question, then there is no limit to the sample size. Guest *et al.* (2006) cites Morse (1994:225) and Creswell (1998) who also recommend at least six and five respondents, respectively.

Five event managers were interviewed for the study. The sample was chosen as they all have experience and in-depth knowledge of the software, as well as using it in the events industry in Cape Town. They were selected by the researcher as they were the only managers who responded in respect of having experience of the chosen software during the initial interrogation phase.

The respondents have both educational and industry backgrounds; this will provide the researcher with different perspectives of the use of the software. The one group will illustrate the benefits of the software through their training of students, which should also elicit the reasons why this software was chosen to be used for training purposes compared with other software; whereas the other participants will respond in terms of their professional opinions on the software's usability and its assistance with events which they have organised and managed.

The participants were chosen once research had identified them as potentially the only professionals familiar with the software in Cape Town. The Summit Software (n.d.) website indicated some of their clients who use the software. The researcher contacted everyone situated in Cape Town to determine whether they were still using it. Once they had responded, the researcher requested their participation in the study.

3.4.2 Research method

The research method chosen for this particular study was an interview guide. The researcher identified this as the chosen method in order to gather the correct data needed to arrive to the right conclusion. The interview will assist in discovering the industry personnel's professional opinions regarding the functionality of the software and what extra features or actions are still lacking and required as identified by the framework set out by EMBOK. The researcher arranged to personally meet with the interviewee and informed them of the research and that their personal information will be kept confidential. They were then informed that the interview would be recorded. The recorded information was then transcribed by the researcher and analysed for results.

The process for transcribing the data was replaying the recording several time in order to ensure that word for word was transcribed. While transcribing several themes stood out and the researcher made notes next to it in order to serve as a reminder when analysing the compiled data. Once all the recordings were transcribed, the researcher highlighted in different colours the themes that were identified in the responses of each of the interviewees. UWE Bristol (2007) indicated that during the process of transcribing the data it is a good idea to code the data in order to allocate them into various themes. Saldana (2013:5) agrees and states that a code must be assigned to the relevant information identified. A code must be labelled either by a word or a symbol in order for the researcher to identify it easily when analysing the data (Impact, 2012:2). For this study the researcher identified the codes using various colours in order for it to be identified by the researcher.

The interview was semi-structured as it contained open-ended questions as well as Likert scale questions. The reason for both forms of questions was to gather opinions and descriptive data to gain an understanding of how the software is viewed by the representative sample of the industry (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:148). The Likert scale was used so that the research can collate a quantitative measurement of what impact the software may or may not have on the outcome or the planning stages of the event.

3.4.3 Instrumentation

The detailed and in-depth data was collected by means of an interview guide in order to get elaborated responses from the respondents on their experiences and opinions of the software. The interview guide was compiled to elicit answers to the following research sub questions:

- Does the software's function satisfy each domain in EMBOK, thus completing all the tasks required?
- Does the use of the software impact on the time, cost or quality of an event?
- Does the use of event management software have an effect on the success or failure of an event?
- Does the use of event management software allow the user to work faster and more efficiently, thus providing a better event practice?
- How can the events industry benefit from implementing event management software?

The questions were compared with their relation to the functional areas of EMBOK's five domains. With the comparison, the questions for the interview guide were compiled to gather the correct data for the researcher to reach a satisfactory conclusion on the research topic.

3.4.4 Procedure

The researcher attempted to identify all the managers that use SEMP in Cape Town. Once they had been contacted to ascertain whether or not they use or had used the software for their own events, they were asked if they would participate in the interview. Each sent his/her consent form in order to participate in the research. The interview guide (Appendix A) was used when meeting the participants. Their answers were recorded by the researcher and transcribed. The information submitted will be confidential and none of their details will be divulged. In-depth interviews were used to determine the experiences the event managers had with SEMP, Moustakas (1994:133) explained that transcribing allows for a word for word analyses of the recorded data which can be used in order to analyse the interviewees' thoughts and determine their experiences and exact feelings (as cited by Park, 2006:12).

3.5 Limitations of the research

The limitations identified for this research could be that the managers might display a lack of veracity in their responses, in order to seem professional. This could impact the results of the research; therefore, the researcher is required to analyse the data carefully and ensure sufficient literature studies support a credible conclusion.

A delimitation identified for the research is that the sample was limited to Cape Town, especially given the magnitude of the events industry. Various cities and provinces have different events, and as a result, have different methods of planning and running events.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The researcher will ensure that full confidentiality will be kept regarding the expert opinions of the interview respondents. The respondents have all been made aware of what the researcher is requesting and they all have giving their consent to participating in the interview. No harm can be done to the participants; the questions will be conducted in a safe environment, and the responses recorded and transcribed verbatim. No information will be altered by the researcher to manipulate the results.

The researcher will not release the names of the participants or the companies they work for. The questions posed and subsequent analysis of the results will be unbiased and accomplished in an ethical manner. The work in the research paper will be solely that of the researcher, and no one else who has not been acknowledged.

3.7 Chapter summary

The qualitative analysis was chosen as it provides the researcher with the descriptive information required in order to answer the research question. In order to accomplish that, the population sample was chosen based on the client list on the SEMP website, as well as individuals from a university of technology in the Western Cape, South Africa, who have experience with the software. They were interviewed and their responses were transcribed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter will analyse the results gathered from the interviews regarding the usefulness of SEMP in events with regard to its ability to assist with all functions in event management. A qualitative approach was undertaken to assist the researcher in gathering the necessary opinions of event industry personnel. The respondents were asked to participate in the interview in order to gather the necessary information to complete the research and reach a conclusion.

After the interview, transcriptions were compiled: there were several discernable aspects of the domain areas that were impacted when using software, such as, time, cost and quality. These aspects will be discussed in greater detail in this chapter. Table 4.1 represents an overview of the respondents who participated in the interview.

Table 4.1: Overview of respondents

Respondent	Position	Background
A	Assistant	Event Management
B	Manager	Event Management
C	Manager	Tourism Management
D	Manager	Tourism Management
E	Junior Lecturer	Food and Beverage Management

4.2 Impact of software on an event

The respondents were asked to describe the impact the use of software has on an event. It was a unanimous opinion that it clearly does have a positive effect. Fink (2012a:4) also agrees and indicates it provides for innovative ideas and solutions to problems. The answers given by the respondents clearly identified three areas in which software assists in the management and planning of an event, as illustrated in Figure 4.1. The needs of the user should be clearly defined, as technology is always changing and one must ensure the software is able to assist the manager (Bergmann, 2012).

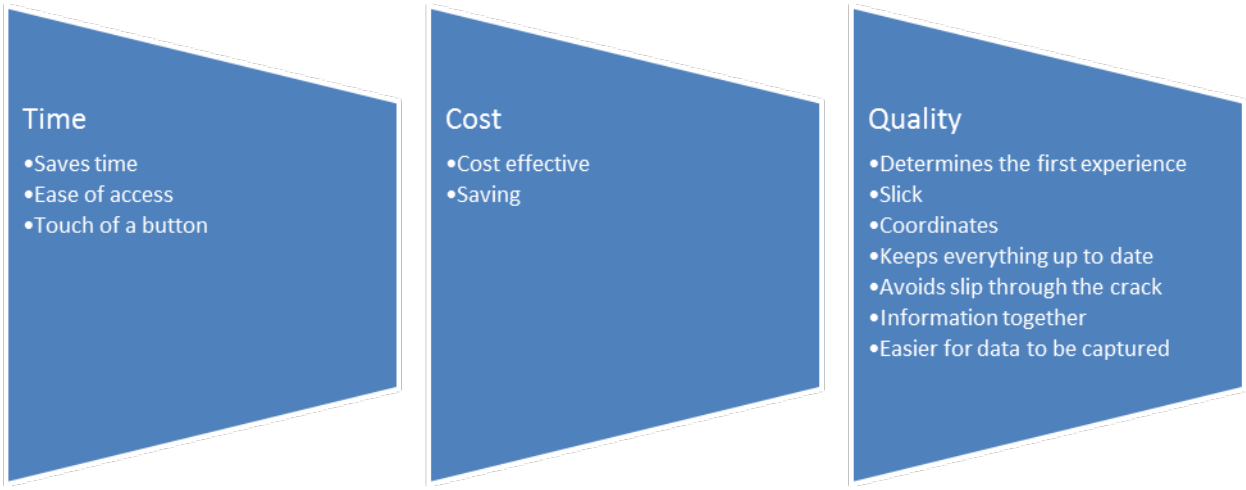

Figure 4.1: Three areas affected by the use of software

However, when asked about SEMP being able to perform every task required, the responses were mostly negative in terms of the quality of work it provides. It was reported that some tasks have "to [be done] on paper" as SEMP is unable to customise to each specific event or theme; it also provided "limited branding". A further correlation was found in the use of the term "limited" with regard to reporting. SEMP is able to provide reporting, but not to the extent which the event manager requires, as they still "need to tweak" various aspects to obtain the final required report. Respondent C indicated that this "leaves room for error" which is not considered a small threat as it could impact financial outcomes. However, when describing the efficiency of the software, respondent B indicated that it allows for completion of tasks in a "time effective manner". This is a positive aspect, since when it comes to the final stages of management, saving time becomes a valuable task; this, however, does not outweigh the negative comments regarding the quality of work. As Oxton (2011b) observes, an event manager should be able to multi-task and work under pressure. Making the most of one's time becomes a crucial factor closer to the event.

4.3 Administrative domain

- *Time*

Four of the participants indicated that one of the most common experiences of SEMP was that their efficiency improved and they managed to save time, as indicated in Table 4.2. Considerable emphasis was put on 'saving', which refers to the time gained; this is an important factor to event managers when organising events. Time management becomes a crucial component of an event manager's work, as it could impact the success or failure of a project. Allen *et al.* (2005:279) concur that by not having a strong hold over the planning of one's event, it could impact the company and the manager's credibility. By using SEMP, the event manager is able to save time as allocating tasks becomes easier. Thus, event managers are able to complete more tasks in a shorter time period than before.

Table 4.2: Time management impacted by SEMP

Rating	1 (least)	2	3	4	5 (most)
There is a noticeable change in time management when using the software.	0	0	1	0	4

The registration process was identified as one area where the manager can improve his/her administration. The software provides the capability to link registration to a website and the details can then be uploaded to the database. This is a significant improvement in work efficiency compared with the previous method of receiving large numbers of registration forms and uploading the information manually. Oxton (2010e) agrees that automation is a safer way to handle and organise data, as it reduces the risks of mistakes. Ladika (2007:62-66) agrees that mistakes should be eliminated, since they waste time and cause embarrassment. Mistakes can have a significant impact on an event and could go unnoticed, with ultimate financial consequences. When completing registration manually, there is a possibility of uploading incorrect information. As a result, a company might need someone to correct a portion of the information at a later stage which becomes a waste of the manager's time. However, in terms of calling up reports when dealing with a large database, it was indicated that SEMP does not always comply. Respondent C stated:

> … because when you've got a delegate database of over a thousand people and you are trying to merge a database on its overlap, then it doesn't work, so my answer is almost one on the one scale, and five on the other, because when the report works it is a five, but when the report has shortcomings, it is a one.

Mass mailing has the capability of reducing the amount of time spent on sending individual emails to each delegate, which can be time-consuming when one is organising a large conference or event. Respondent C indicated that SEMP does not provide the means to assist completely "to customise the communication" between organisers and the delegates, and thus more research will have to be conducted to determine which software will allow them to do so. As communication is a very time-consuming part of an organiser's manifold tasks, it is essential for the software to be able to assist in this regard.

Cost

Significant savings in costs spent on administrative tasks were recognised, such as employing fewer staff in charge of mundane tasks. One example given was that the company no longer had to employ staff to do a head count or report, as delegates could select the tracks or workshops they wanted to attend online; thus, an instant indication of expected numbers was gathered. However, it must be considered that delegates do have a tendency to change their minds at the last minute. This is an obstacle, since software is not programmed to take these vagaries into consideration. Oxton (2010c) contends that companies have turned to software as a way of reducing internal costs in order for the events to become more profitable, respondent C explained:

> … because previously we would have had to put about 3 or 4 people on a conference job, depending on the size, to help just capturing the information; now we can have one agent that just does reports and status updates and so on …

- *Quality*

According to respondent B the software assists in using "less paperwork" in the office. Oxton (2011b) notes that using less paperwork assists in reducing costs and ensures a greener working environment. However, the respondents also agreed that the software could not be used on its own for administrative functions respondent D stated that the organisers "have to use Summit in conjunction with something". SEMP should be used in conjunction with another program for added administrative factors. One of the negative points regarding the quality of administrative work provided by SEMP is the fact that the "reporting is limited". Quality of work conducted is important when considering the administrative phase, as it could have an impact on how well the rest of the event will be managed. Respondent D felt that "every conference is different and you have to adapt"; if one does not adapt, it could affect the organisation of tasks as well as the success (or failure) of the event. Volberda *et al.* (2011:15) explain that in order for the event manager to have a competitive advantage, he/she should be able to find innovative ideas in order to stand out.

4.4 Design domain

- *Quality*

There appeared to be agreement in the preference for completing the design manually by the company or outsourcing it to a design firm respondent C indicated:

> You know our clients spend a lot of money on design and brand identity and the corporate language and the brand language that they want to use, and then with Summit all you can do is stick a logo in the top left- or right-hand corner of the invoice. So if lot of signage is done, we then incorporate external designers to lay our documents [out] for us.

The reason for this was that SEMP's design capabilities were seen as "very limited", and simple by respondent B. As events are constantly changing and the clients try to stand out, the requirements for branding their events become more detailed or personalised to the particular event. Therefore, Summit seems lacking in assisting the manager with efficient design functions, and one of the respondents suggested that in this area SEMP seems to "lag a little behind". There were several negative descriptions regarding the use of SEMP for the design phase, and the following word cloud in Figure 4.2 identifies these descriptions from the respondents.

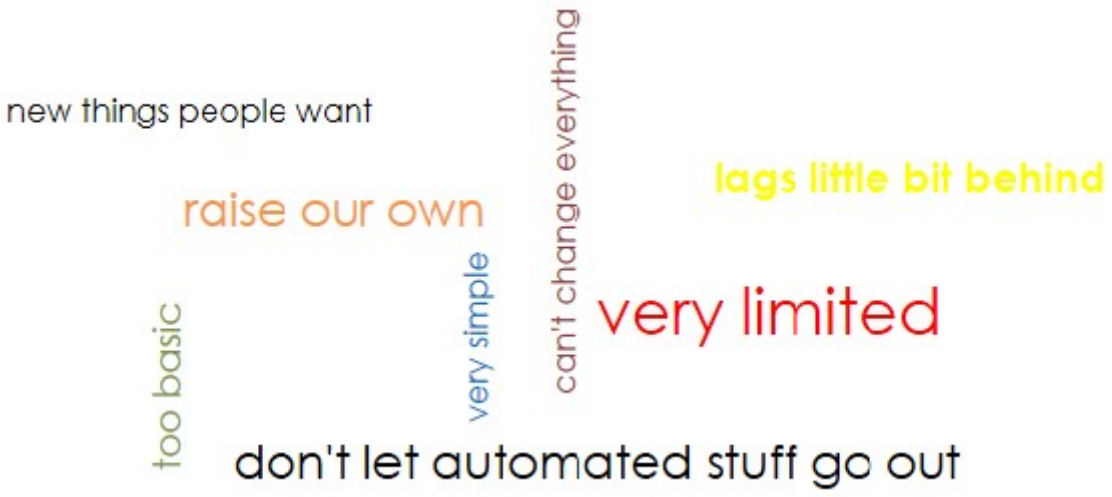

Figure 4.2: Descriptions regarding SEMP's assistance during design phase

4.5 Marketing domain

The results regarding SEMP's assistance with tasks involved in the marketing domain varied between respondents. There was no clear agreement or disagreement regarding the questions, which could lead one to believe that SEMP is not really used for the major tasks involved during this process.

- *Time*

It was remarked that SEMP does not assist in getting the message faster to the target market. "The functionality is there", but when it comes to the design, managers prefer to do it manually as it is faster and can create something more specific to their needs. Three of the respondents rated SEMP as below average and one as average with regard to the time it takes to reach the target market. This can impose a problem for the manager; for example, a message arriving too late to the target market may, in return, have an enormous impact on attendance. As stated by Ladika (2007:62-66), the manager cannot afford to make mistakes. Fox (2008:127) concurs, and explains that time can be managed effectively by the use of reminders and task lists from software.

- *Cost*

The merge messaging service does seem to have a positive impact, especially in terms of cost to the organiser. Sending bulk messages saves a considerable amount of money when routing a message to a specific target market. Whiteling (2008:35-36) agrees with the respondents that the use of technology assists in targeting a wider market and allows communication to reach them faster. Respondent C indicated that bulk messaging was possibly the only assistance the manager received when needing to contact the target market, but owing to design constraints, they preferred not to go that route. They also found little or no improvement in the cost of the marketing phase. The managers also preferred to handle the marketing aspects manually on hard copy, as opposed to using SEMP.

- *Quality*

Peters (2007:125) mentions that when considering the use of software, one should ensure the software assists in all tasks and does not leave any task unattended. The respondents indicated that the software assists in contractual requirements not being overlooked and the management of procurement practices illustrates a slight improvement. However, when looking at the actual marketing of the event, there seemed to be consensus with regard to doing the work manually, rather than using the software's functions. Respondent C stated:

> There isn't room for a lot of graphic coding or html kind of design; it is very simple functionality.

Some of the responses elaborated and explained that there was no way to market events in a unique and personalised manner, as the software "has very simplistic functionality". Respondent A explained that there was not a lot of focus on "how to market your event itself".

However, the link between the website as well as bulk messaging seemed to be of assistance. Respondent E was of the opinion that the website functionality did improve the management of registrations, which assists one's marketing of the event. Respondent E indicated:

> You can obviously send out your emails, or your marketing tools are better, so I have to say it does actually assist with your marketing, because it just makes it easier, and if it is linked to your website as well, then you can do your registration for the event and everything.

4.6 Operations domain

- *Time*

Even though the research indicated that the use of the software for the operations phase provided assistance, the respondents still agreed that some functions were easier to do manually. Some of this included signage, or communicating directly with suppliers, as this would save time. Respondent B noted that:

> It is much easier to communicate the operational side of things straight through to the service providers themselves so working through a software program is not always that efficient.

However, the ability of the software to provide task or activity lists with due dates and times does assist in improving the process and ensuring that everything runs on time. As some of the respondents stated, the activity or task list clearly assists in delegating tasks and identifying the responsible person for each task, including their deadlines. According to respondent E:

> You can do your name badges according to your programme, you have a checklist, you have a task list, you have all your individual workings before an event and you can break [down] the specific activity according to that, and by when it should be completed, and by what time and by what date, etc.

Jenkins (2005:23) also contends that by using a task list or event plan the manager has considerably more control over the potential decisions that need to be made regarding the event. Tassiopoulos (2010:109) agrees that the plan serves an important purpose for the event planning phase as it assists in the team's seeing the bigger picture, or the event goals and vision.

- *Quality*

The majority of the respondents perceived the operation domain's features or functions to be satisfactory in the software. However, there were several functions that were reported as too basic and that could not be altered to suit a specific event or their brand identity, in that the software provided a "very basic layout". Therefore, it was deemed expedient to complete some of the functions manually, such as the programme planning, layout planning, communication, and administration of exhibitions/exhibitors. Respondent D stated:

> Every exhibition is also different, so there's a certain point where it can do the standard and then the rest you have to do yourself.

4.7 Risk domain

- *Time*

A project plan puts together all the identified tasks, the roles of the team and resource plans required for an event; it is deemed to be necessary in order to have a successful event (Bender, 2010:25). The software signifies an improvement in time management for event managers. It was mentioned that it assisted in keeping to deadlines, flagging dates and providing reminders for specific people, as illustrated in Table 4.3. The majority of respondents indicated that the software definitely assisted in reminding them of future deadlines, thus ensuring nothing was overlooked that could impact the outcome of the event. Respondent B indicated that SEMP assisted one to "stick to time management, which is more effective when running an event".

Deadlines and time management are crucial aspects of event management as they could have legal implications if items or agreements should be omitted in respect of contracts. It could result in an event's being unsuccessful, as everything was not arranged on time for the final day. There was consensus that assistance in flagging dates was a crucial and helpful feature of SEMP to ensure no important deadlines were missed.

Table 4.3: Assistance of SEMP in managing time and deadlines

Ratings	1 (least)	2	3	4	5 (most)
Software takes into account future deadlines, thus assisting in reducing failure to meet those deadlines.			1	3	1

- *Cost*

Using alerts and reminders on the software reduces the chance of financial penalties for an event and company should contractual promises be breached. In some instances, bad time management, such as failure to remember when suppliers or contractors should be paid, could result in penalties added to events' expenses. These unforeseen expenses could have an unexpected effect on the cash flow of the event. Respondent C elaborated:

> I think what's great about the software is the deadlines and the project planning where we can actually flag dates, and flag dates to certain people.

- *Quality*

The majority agreed that the software does not assist in taking risk areas into account. This could mean it does not have the ability to identify possible areas one should consider, depending on the type of event. However, it does give a breakdown of all the activities in the form of a task list which could assist in identifying anything left out by manually reviewing it. What respondent B did find very useful, was that SEMP has the ability to "put all of your needs on one sheet". This assists in making the work environment more efficient, as it allows the user an overall view of what has been done and what tasks are still outstanding. Bartholomew (2002:29) suggests that the software used by event managers does not completely help them with all their tasks they need to complete. Bartholomew (2002:29) therefore claims that one should identify the needs of the user and identify any possible feature that is not provided by the software in order to make it more desirable to the industry.

Some areas that the software cannot be expected to assist with are contracts. The individual has to manually review, interpret and take note of important requirements from contracts. According to respondent D:

> With planning, you need a human being with that. Like with contracts, the contract says this, but not that; you have to do it manually. It's too much to expect a program to do that. I say deadlines, otherwise we end up paying for everything like hotels or whatever, and the risk of booking an entire hotel when you've only got 20 rooms … I can't have a software [program] reading a contract; there are certain things on a contract like words [for] which you need a brain. I don't think a computer can do it.

4.8 Chapter summary

The analysis of the interviews suggests that SEMP does have many benefits in assisting event management; however it does not assist in all the areas indicated by EMBOK required for a successful event. The most common term used was 'saving' in terms of the time saved by using SEMP. A considerable number of administrative benefits have come to light, but the software seems to lag behind, especially in the design aspect. Most of the answers reported many tasks having to be done manually or in combination with other software. There are many positive attributes of SEMP, but the terms 'limited' or 'simple' militated against these, and this could be problematic with more demanding or specialised events.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

Technology trends should be carefully monitored and managed in order to follow them, as this could ensure the company's gaining a competitive advantage. Event managers and events companies should attempt to remain abreast of trends in order to satisfy their clients' wishes. The clients' aim is also to impress their delegates with their unique functions, as this will help them stay ahead of their competitors and will ensure that the event remains the most talked-about function. SEMP was selected since the company advertises itself as the 'total solutions provider', assuring its clients of its ability to handle every genre of events (Summit Software, n.d.).

Once all the functional and management areas of the EMBOK had been analysed, it was determined that SEMP does cover several of the management areas from the five domains, but only to a certain extent and in a simplistic form. The software is not able to personalise each event specifically for the unique theme clients might require. Also, it was not able to fulfil all the requirements EMBOK identified to organise a successful event.

However, it was discovered that SEMP does improve work efficiency and that the event organisers are in favour of using software; unfortunately there is no specific software which caters to all their needs for events. It was indicated during the interviews that with some functions, the manager cannot complete the task in SEMP alone, but has to complete the task in conjunction with other software. This becomes time-consuming and there is a greater risk of losing information or making errors. There are some functions, such as contracts, where the event manager cannot rely on software or other computer programs. Contracts play such a large role in events, that if anything were to go wrong owing to contractual failure, it could have a disastrous impact on the event. Some functions are therefore better left to managers to handle personally.

5.2 Advantages of Summit Event Manager – Pro

There is consensus among the interviewees that the software has the ability to assist in the improvement of time-management in the workplace. It allows for managers to focus on other important tasks and let the software handle the rest. Some of these tasks include web integration of online registration. This feature allows the software to compile a database as each delegate registers online. Also, by permitting the delegates to register for their desired sessions, it allows the manager to have better control of capacity monitoring per venue instead of having an employee stationed at each venue to do a head count.

The software also provides the user with all their information in one place. Once the information is captured, everything is kept together and everyone that needs to access it can do so. This does make the work environment more efficient and effective as the manager does not have to search through several folders or papers when he or she needs certain data. Also, owing to the link between email and the Internet, it does entail less paperwork in the office. Paperwork has a tendency to be misplaced, and if there are no copies or backup, it could be problematic. But with all the information stored on the software, this risk is minimised.

One major benefit the software has is its ability to provide detailed task/activity lists. These lists are able to identify each task that is still outstanding and indicate the starting time of the task as well as the deadline and designated responsible person. These could be used to flag certain dates, and set reminders. They ensure that deadlines are not missed, which could have disastrous consequences.

5.3 Disadvantages of Summit Event Manager – Pro

The most agreed upon disadvantage of the software was that many of the functions had to be done manually. SEMP provides a plethora of functions; however when it comes to design, such as marketing material, layouts, invoice design, etc., it provides the manager with only a basic option. SEMP does not provide many features to personalise a design for a particular event theme or look; one is only able to insert a logo.

A major disadvantage was the limited ability of the software to provide detailed and usable reports. In many cases managers had to use other software in conjunction with SEMP to display the information they required in report format. At other times the reports had to be imported into other software, such as Excel, and columns moved and arranged to display the information in a specific order. This practice was deemed a waste of time as well as risky, as the information could get lost in the process of moving around columns.

A further problem experienced with SEMP is its inflexibility after a certain point. In events management, the manager should be able to be flexible when it comes to certain tasks, as things do change and one should be able to adapt. However, the software does not allow this after a certain point in use. Another inflexible function is the marketing domain. As mentioned before, the software has limited design abilities; this could be a problem when it comes to marketing. In focusing on events marketing, creativity is required to secure the target market's attention. However, SEMP does not facilitate marketing, as only a basic layout is provided. Managers therefore preferred either to outsource these functions, do them manually, or use other software.

SEMP is described as useful but many of the functions are still outsourced or done manually, as it does not allow for personalisation of an event. The options provided by SEMP remain standard, with basic layouts. Managers had a positive attitude to using this software for events in general, as it does fast track the time-consuming tasks, especially administrative ones. However, it was concluded that SEMP does not include all the features in its software identified by EMBOK to organise a successful event.

5.4 Further research to be conducted

Further analysis into all of the most popular software packages used in South Africa could be conducted. The analysis could include a rating of each software package in order to determine which one is able to complete the most tasks required during the organisation of an event. This could prove useful to event managers when they are considering the purchase of software. The research could provide a checklist to determine which software would be most suited to their business needs.

Such research could use two case studies of events of similar genre and with like features; however one would be organised using event software and the other without. The researcher would then be able to analyse the two events and determine benefits accruing from using (or not using) the software, with regard to time, cost, and quality, as well as the implications the software's use (or non-use) has on the events' outcome.

5.5 Recommendations

- The software company should consider looking to collaborate with a design software vendor in order to provide the event user with a lot more options to design their event. The software should have the capability to personalise for each event according to the needs of the user and client.
- Allow the event user to determine in what form or setup the reporting documents should be run.
- Due to the inflexibility of the software, tasks such as marketing activities are outsourced. The software should be able to assist these functions and provide more options and not just the basic layout.
- Allow all the information to be stored and accessed in real time on the cloud so that the manager can access the information anytime anywhere. Ease of access of information is crucial in running a business today as the manager must be able to continue her work in the field and not just in the office.

5.6 Conclusion

Software functionalities do ease some of the burden of managers as they provide efficiency in the workplace. However, it was found that SEMP offered events-only standardised features and did not allow the manager to tailor the program to a specific event. The design of the software was deemed too simplistic, as it does not assist in creating unique once-off features for an event. This does pose as a problem, as not all events are the same, and with the changing nature of business, the clients' demands are always changing and their requirements are important. Clients want to stand out, and host unique events; in this requirement SEMP is unable to assist.

The results concluded that there was a clear indication that the software did have an effect on the end result of an event, but that there were also a few problems with regard to SEMP. The research aimed to determined if SEMP is able to apply all the areas identified by EMBOK that are required in order to organise a successful event. It was determined that it does allow for more efficiency and that mundane tasks are attended to a lot faster, however it does not allow for flexibility or unique creativity. There are a lot of the design tasks which are still attended to manually as SEMP cannot assist with this regard as well as some of the reporting tasks. Some reports cannot be gathered according to the needs of the user therefore flexibility in the software is not identified.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following research is being conducted in order to determine what benefits managers' gain from using the Summit Event Manager – Pro software and if there are any extra functions they require from the software. Please note that all the information you administer is confidential and your personal details will not be divulged.

Please select one of the following and mark it with an X.

Section A – Biography

1. What is your title?

Manager	Coordinator	Supervisor	Assistant	Other (Specify)

2. What is your educational background?

Tourism Management	Project Management	Event Management	Financial Management	Other (Specify)

3. What tertiary qualification do you have?

None	National Diploma	Degree	Master's	Doctorate	Other (Specify)

Section B – Personal Experiences

4. Do you think event management software has any impact on the outcome of your final product?

Yes	No

5. If yes, please specify how.

6. To which extent does the software allow you to complete every task that you need it to perform?

Section C – Likert Scale Question

Please select which is more appropriate, 1 being the least and 5 the most applicable.

Administrative Domain

	1	2	3	4	5
7. Does the software allow you to complete certain tasks faster than doing them manually on paper?					
8. Are finances managed and controlled in a simple and useful manner?					
9. Is there a noticeable change in time management when using the software?					
10. Are all the administrative tasks completed more efficiently using the software?					

11. Elaborate to what extent the software provides/does not provide efficient assistance for all your administrative needs. (Include personal experiences.)

Design Domain

	1	2	3	4	5
12. Is making last-minute changes to the event design simple?					
13. Does the software help ensure that no element is overlooked?					
14. The software is able to help create the programme design and changes to the design.					
15. The work efficiency level during the design phase has improved.					

16. Elaborate to what extent the software provides/does not provide efficient assistance for all your design needs. (Include personal experiences.)

Marketing Domain

	1	2	3	4	5
17. The software assists in ensuring that no contractual requirements are overlooked when managing sponsors or key role players.					
18. The software ensures procurement of merchandise is more efficient.					
19. The software improves communication with target market, in terms of time to reach them.					
20. The software improves communication with target market, in terms of cost to get message across.					

21. Elaborate to what extent the software provides/does not provide efficient assistance for all your marketing needs. (Include personal experiences.)

Operations Domain

	1	2	3	4	5
22. The software assists in ensuring relevant messages are sent to the required personnel/attendees.					
23. The software ensures that a detailed plan is available for all personnel to ensure safety during setup, the actual event and breakdown.					
24. The software has improved logistical plans required to keep the event on time.					
25. The software improves communication with event goers with regard to maps, signage, ticketing etc.					

26. Elaborate to what extent the software provides/does not provide efficient assistance for all your operational needs. (Include personal experiences.)

Risk Domain

	1	2	3	4	5
27. The software assists in taking into account all possible risk areas.					
28. The software takes into account contractual promises and assists in managing them accordingly.					
29. The software takes into account future deadlines, thus assisting in reducing failure to meet those deadlines.					
30. The software improves communication with all relevant personnel with regard to emergency plans or protocols.					

31. Elaborate to what extent the software provides/does not provide efficient assistance for all your risk needs. (Include personal experiences.)