

Case study – TOURFILM (Czech Republic, Karlovy Vary)

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Introduction

The international festival of films devoted to tourism TOURFILM is the eldest festival with this topic in the world. The festival takes place in Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) in October every year¹. The case study uses information about the festival for deepening of professional knowledge and skills of future tourist business managers, especially the ability to complexly evaluate the situation and create visions and strategic objectives during decisions.

After solving the questions of this case study, the students will be able to:

1. analyze the situation, foresee future development and create a vision and strategic objectives for further evolvement of the festival
2. notice basic factors and understand their influence on the organization of an international festival (and analogically, other similar events organized in travel business)
3. understand the process of an important international festival organization
4. comprehend the importance of an international festival for the development of tourist business
5. realize the importance of tradition and solve the conflict between preserving the tradition and respecting contemporary and future demands of interested subjects.

Basic information regarding the case study

The description of the festival and its importance

The international festival TOURFILM is the eldest, the biggest and the most famous competitive festival specializing in films devoted to tourism in the world.

The TOURFILM festival organizer is the agency CzechTourism (National tourist organization). Since 1992, the agency AVANT Promotion s.r.o has been entrusted with the organization of the festival. The festival TOURFILM is a member of the International Committee of Tourism Film Festivals C.I.F.F.T. residing in Vienna².

Program of the festival

The program consists of several parts:

- Competitions
- Professional
- Festive
- Others

The main goal of the festival is to present and evaluate films, audiovisual recordings and multimedia, whose content and artistic level support the development of tourist business. Those video recordings, TV films, spots and multimedia are accepted for competition, whose purpose is the popularization of tourist business with one of the following themes: countries, regions and cities, active utilization of leisure time (culture, sport etc.); and the support of commercial objectives in tourist business. The competition has 4 categories:

1. video recordings and films representing states, regions and cities
2. video recordings, clips and films of commercial tourism

3. TV films with the theme of tourist business
4. multimedia (www + CD ROM) with the theme of tourist business

Competing recordings are evaluated by an international jury consisting of film directors and specialists in tourist business. The jury is appointed by the Festival committee every year. The jury awards one main prize – Grand Prix and then the three first places in each category.

Only 30 countries submitted an entry for the first year; in contrast of 2010 when 136 countries participated (with ca. 600 recordings).

Professional program involves

- projections of submitted recordings and multimedia, divided according to the continents
- workshops, discussions and exchange of experience among specialists in tourist business, film directors and journalists
- exhibitions with the theme of travelling (exhibitions of photographs, promotional material, maps and guidebooks from the competition TOURMAP)
- briefings and meetings with prominent travelers
- presentations of TV companies
- TOURFILM student Academy (lectures of experts concerning the topic of advertising)

Festive program involves

- additional festive, gastronomic, cultural and sport events (golf, tennis)

Other parts of the program are intended for media representatives (press conferences, Media Party), partners etc.; they also contain other events and commercial happenings.

Main program of the festival for public takes place during 2 days, some events are offered during the whole Carlsbad's week. The program takes place in several places simultaneously. The opening ceremony and the following main program (the show of the festival's celebrity and meeting with famous travelers) take place in the Small hall of the hotel Thermal. Competing recordings are shown in 3 halls simultaneously. In adjacent rooms, additional exhibitions and shows of the guests take place. A specific program for media representatives is held in special areas. The TOURFILM Student Academy takes place in the congress hall. Entertaining program and display of adrenalin sports are in front of the hotel Thermal. The Nether Railway-Station hosts airing of the competing films in Cinematotrain and a tennis tournament takes place in the Geyser Park. The festive Gala evenings, during which the creators of winning recordings receive prizes, are held during both days in the Ceremonial Hall of the Grandhotel Pupp.

The importance of the festival

The importance of the festival lies especially in its professional contribution. It provides chance of meetings, establishing of contacts and experience exchange of film directors. It offers the opportunity to get to know trends and news and to compare one's own creations with the best of the best. The awarded prizes are a prestigious chance for the producers. An important contribution is also the strengthening of the image of Carlsbad and the whole Czech Republic – thanks to the international participation and the presence of important guests the information about the festival is distributed by both Czech and foreign agencies. Festival also attracts professional visitors to Carlsbad and broadens the program available to other guests of the city.

The participants of the festival

The participants of the festival are primarily specialists in film production and tourist business and also teachers and students of schools specializing in tourist business. A specific group of participants are VIP guests of TOURFILM – the invited performers, the members of the jury, the representatives of state, regional and town institutions, the representatives of sponsor and partner companies. Another group are journalists.

Since travelling is one of the most common activities of people, a huge part of the program is meant for laic public, for all who enjoy travelling – the citizens and the Carlsbad's guests. A part of the visitors of the festival consists of foreign guests, both specialists and laics.

All parts of the program are available for everyone for free. The only exception is the Gala evenings that are, for capacity and for decorum reasons, opened for invited guests only.

Collecting data about the visitors of the festival is difficult, because a huge part of the program takes place outdoors. The estimate (in 2012) for specialized visitors is 400 persons and over 3000 persons of laic public.

The development and history of the festival

The first year of the festival TOURFILM took place in 1967 in the town of Špindlerův Mlýn. Since the number of visitors grew and the festival went through development, the capacity of Špindlerův Mlýn became insufficient. The festival was moved to Carlsbad to the Grandhotel Pupp in 1974 and in 2009 to the hotel Thermal. The reason for the last change was better facilities for organizing of the specialized program. The festive part of the program stays at the Grandhotel Pupp.

Apart from the change of place, also the program of the festival underwent several changes. New categories for competition were added accordingly to the development of media: TV travel films category and multimedia category (www + CD ROMs). These new categories show progress every year.

Since 2003, one famous celebrity has been invited every year. The “festival's star” presents his or her work during the main program. Czech public therefore has the opportunity to learn about his or her exceptional results.

Until today these celebrities have been introduced:

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| Erich von Däniken | A writer and a mysteryologist; the author of 29 books concerning yet unsolved mysteries of our planet; the main advisor of the TV series The X-Files; in 2003 Däniken opened The Mystery Park in Interlaken in Switzerland, where he introduced mysterious places of our planet through a virtual presentation, but due to unsatisfactory profitability the park was closed after 5 years. |
| Jane Goodall | A researcher who studies the behavior of wild chimpanzees; she wrote 22 books and shot 13 films, from which “Return to Gombe” was presented during TOURFILM in 2004. |
| Reinhold Messner | A mountaineer and famous adventurer; he was the first man who conquered all 14 eight-thousand mountains; he climbed Mount Everest twice without oxygen masks; he organized more than 20 trips to see yeti; he wrote around 50 books; he shoots films and gives lectures all over the world. |
| Mark Inglis | A mountaineer; he conquered Mount Everest despite having both legs amputated. |
| Michael Palin | A member of the famous group Monty Python's Flying Circus; he shot 6 major travelogues for BBC and became one of the most respected TV travelers in the whole world. |

- Mike Horn An instructor of extreme sports and one of the most famous adventurers and travelers; a member of many expeditions; he's part of the 4-year expedition PANGEA.
- Ian Wright Belongs among the best TV travelogue broadcasters of the new generation in the whole world; he is the star of The British TV program Globe Treter.
- Charlotte Uhlenbroek A researcher; she shoots exceptional films about communication with animals and about the life of chimpanzees in African jungle for BBC.
- A guest of honor is usually also the well-known Czech traveler, ethnographer and writer, Dr. Miloslav Stingl³).

Every year, the supportive program of the festival is enlarged and becomes more attractive for public. E.g. the cooperation with Czech TV companies develops since most TV channels air also films and programs about travelling. During the "Day with the TV", the TV companies get the opportunity to present their programs about travelling. The entertaining program is being enlarged as well, there are many adrenalin sports in front of the hotel Thermal (aquaball in a pool, a trampoline, segway, jumping boots, a jumping castle, a jumping hot-air balloon, a tourist bus PRAGA from 1925). There is also a special part of the program for children, called "The Children's Day with TOURFILM". Another part of the program is a golf and tennis match.

During the development of the festival, it became connected to other events specialized in tourist business. Since 2003 it's been enlarged by the national festival of tourist films TOUR REGION FILM. Approximately 170 films participate in the national competition – it is independent and the results are announced separately from the international competition. In 2004, TOURMAP, a competitive festival, became part of TOURFILM. TOURMAP awards prizes to guidebooks and maps. As a part of the festival's program, an exhibition of the competing titles (around 300) is held.

Since 2010, TOURFILM became part of the Karlsbad's Week⁴. Due to the connection of TOURFILM and the Spa Festival under the Karlsbad's Week, the TOURFILM competition was enlarged with a section of movies with the Spa theme.

The elements of organization

The preparation of the festival is a long-term matter; especially the invitations of important guests have to be sent in advance, sometimes even more than one year before the festival takes place. Also the competitive part of the festival is kept secret from the public and is prepared several months before the festival begins (submissions, evaluation by the jury). The organizer looks for new participants and partners all the time; the festival is advertised during main tourist business fairs in London, Berlin, Madrid, and Milan etc.

The organization of the festival includes putting together the program and ensuring the participation of all performers, translations Czech-English, ensuring all areas and the equipment needed for the features of the program, informational service etc.

Apart from preparing the program, other services have to be provided as well: transportation, catering, guest service (for performers, members of the jury, VIP service for guests of honor – accommodation, trips/excursions, and personal services), service for the media (providing a press centre), and additional service. It is also important to concern the advertisement of the festival in advance.

The funding of the festival

The state's contribution is about 1/3 of the budget. Other financial sources are contributions of the city and the region, contributions acquired from partners and sponsors of the festival. Some services are solved by the means of barter.

Conclusion

After 45 years of the festival, TOURFILM became a set date in the calendar of specialized events in the Czech Republic. During its development, the festival was enlarged from the point of view of number of competing recordings, their categories and participating countries. The specialized program was enlarged as well, together with additional activities and the specter of visitors. The festival has been so far capable of keeping up with the times, reacting to the changes in the society, dynamic development of tourist business and development of media and technology and keeping up the development. The success of TOURFILM is not incidental; it was brought by a cautious strategy of the festival development.

Supplementary notes

1) Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) is the biggest and most important spa city in the Czech Republic. It has a very good infrastructure for the development of tourist business, a wide variety of spa stays, and a rich cultural and festive program. Those are the reasons why visitors from all over the world come here. The city lies in the west part of the Czech Republic, 120 km from Prague, the capital.

2) C.I.F.F.T. (Comité International des Festivals du Film Touristique) was founded in 1989. This institution connects the organizers of the most important film festivals in tourist business. The goal of this organization is to coordinate the dates of the festivals in a given year and to support films about tourist business. The finale of the series of film festivals and the year-worth work is the "festival of festivals" – the festival C.I.F.F.T. in Vienna.

3) Dr. Miloslav Stingl, born in 1930, is a famous Czech ethnographer, writer and traveler. He worked for the Academy of Sciences of Czechoslovakia; he studied non-European nations and their culture and art. He visited 151 states, drove around the Earth 16 times and he wrote 41 books about his journeys and research. He is an honorable chief of the Indian tribe Kickapoo.

4) The Karlsbad's Week is a project of agency CzechTourism, its goal is to support advertisement and commerce in the field of tourist business and spa business. It's been organized since 2005; nowadays it connects 3 important events of tourist business:

The film festival TOURFILM

The Spa Festival

The Conference of the Association of the Spa Areas of CR

Points for discussion

For future visions:

- What are future possibilities of the development of the festival?
- What is fundamental for the continuation of the festival; what is a key factor? (Finances, interest in participating – to submit films for competition...)
- What feature, from the so far 45 festivals organized, do you consider to be fundamental and important to be preserved as a traditional part of the festival; what factors have already been surpassed and what new ones would you incorporate?
- Is Karlsbad a fitting place for the festival also for the future?
- What will influence the festival during the years to come?
- What can endanger the festival during the years to come?

- Who are the participants of the festival; is it desirable to change the structure of the guests? In what direction?
- What do creators (filmmakers, advertising agencies) expect to gain from the festival?
- What do producers (submitters, those who fund the films) expect to gain from the festival?
- What do representatives of the city expect to gain from the festival?
- What do state's institutions expect to gain from the festival (The Ministry for Regional Development, The Czech Tourism Authority)?
- What do specialists expect to gain from the festival?

For the program, organization of the festival:

- How can the festival be attractive for public?
- What is the content of the festival; is it desirable to change its structure; in what direction?
- How would it be possible to provide self-funding of the festival (to enlarge the profit of the budget of the festival)?
- Precisely formulate the goals of the festival for the following year, in 5 years, in 10 years etc.
- Suggest celebrities whom you'd invite for the festive program of the festival.
- Suggest main themes for the festival for the following 3 years.
- How do media influence the image of the festival in the eyes of – public, specialists?

For advertisement:

- The centre of the festival is film production. What changes occurred in the content in the past; what sort of development can be expected in the future?
- If you were a member of the jury, what criteria would you choose for the evaluation of the films? How much would each criterion contribute to the overall evaluation of the film?
- Whom would you nominate as a member of the jury for an international festival?
- (After having seen the winning picture from the last-year festival) Why (due to what features) was this film considered to be the best one?

Sources:

<http://tourfilm.cz/>

The winning competing film

2010 *Welcome to Riga* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sflsgGhgSZA>

2011 *Mexico en tus Sentidos* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrnyopQs0bk>

2012 *Gstaad* <http://www.tourfilm.cz/?setWeb=1>

youtube: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Welcome+to+Riga++&aq=f

Ostrava 2011 children - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYSGjbG9WSw>

Switzerland not only mountains

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SnwvaqM4cw&feature=related>

Switzerland sexy www.youtube.com/watch?v=kd9QtTosCU0&feature=related

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