

Solmaz Filiz Karabağ, Mehmet Cihan Yavuz  
and Christian Berggren

# The impact of festivals on city promotion: A comparative study of Turkish and Swedish festivals

## Abstract

*Tourism literature suggests that cities as corporate brands which can be promoted in the market and communicated to stakeholders. City tourism managers use tourism products such as festivals or other special events to promote their city as a corporate brand. This paper examines how festivals, in particular, affect the promotion and communication of a city in different market levels. A survey instrument was used to gather data from festival managers in İzmir, Turkey, in April 2009; and Göteborg, Sweden, in April 2009. The main findings indicate that managers perceive their festivals as creating community cohesiveness and strong communication among the current residents. However, they view the impact of the festivals on the promotion of the city within its country or in the international tourism market as limited. This study ultimately suggests that the festivals of İzmir are less efficient in promoting the city and that Göteborg festivals work to promote the city in Sweden and in the larger regions of Scandinavia.*

## Key words:

*city promotion; city communication; festival management; İzmir; Göteborg*

## Introduction

Research finds that "[t]he growth of festivals and special events in numbers, diversity and popularity has been enormous in recent years" (Gursoy, Kim & Uysal, 2004, p. 171). One reason for the growth in festivals might be the important role that events play in tourism related marketing (Kim & Chalip, 2004). Festivals and other events that attract visitors (Light, 1996) compensate for the seasonality of ordinary tourism (Higham & Hinch, 2002), promote a city's image (Roche, 1994), and contribute to the development and sustainability of the urban economy (Bramwell, 1997). Therefore, it is in the best interest of those public, private, and non-profit organizations that wish to promote the image and "brand" of their city to support special events (Gursoy et al., 2004; Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004).

---

**Solmaz Filiz Karabağ**, PhD., Södertörns University, Sweden;  
E-mail: sfkarabag@gmail.com

**Mehmet Cihan Yavuz**, PhD., Çukurova University, Turkey;  
E-mail: mcyavuz@cu.edu.tr

**Christian Berggren**, PhD., Linköping University, Sweden;  
E-mail: christian.berggren@liu.se

In tourism literature, the number of studies conducted on festivals is showing an increase since the early 1990s (for a review, see Getz, 2008). These studies primarily investigate the impacts of environmental values on tourism motivation (Kim, Borges & Chon, 2006), the economic impact of festivals (Moscardo, 2007), the social impact of festivals, the motivation and satisfaction level of festival visitors, and the perceived impact of festivals and special events on local communities (Gursoy et al., 2004). Recently, however, new research themes are emerging. These include the structure of the festival industry (Andersson & Getz, 2009) and the relationships among stakeholders (Larson, 2002; Richards & Ryan, 2004). Although promotion and communication capacity are some of the most important functions of festivals, few studies focus on them. Prentice and Andersen (2003) and Raj (2003) studied the impact of the Edinburgh festivals on the promotion of the city's cultural tourism. Richards and Wilson (2004) also analyzed the effects of the events that took place during Rotterdam's tenure as the European Capital of Culture in 2001. Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003) evaluated the influence of two local festivals on tourism promotion, using public assistance and visitor expenditures as their control factors. These studies use either tourist expenditures or tourist numbers to determine how events influence the promotion of a city. Moreover, individual studies tend to focus on and analyze events in only one city (e.g., Edinburgh) or one country (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003).

While the organizers and researchers mention promotion and communication capacity of festivals, few studies focus on what managers think about the promotion and communication capacity of their festivals. However, since festival managers make important decisions pertaining to the promotion and communication capacity of festivals, they have extensive knowledge about the aim and operation of festivals and may be better equipped than others to evaluate a festival's impact. Moreover, perceptions of stakeholders (e.g., managers, residents) are widely used to evaluate the impact of festivals in existing literature. Gursoy et al. (2004) examine the impact of festivals and special events from the perspective of their managers, and attempt to understand managers' perception on the impact of festival on community cohesiveness, economy of the city, social incentives and cost. Furthermore Byrd, Bosley, and Dronberger (2009) use stakeholders' perceptions to evaluate tourism's affect on rural areas. To date, two important factors are absent from the tourism literature: (1) how managers of festivals perceive the contribution of their events to city promotion and (2) what differences exist between cities in different countries.

Therefore, the aim of the current study is to understand how events affect and contribute to the promotion and communication of a city. While previous studies use tourists' expenditures and quantity of tourists to measure the affect of events on a city's visibility, the current study uses the perceptions of festival managers. In an attempt to expand the geographical breadth of tourism literature, this study incorporates festivals from both Sweden (Göteborg) and Turkey (İzmir).

The paper is structured as follows. The first section reviews the literature on place marketing and promotion. It discusses how city tourism literature discusses place marke-

ting and promotion, how promotion and communication activities affect city tourism, and what function festivals serve in city tourism. The second and third sections summarize the methodology of this research and display the key results. The final section discusses the findings and the impact of festivals on city promotion and communication. It also states some implication for the cities' future festivals and researchers who wish focus on promotion and communication capacity of events.

## Literature review

### MARKETING AND PROMOTION MIX IN CITY TOURISM

In place marketing, a place is treated as a product and geographical locus that exists in a market and competes with other places. Place marketing has been in practice since the beginning of American colonization. Over time, it evolved from a tool used to attract people for work and habitation purposes into an income generator. According to Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008), the historic development of place marketing involves three main stages, although locating these stages within specific time intervals may be difficult because they often overlap. In the first stage, which began in the seventeenth century and continues in different forms today, place marketing promotes destinations for the purpose of agricultural colonization and industrial expansion (Ward, 1998). From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, it primarily furthered agricultural colonization. Companies (e.g., ICRR Associates Land) advertised their lands extensively in Western Europe, hoping to attract new inhabitants. Later on, place marketing became "smokestack chasing" or, in other words, the selling of industrial sites. This type of marketing was widely used in Western Europe and North America between the 1930s and 1970s. In the latest manifestation of this first stage, place marketing, began in the 1990s and still persists, aims to promote an existing city and its attractions, often emphasizing low labor costs, in an attempt to attract inward investment. In the second stage, from the 1990s to the present, place marketing operates as a planning instrument for cities wanting to revise their image and as a promotional instrument for post-industrial cities (Ward, 1998). This stage involves activities such as mass and specialized marketing, the improvement of city infrastructure, increased co-operation among public and private sectors, re-imaging of cities, and competition in the tourism market. In the third stage, which began in the 2000s and continues to date, place marketing involves the branding of places and communication with city stakeholders in a manner similar to corporate communication activities (Barke, 1999; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). As evidenced by these stages, one or more marketing mix approaches are often used to accomplish several functions. Here, the promotion mix of place marketing is discussed.

As compared to consumer products, a city or festival as a product is more complex and therefore creates difficulties for marketing practitioners (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2002). The same place (i.e., city) or festival can have different meanings for different consumers. For example, a city resident may attend a festival to interact with other city residents or just to enjoy his or her leisure time; a local or international firm may attend the same festival in order to sell or promote its products; and a tourist may attend for entertainment and to experience the local culture (Ashworth & Voogt, 1990).

In the tourism marketing literature, cities are treated as products that can be sold or corporate brands that can be promoted and communicated. For example, Ashworth and Voogt (1990) deal with the city as one part of a region's total tourism offerings. Buhalis (2000) and Ward (1998) approach the city as a product that can be sold and promoted. Balakrishnan (2008) discusses how a city can be positioned as a product within a larger market. Ekinici and Hosany (2006) regard the city as a corporate brand and argue how the concept of brand personality can be applied to it. Kavartzis and Ashworth (2005), Morgan et al. (2002), and Yavuz (2007) explain how the city can be branded, re-imaged, and promoted. Finally, Trueman, Klemm, and Giroud (2004) examine whether a city can be communicated to stakeholders as a corporate brand. The current study accepts the notion of the city as a brand that can be promoted in the market and communicated to stakeholders.

### **THE PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION OF CITIES**

Many destinations that aim to establish themselves in the international tourism market launch large-scale promotional campaigns, mostly in the form of advertisements, to improve their image and attractiveness (Tosun & Bilim, 2004). Although these advertisements present the general features of a destination and increase awareness about its name, they can be insufficient when it comes to supporting a destination's unique position within the larger market. Moreover, such promotions do not strongly affect the buying behavior of tourists (Yavuz, 2007). However, more effective promotion and communication tools can be used to increase city tourism. Events such as trade fairs and festivals can double as mass communication and promotion vehicles. According to Seisdedos's study, 71% of the marketing managers in European cities use trade fairs as promotional tools in addition to business seminars, media outlets, and cultural and sporting events. A few managers promote their city on the Internet; however cities market, promote, and communicate with face-to-face tools more than non-face-to-face tools (Seisdedos, 2006).

For corporations and firms, events are key components of their marketing and image promotion strategies (Bowdin, Allen, Harris, O'Toole & McDonnell, 2006). Cities have followed suit in recent years, using events for self-promotion, and as a result, events and festivals are increasingly recognized as valid tools for city branding and marketing (Roche, 2000). Tourism packages have started to include festivals and events as central features (Picard & Robinson, 2006). In addition, festivals and events can be used to change the image of a city. For example, Johannesburg has used event-driven place marketing to effectively change its reputation as an unsafe city (Cornelissen, 2005). According to Seisdedos (2006), city marketing strategies tend to favor face-to-face promotional activities such as trade fairs, business seminars, cultural and sporting events sponsorship, road shows and study tours. In response to recent developments in marketing communication technologies, cities should transition from persuasion to interaction, listening and relating to target audiences (Hughes & Fill, 2007). Thus, festivals and events, which create an interactive, relational, and experience-based atmosphere, can become the key promotion and communication tools for cities.

## THE IMPACT OF FESTIVALS ON CITY TOURISM

Throughout recorded history, human beings have organized informal or formal events to mark important cultural or natural activities. These events have often centered on themes such as seasons, agricultural products, or personal and national achievements (Allen, O'Toole, McDonnell & Harris, 2002), but in tourism studies, events and festivals exist as products and promotional tools (Crompton & McKay, 1994; Uysal & Gitelson, 1994). Hall (1989) notes that events have different types of social, political and economic impacts on societies. Hall (1992) also points out that festival organizers and local governments tend to focus on the economic impact of events and festivals rather than their social functions to protect cultural and historical heritage or create recreational and leisure opportunities (Long & Perdue, 1990). Furthermore, according to Felsenstein and Fleischer (2003), successful festivals and events increase the demand for tourism and help re-image a city.

The impacts of events and festivals on society, the economy, the environment, and city tourism are widely studied, but studies have focused on mainly their economic benefits. For instance, the economic benefit of festivals and events is the most widely researched factor in event management literature (Crompton, 1995; Crompton & McKay, 1994; Jackson, Houghton, Russell & Triandos, 2005; Long & Perdue, 1990; Moscardo, 2007; Mules & Faulkner, 1996). However, a few studies focus on how festivals affect communities (Gibson, 2005; Gursoy et al., 2004; McCabe, 2006; Jackson, 2008; Small, Edwards & Sheridan, 2005). For example, Jackson (2008) examines how residents perceive special events and finds that they tend to recognize an event's economic and social impact.

Events like festivals are cultural artifacts that cannot simply be consumed (Waterman, 1998). They create an interactive medium for communication among stakeholders and contribute to participants' sense of identity in different market levels such as in the local market, in the national market and in international market. This makes them an ideal forum for tourism marketers, who can easily interact with tourists during a festival and use these interactions to hone their promotional activities and communicate specific messages. Examples of cities that have successfully used festivals in place marketing activities include Barcelona (Nagle, 1999), which has used events to position its tourism products. After the 1992 Olympic Games, Barcelona's popularity as a short visit destination moved from the 16th to the 13th place among Europe's top cities (Report of Department of Communities, Media and Sport, 2007). The destination organization of Barcelona, Turisme de Barcelona, had previously used the phrase "enjoy the sun" to promote Barcelona as a tourism product but changed to the more official phrase, "a cultural and business tourism city." Since 2000, Barcelona maintains its image as a cultural destination by hosting several noteworthy events such as the "Year of the Contemporary Art," "Year of Gaudi," and "Year of Design" (Sabau, 2008, p. 24). Another example of marketing success is Edinburgh. According to Prentice and Andersen (2003), the Edinburgh festivals have helped establish the city as an international art attraction. In the same vein, Raj (2003) explained how the Edinburgh festivals promotes the city's image as a cultural locus in the same way the promotion of Leeds'

West Indian Carnival expanded the attractiveness of Leeds as a culturally vital tourism destination. Another outstanding example is Tamworth, which uses a country music festival to differentiate itself from other cities that promote themselves with music festivals featuring opera or jazz (Gibson, 2005). Additionally, according to Richards and Wilson (2004), the Cultural Capital events in Rotterdam successfully contribute to the city's image as a cultural destination. Finally, Gimeno Martinez (2007) highlights the impact that mega cultural events have had on Antwerp's image as a fashion capital.

In the same way that corporate agents use events to locate target audiences and tailor their branding messages (McDonnell & Gebhardt, 2002), cities use events to successfully hone their image and promote themselves in the tourism market. Although cities use several tools such as festivals and events in their place marketing mix (Hall, 1992), few studies measure how these tools contribute to the actual promotion and communication capacity of a city. Furthermore, the views of festival managers on the contribution of their events to city promotion and communication have yet to be thoroughly examined.

## Methodology

The aim of the current study is to investigate how festivals contribute to the promotion and communication capacity of a city. Whereas previous studies use tourists' expenditures and the number of tourists to measure the impact of festivals, the current study uses the perspectives of festival managers. Data was collected from festival managers by a survey administered in İzmir, Turkey, and Göteborg, Sweden.

### PARTICIPANTS

Sweden and Turkey started organizing tourism-oriented festivals to increase their presence in the market. Statistics confirm that this growth is especially notable in Turkey. According to the Turkish Statistics Institute (TUIK, 2010), while the organized festivals numbered 26,610 in 2005, it rose to 35,246 in 2008. Furthermore, the number of event and festival visitors was 44 million in 2005, it reached 51 million in 2009 (TUIK, 2010). Similar growth is evidenced by the Annual Report of Göteborg (2008) in Sweden, which demonstrates that one city festival—the Culture Night and Göteborg Culture Feast—attracted almost 600,000 people, approximately 16% more than in the previous year.

Göteborg and İzmir particularly aspire to be event cities in their respective countries and organize many local, national and international festivals. İzmir, stands as one of the primary candidates for events based tourism city in the proposed Turkish National Tourism Strategy for 2023. This city has been the candidate of being host of many international events such as Expo, sport games, fair and conferences. In addition, the managers of the city collaborate with the İzmir Foundation for Culture, Arts and Education and organize or host events such as the İzmir International Festival (24th in 2010), İzmir European Jazz Festival (17th in 2010), National Composition Contest, Culture Congress (Izmir Foundation for Culture Arts and Education, 2011). Therefore, this city is event oriented both historically and strategically. Göteborg is

the host of many international events, beginning in the 1950s. In order to improve its competitiveness in event industry, the city stakeholders such as Göteborg Municipality, and the West Sweden Chamber of Commerce and Industry etc. formed Göteborg & Co which aims "to market and take part in developing Göteborg as a tourist, meeting and event destination" (Goteborg & Co., 2011). The annual report of the Göteborg & Co shows that the goal is achieved and the contribution of Göteborg's events to the city tourism is growing (See Göteborg & Co Annual Report, 2010). This information indicates that these cities are committed to becoming event cities. Since these two cities which have similar event management objects, are competing in their national event industries, might be one of players in the global event industry in future, it is accepted that these cities can be compared with each other easily.

The festivals of İzmir and Göteborg included in this study were selected from the web pages of cities (i.e. Göteborg & Co., 2009; İzmir İl Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü, 2009). Activities that had themes of national independence or freedom were excluded, since they target the local community and create community cohesiveness. While İzmir and its districts hold several events commemorating independence, Göteborg does not have any such events. Excluding İzmir's independence celebrations created consistency, making it possible to focus on similar types of events, such as entertainment, film, and jazz festivals. Following necessary exclusions, there were 25 festivals in İzmir and 20 festivals in Göteborg. Festival managers were contacted via phone and invited to participate in the study. The manager response rate from İzmir's was 28% and Göteborg's was 40%. These response rates were accepted since they were close the previous studies participants rate (for example see Gursoy et al., 2004)

## STUDY DESIGN

In order to achieve the aim of the study, a quantitative research method has been used. There are several reasons to use this quantitative method. First, one of the major aims of the study was to understand the perception of festival managers on the contribution of their events to their cities' promotion and communication in different market levels. Using quantitative approaches and collecting the data via structured questions in the survey from the managers in two cities had advantages and disadvantages, and helped to achieve that aim. As stated in the introduction, many studies focus on the best practices and use case studies. However, the case study method gives detailed information about the selected best practicing city, but it has limited generalizability because there are average or poor performer practices. Although surveys are inflexible and create limitations, especially regarding the receipt of complete information from participants, they are still a useful tactic when distance separates researcher from subjects (Sapsford, 2006). The data for this study was collected from two different cities, thus, surveys were advantageous. Furthermore, since the researcher aims to understand specific promotion and communication impacts of festival on the city in different market levels for instance in the city, national or international market, the structured questions in the survey allows the researchers to observe them easily. To navigate the limitations of the using, the survey method presents in terms of information acquisition, the authors communicated with each participant on the phone on multiple occasions and explained the questions when necessary.

## **SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

The survey had two parts; the first aimed to collect descriptive information on regular festivals taking place in these cities. The second aimed to measure the perceived contribution festivals made to the promotion and communication of these cities. Survey questions used a Likert-type response scales ranging from 1, which equaled disagree, to 5, which equaled agree. In order to measure the impacts of festivals, the authors first drafted 20 possible items in Turkish. Two graduate students enrolled in a destination management course at a Turkish university evaluated those items. After the students completed their reviews, the authors selected 12 items. The final version of the survey was translated into Swedish by one of the authors and three graduate students from a Swedish university revised the Swedish version.

Since this kind of impact study has not previously existed in the literature, the authors had to develop the questions themselves. However the impact of festivals tried to be constructed on several major dimensions which were developed in the light of existing literature. Those dimensions are the communication and promotion impact of a festival on the city in the different market levels. In place marketing, festivals serve as a promotion and communication tool targeted not only at potential tourists but also at place stakeholders such as residents and local entrepreneurs and firms in the city, in the country and abroad (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008).

In order to understand how much a festival contributes to its city's communication and promotion in the different market, four groups of questions were asked. The first group questions such as "This festival helps the city's residents to socialize.", "This festival helps the people originating from this city but living in other cities or abroad socialize with the city's current residents." and "This festival increases the collaboration among local institutions and firms." were used for understanding the potential communication and promotion impacts of festival in the home city. The second group questions such as "This festival helps introduce the city to other Turkish/Swedish citizens.", and "This festival helps promote the city in Turkey/Sweden" were aimed to explore how a festival helps the communication and promotion of the city in the national market. The third group questions were asked in order to examine if the festival help the communication and promotion of the city in the international market. Final group of questions such as "This festival popularizes the city." were used for investigating general impact of a festival on the city image.

## **Findings**

This study's findings were obtained from statistical calculations such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviation. Table 1 presents the descriptive findings from each included festival broken down by city. Descriptive findings were categorized according festival type, organizer, time, scope, budgets, sponsors' contributions, number of visitors, and types of advertisements.



Table 1

**DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION OF PARTICIPATING FESTIVALS (in numbers)**

Descriptive information	İzmir	Göteborg
Number of participating festivals	7	8
Survey response rate (%)	28	40
Type of organizer (1)		
Public (municipality/civil government)	7	1
Non-profit or joint	0	4
Private	0	3
Type of organizer (2)		
Professional festival organization	2	4
Internal department	5	4
Time		
Once a year	7	7
Other	0	1
Scope		
Local	4	2
National	1	2
International	2	4
Budget		
Less than 50,000 €	NA	2
50,001–200,000 €	NA	1
More than 200,001 €	NA	3
Sponsor contributions to festival budget		
0%–33%	3	3
34%–67%	1	2
67–100%	0	2
Number of visitors		
Less than 10,000	3	2
10,001–40,000	3	3
More than 40,001	1	3
Types of advertisement media		
Brochure or invitation (Yes/No)		8/0
Advertisement in newspaper or journal (Yes/No)		6/2
Radio (Yes/No)		3*/5
TV (Yes/No)		3/5
Webpages of festivals and sponsors (Yes/No)		7/1
Advertisement in e-media, i.e., newspaper (Yes/No)		2/6

\* Local media

As shown in Table 1, descriptive information shows that the participants of the İzmir festivals are more local than international (see Table 1). The two İzmir festivals that were international used professional festival organizers. The municipality and counties of İzmir financed most of the festivals. İzmir use published media (e.g., newspapers, brochures), TV, and radio in most cases, but not electronic media. The included festivals of Göteborg were more international than national and local. Half of them were organized by professional festival organizations. Göteborg's primary advertisement tools were published and electronic media, and Göteborg festivals rarely used TV and radio.

Table 2 includes the themes of the festivals. İzmir, known for being industrialized, modern, and dynamic, is a leader in sports and arts activities (Yavuz, 2007). Therefore in some cases, İzmir tries to bid for international events such as sport games. Yet, the themes of the İzmir festivals only partially reflect the city's perceived image since most relate to agricultural products (e.g., flowers, cherry) and only a few relate to art or poetry. While Göteborg is known by visitors as safe, friendly, and clean (Chen & Pan, 2006), it wants to create a more westernized city identity centered on partying, celebration, pleasure, sightseeing, shopping, relaxation, exploration, and discovery (Göteborg, 2010). The themes of Göteborg's festivals tend to relate to entertainment (e.g., film, music, and comedy), culture, and science. These themes parallel the city's desire image, partly due to the major role played by Göteborg's municipality in organizing the events. A comparison of festival themes between these two cities shows that İzmir's festivals are more rurally oriented than The Göteborg's.

Table 2  
**FESTIVAL THEMES**

	İzmir	Göteborg
Themes	Cherries	Culture
	Art	Science
	Fishing and Diving	Music
	Flowers	Entertainment
	Poetry	Film
	Youth	Comedy
	Children	

To measure managers' perceptions of the impact that their festivals have on the promotion and communication of their cities, the frequencies of their agreement and disagreement with individual items were calculated. The results of those calculations are presented in Tables 3–4.

In İzmir, managers perceived their festivals as having a limited impact on city promotion and communication. As shown in Table 3, they tended to agree with the items that measured the impact of festivals on the local community, such as, "This festival helps the city's residents socialize," "This festival helps fellow citizens socialize with the current residents of İzmir," and "This festival increases the collaboration among local

institutions and firms" (see items i1, i2, i9). However, they tended to disagree with items that evaluated festivals' promotional and communicational impacts on the Turkish and international tourism markets (see items i3, i4, i5, i6, i7, i10, i11, and i12).

Table 3  
**PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF IZMIR'S FESTIVALS ON CITY PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION**

Item numbers	Items	Frequencies			Mean	Standard deviation
		Disagree (%)	Neither disagree nor agree (%)	Agree (%)		
Perceived impact in local market						
i1	This festival helps the city's residents socialize.	0.0	0.0	100.0	4.29	0.5
i2	This festival helps the people originating from Izmir but living in other cities or abroad socializes with Izmir's current residents.	0.0	14.3	85.80	4.29	0.8
i9	This festival increases the collaborations among local institutions and firms.	14.3	0.0	85.70	4.00	1.0
Perceived impact in national market						
i3	This festival helps introduce Izmir to other Turkish citizens.	42.9	28.6	28.60	3.00	1.5
i4	This festival helps introduce Izmir to international tourists.	57.2	14.3	28.60	2.57	1.8
i5	This festival helps promote Izmir in Turkey.	42.9	14.3	42.90	3.00	1.7
Perceived impact in international market						
i6	This festival helps promote Izmir as an international tourism attraction.	42.9	0.0	57.20	3.14	1.8
i7	This festival helps promote Turkey abroad.	71.5	0.0	28.60	2.42	1.8
i8	This festival helps introduce local culture and tourism products to international tourists.	42.9	14.3	42.90	3.00	1.7
i10	This festival helps promote local products and services abroad.	42.9	28.6	28.60	2.58	1.3
Perceived impact in general						
i11	This festival increases the trade potential of Izmir.	42.9	28.6	28.60	3.00	1.5
i12	This festival popularizes Izmir.	42.9	28.6	28.60	3.00	1.5

Table 4 presents the Göteborg festival managers' perceptions of their festivals' contributions to city promotion and communication. They believe that their festivals make a significant contribution in the local community (see items g1). However, only three managers feel that their festivals create communication among former citizens of Göteborg, and only some managers agree that their festivals contribute to the trade potential of Göteborg (see items g10 and g11). Half of the surveyed managers think that their festivals contribute to the promotion and communication of Göteborg in Sweden (see items g3 and g5). However, the impact of the festivals on the promotion of Göteborg abroad was thought to be restricted (see g4 and g6). In addition, some managers indi-

cate that their festivals are not international but rather Scandinavian attractions. Despite some variation in the findings, it is concluded that the surveyed festival managers in Göteborg believe that their festivals contribute to the promotion and communication of Göteborg in Sweden and in Scandinavia.

Table 4

**PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF GÖTEBORG'S FESTIVALS ON CITY PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION**

Item numbers	Items	Frequencies			Mean	Standard deviation
		Disagree (%)	Neither disagree nor agree (%)	Agree (%)		
Perceived impact in local market						
g1	This festival helps the city's residents socialize.	0.0	25.0	75.00	4.50	0.9
g2	This festival helps the people originating from Göteborg but living in other cities or abroad socializes with Göteborg's current residents.	37.5	25.0	37.50	3.12	1.7
g9	This festival increases the collaboration among local institutions and firms.	25.0	12.50	62.50	4.00	1.40
Perceived impact in national market						
g3	This festival helps introduce Göteborg to other Swedish citizens.	12.5	25.0	62.50	4.00	1.2
g4	This festival helps introduce Göteborg to international tourists.	37.5	25.0	37.50	3.12	1.5
g5	This festival helps promote Göteborg in Sweden.	12.5	12.5	75.00	4.00	1.1
Perceived impact in international market						
g6	This festival helps promote Göteborg as an international tourism attraction.	25.0	25.0	50.00	3.62	1.3
g7	This festival helps promote Sweden abroad.	12.5	12.5	75.00	3.88	1.0
g8	This festival helps introduce local culture and tourism products to international tourists.	25.0	12.5	62.50	3.50	1.4
g10	This festival helps promote local products and services abroad.	50.0	12.50	37.50	3.12	1.60
Perceived impact in general						
g11	This festival increases the trade potential of Göteborg.	25.0	12.50	62.50	3.50	1.40
g12	This festival popularizes Göteborg.	12.5	12.50	75.00	4.25	1.50

Comparisons between the festivals in these two cities indicate that the festivals function as leisure activities for the residents. The managers of the Turkish festivals strongly support the notion that their festivals function as a communication medium between the people originating from the host city but living elsewhere and the current residents. In the Göteborg context, however, the festivals' function as a communication medium between these groups was perceived as weak. A majority of the mana-

gers from all three cities agree that their festivals partially contribute to the promotion and communication of their city in the larger context of their countries. However, the results suggest that the festivals in Göteborg help promote the city outside of the country more effectively than the festivals in İzmir.

## **Conclusion and discussion**

The purpose of this study is to understand how much festivals can contribute to the promotion and communication of a city in different market levels. Data was gathered from the managers of festivals in İzmir, and Göteborg by means of a survey conducted in 2009. The managers tend to believe that their festivals partially contribute to the promotion and communication of their city. Above all, the study results suggest that the festivals create a communicative atmosphere among the residents of cities. These finding parallels the results reported by previous literature, which indicates that festivals create recreational and leisure activities for local communities (Byrd et al., 2009) and contribute to social coherence (Gursoy et al., 2004).

For this study, the managers from two cities rate the impact of festivals on their city's trade potential as relatively low. This does not support the current literature, which strongly argues that festivals influence the local economy (e.g., Jackson et al., 2005; Long & Perdue, 1990; Uysal & Gitelson, 1994). However, it is consistent with sociological research (e.g., Rao, 2001), which suggests that festivals are public goods and therefore, they support community cohesiveness over economic growth (Gursoy et al., 2004). The discrepancies between previous studies and the current study regarding economic impact may be caused by differences in measurement strategies. Previous studies focus on tourist expenditures or the revenue of tourism firms. However, the current study does not use this kind of direct financial measurement. As Crompton and McKay (1994) point out, reports on the economic impact of festivals in the literature tend to be overly optimistic because they focus on revenue impact and disregard costs. Moreover, depending on their position, some stakeholders perceive the economic impact as negative while others perceive it as positive (Byrd et al., 2009). The festival managers surveyed for this study may have goals, such as increasing the social benefits (especially in art, science, and film festivals), that distract them from the festivals' economic repercussions.

The findings suggest that not all festivals contribute to the promotion of a city in its country or in the international tourism market. Although this partly contradicts previous studies that have perceived festivals as promotional tools that further the development of city tourism (Cornelissen, 2005; Gibson, 2005; Picard & Robinson, 2006; Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Raj, 2003; Richards & Wilson, 2004; Roche, 2000), there are several potential explanations for the contradiction. First, the research methods of previous studies primarily focused on the best practices and used case studies. While the case study method gives detailed information about the studied object, it has limited generalizability. Therefore, it might be possible to find poorly performing festivals in those cities, and future studies might which focus on all the festivals within a city.

A second explanation may relate to the size of the festivals in the current study, which includes both smaller local festivals and larger international festivals. Because of this range, some of the surveyed festival managers may not view national or international visitors as a target audience. The identity of festival organizers can also influence a festival's impact on the promotion of a city. In the Turkish city, İzmir, the municipality is the main event organizer, thus they may tend to focus on community benefits over development of city tourism. A further explanation can be found in the theme and content of festivals. According to several studies, in order to establish the image and attractiveness of a destination, festivals and events should have themes that distinguish them from their competitors (Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond & McMahon-Beattie, 2004). However, some festivals in the current study do not have unique themes. For example, several festivals in İzmir celebrate agricultural products that may not interest tourists. Additionally, an evaluation of festival themes in both cities revealed that each had international film, art, and jazz festivals, which have become common in the market. The use of generic themes may actually limit the effectiveness of these cities in promoting themselves as destinations.

## Implications

The current study suggests that festival managers rate the impact of the festivals on the promotion and communication of their city as low especially in Turkey. The festivals instead tend to build cohesion among local residents. These findings of the study have implications for festival developers and organizers such as strategy developer of the city, local festival organizers and private agencies which support, contribute or organize festivals in order to promote their cities in different market levels. Festival developers and organizers of a city should be sure that future organized festivals are part of total city tourism objectives. In other words the selected theme, size, activities, uniqueness and promotion activities should be part of the city tourism objectives. This implication might be especially important for Turkish cities. For the Swedish city the market is limited to Scandinavia region, thus the festival developers and organizers of this city should plan and implement new strategies for extending the market scope from the neighborhood countries' market level to the global market level.

The findings of this study have also implications for tourism research. One of the major implications is there are clear differences in the capacity of festivals in different market levels. Therefore it is important to make a distinct separation between local and international festivals in future studies and state that not all festivals contribute to the promotion of cities in all market levels. Furthermore, the observed findings of the study are not partly parallel to the place marketing literature. Hence, future studies may increase the number of cities from different countries and observe the impact of festivals on city promotion.

Lastly, the primary limitation of current study should be stated here. Unfortunately, the number of studied festivals in current study is limited. Thus future studies should increase the number of the festivals.

---

## Acknowledgements

The first author thanks the Swedish Institute (SI), which supplied a generous Post-Doctoral Scholarship and made this research possible. The authors would also like to thank all the festival managers who took the time to complete the surveys and answer all the questions. In addition, the authors are grateful to Ann-Christine Forsberg, Dzamila Bienkowska, and Lena Anderson for their excellent reviews of the Swedish version of the survey. The authors would also like to acknowledge the editorial input from De Martin, Zirve University.

## References

- Allen, J., O'Toole, W., McDonnell, I. & Harris R. (2002). *Festival and Special Event Management* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Milton: John Wiley and Sons Australia Ltd.
- Andersson, T.D. & Getz, D. (2009). Tourism as a mixed industry: Differences between private, public and not-for profit festivals. *Tourism Management*, 30(6), 847-856. Doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2008.12.008., 1-10.
- Annual Report of Göteborg City* (2008). Göteborg: City of Göteborg Publication.
- Ashworth, G.J. & Voogt, H. (1990). Can places be sold for tourism? In G.J. Ashworth & B. Goodall (Eds), *Marketing Tourism Places*. London: Routledge.
- Balakrishnan, M.S. (2008). Dubai-a star in the east: A case study in strategic destination branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1(1), 62-91.
- Barke, M. (1999). Place marketing as a planning tool. In M. Pacione, (Ed.), *Applied Geography: Principles and Practice* (pp. 486-496). London:Routledge.
- Bowdin, G.A.J. Allen, J., Harris, R., O'Toole W. & McDonnell, I. (2006). *Events Management*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Bramwell, B. (1997). Strategic planning before and after a mega-event. *Tourism Management*, 18,167-176.
- Buhalis, D. (2000). Marketing the competitive destination of the future. *Tourism Management*, 21, 97-116.
- Byrd, E.T., Bosley, H.E. & Dronberger, M.G. (2009). Comparisons of stakeholder perceptions of tourism impact in rural eastern North Carolina. *Tourism Management*, 30, 693-703.
- Chen, N. & Pan, H.H. (2006). *Gothenburg's Image as a Tourism Destination Among Typical Tourists and Sport Tourists*. Master Thesis No. 2006:90. Tourism and Hospitality Management Department of Göteborg University.
- Cornelissen, S. (2005). Entrepreneurial urban governance and development in Africa: Challenges, opportunities and lessons from South Africa. In U. Engel & G.R. Olsen (Eds.), *The African Exception: Contemporary Perspectives on Developing Societies*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing.
- Crompton, J. & McKay, S.L. (1994). Measuring the economic impact of festivals and events: Some myths, misapplications and ethical dilemmas. *Festival Management and Event Tourism: An International Journal*, 2, 33-43.
- Crompton, J.L. (1995). Economic impact analysis of sports facilities and events: eleven sources of misapplication. *Journal of Sport Management*, 9, 14-35.
- Ekinci, Y. & Hosany, S. (2006). Destination personality: An application of brand personality to tourism destination. *Travel and Tourism Research*, 45, 127-139.
- Felsenstein, D. & Fleischer, A. (2003). Local Festivals and Tourism Promotion: The Role of Public Assistance & Visitor Expenditure. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(4), 385-392.
- Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: definition, evolution, and research. *Tourism Management*, 29(3), 403-428.

- Gibson, C. (2005). Festivals: Community and capital. In C. Gibson & J. Connell (Ed), *Music Tourism: on the Road Again* (pp. 210-259). Bristol: Channel View Publication.
- Gimeno Martinez, J. (2007). Selling Avant-garde: How Antwerp became a fashion capital (1992-2002). *Urban Studies*, 44(12), 2449-2464.
- Göteborg & Co (2010). *Annual Report*. Retrieved June 09, 2011, from <http://www2.goteborg.com/templates/Page.aspx?id=7960>
- Göteborg & Co. (2009). *Festivals*. Retrieved April 01, 2009, from <http://www.goteborg.com/sv/Evenemang/s/Events/resultList.asp>.
- Goteborg & Co. (2011). *About Göteborg & Co, Education*. Retrieved June 09, 2011, from <http://www2.goteborg.com/templates/Page.aspx?id=8110>.
- Göteborg (2010). *Graphic Identity Manual 1.3, 2010: Göteborg as a destination*. Göteborg: Göteborg & Co Publication.
- Gursoy, D., Kim, K. & Uysal, M. (2004). Perceived impacts of festivals and special events by organizers: an extension and validation. *Tourism Management*, 25(2), 171-181.
- Hall, C.M. (1989). Hallmark events and the planning process. In G.J. Syme, B.J. Show, D.M. Fenton & W.S. Muller (Eds.), *The Planning and Evaluating of Hallmark Events*. Brookfield: Gower Publication.
- Hall, C.M. (1992). *Hallmark Tourist Events - Impacts, Management and Planning*. London: Belhaven Press.
- Higham, J. & Hinch, T. (2002). Tourism, sport and seasons: The challenges and potentials of overcoming seasonality in the sport and tourism sectors. *Tourism Management*, 23, 175-185.
- Hughes, G. & Fill, C. (2007). Redefining the nature and format of the marketing communication mix. *The Marketing Review*, 7(1), 45-57.
- Izmir Foundation for Culture Arts and Education (2011). *The aim of the Foundation of Izmir Culture, Art and Education*. Retrieved June 09, 2011, from [http://www.iksev.org/iksev\\_tr\\_02.php](http://www.iksev.org/iksev_tr_02.php).
- Izmir İl Kültür Turizm Müdürlüğü (2009). *Local and international activities* (in Turkish). Retrieved April 10, 2009, from <http://www.izmirturizm.gov.tr/Genel/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFF3562477F0F09B0DCE3C2099AE7544165>.
- Jackson, J., Houghton, M., Russell, R. & Triandos, P. (2005). Innovations in measuring economic impacts of regional festivals: A do-it-yourself kit. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 360-367.
- Jackson, L.A. (2008). Residents' perceptions of the impacts of special event tourism. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1(3), 240-255.
- Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G.J. (2005). City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Tijdschrift Voor Ecnomische en Sociale Geografie*, 96(5), 506-514.
- Kavaratzis, M. & Ashworth, G.J. (2008). Place marketing: how did we get here and where are we going? *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1(2), 150-165.
- Kim, H., Borges, M.C. & Chon, J. (2006). Impacts of environmental values on tourism motivation: The case of FICA, Brazil. *Tourism Management*, 27, 957-967.
- Kim, N. & Chalip, L. (2004). Why travel to the FIFA World Cup? Effects of motives, background, interest, and constraints. *Tourism Management*, 25, 695-707.
- Larson, M. (2002). A political approach to relationship marketing: case study of the Storsjöyran festival. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4(2), 119-143.
- Lee, C.K, Lee, Y.K. & Wicks, B.E. (2004). Segmentation of festival motivation by nationality and satisfaction. *Tourism Management*, 25(1), 61-70.



- Light, D. (1996). Characteristics of the audience of event at a heritage site. *Tourism Management*, 17, 183-190.
- Long, P.T. & Perdue, R.R. (1990). The economic impact of rural festivals and special events: Assessing the spatial distribution of expenditures. *Journal of Travel Research*, 28(4), 10-14.
- McCabe, S. (2006). The making of community identity through historic festival practices: The case of Ashbourne Royal Shrovetide Football. In D. Picard & M. Robinson (Eds.), *Festivals, Tourism ad Social Change: Remaking Worlds* (pp. 99-118). Bristol: Channel View Publication.
- McDonnell, I. & Gebhart, S. (2002). The relative effectiveness of special events as a promotional tool: A case study. *Conference proceeding of Australian UTS: Business Event Research Conference* (pp. 389-401). Retrieved May 20, 2009, from <http://www.business.uts.edu.au/acem/pdfs/Proceedings.pdf>.
- Morgan, N., Pritchard, A. & Pride R. (2002). *Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- Moscardo, G. (2007). Analyzing the role of festivals and events in regional development. *Event Management*, 11(1/2), 23-32.
- Mules, T. & Faulkner, B. (1996). An economic perspective on special events. *Tourism Economics*, 2, 314- 329.
- Nagle, G. (1999). *Focus on Geography - Tourism, Leisure and Recreation*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes.
- Picard, D. & Robinson, M. (2006). Remaking Worlds: Festivals, tourism and change. In D. Picard & M. Robinson (Eds.), *Festivals, Tourism ad Social Change: Remaking Worlds* (pp. 1-31). Bristol: Channel View Publication.
- Prentice, R. & Andersen, V. (2003). Festival as creative destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 3(1), 7-30.
- Raj, R. (2003). The impact of festivals on cultural tourism. *The Proceeding of 2<sup>nd</sup> DeHaan Tourism Management Conference: Developing Cultural Tourism*. Retrieved May 15, 2007, from <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ttri/pdf/conference/raj%20razaq.pdf>.
- Rao, V. (2001). Celebrations as social investments: Festival expenditures, unit price variation and social status in rural India. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 38(1), 71-97.
- Report of Department of Communities, Media and Sport (2007). *Winning a Tourism Strategy for 2012 and Beyond*. London: Department of Communities, Media and Sport of United Kingdom. Retrieved May 30, 2009, from [http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/tourismstrategyfor2012\\_fullreport.pdf](http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/tourismstrategyfor2012_fullreport.pdf).
- Richards, G. & Wilson, J. (2004). The impact of cultural events on city image: Rotterdam, Cultural Capital of Europe 2001. *Urban Studies*, 41(10), 1931-1951.
- Richards, P. & Ryan, C. (2004). The Aotearoa Traditional Maori Performing Arts Festival 1972-2000: a case study of cultural event maturation. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 2(2), 94-117.
- Roche, M. (1994). Mega-events and urban policy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21, 1-19.
- Roche, M. (2000). *Mega-Events and Modernity: Olympics and Expos in the Growth of Global Culture*. London: Routledge Pub.
- Sabau, M.F. (2008). More than 'fun in the sun'? The marketing of Catalonia and the Basque Country. *Locum Destination Review*, 9, 21-25.
- Sapsford, R. (2006). *Survey Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). London: Sega Publication.
- Seisdedos, G. (2006). State of the art of city marketing in European cities. *The Proceeding of 4<sup>2nd</sup> IsoCaRP Congress*. Retrieved May 18, 2008, from [http://www.isocarp.net/Data/case\\_studies/858.pdf](http://www.isocarp.net/Data/case_studies/858.pdf).

- Small, K., Edwards, D. & Sheridan, L. (2005). A flexible framework for evaluating the socio-cultural impacts of a (small) festival. *International Journal of Event Management Research*, 1(1), 66-77.
- Tosun, C. & Bilim, Y. (2004) Marketing cities from tourism perspective: Case of Hatay (in Turkish). *Anatolia: Turizm Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, 15(2), 125-138.
- Trueman, M., Klemm, M. & Giroud, A. (2004). Can a city communicate? Bradford as a corporate brand. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 9(4), 317-330.
- TUIK (2010). Cultural and scientific events research in 2009 (in Turkish). *News Bulletin*, No: 131. Ankara: Turkish Statistics Institute's (TUIK) Publication.
- Uysal, M. & Gitelson, R. (1994). Assessment of economic impacts: festivals and special events. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 2, 3-9.
- Ward, S.F. (1998). *Selling Places: The Marketing and Promotion of Towns and Cities: 1850-2000*. London: Routledge.
- Waterman, S. (1998). Place, culture and identity: summer music in Upper Galilee. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 23, 253-68.
- Yavuz, M.C. (2007). *Identity Development Process in Creating an International Destination Brand: Case of Adana* (in Turkish). PhD Dissertation. Adana: ukurova University, Social Science Institute.
- Yeoman I., Robertson, M., Ali-Knight, J., Drummond, S. & McMahon-Beattie, U. (2004). *Festival and Events' Management: An International Perspective*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Submitted: 07/10/2010

Accepted: 11/28/2011