Crisis Management for Event Tourism

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Tourism, festivals, and special events are usually not considered in conjunction with disasters or disruptive events. As the notions of tourism, festivals and other special events reflect enjoyment and relaxation, whereas disasters bring to mind distress, fear, and even panic. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that whether natural or caused by man, disaster occurrences have been and continue to be a part of life that we must deal with. While each special event has different characteristics, they all share a vulnerability to emergency situations. Because special events bring large numbers of people together, they reflect an increased need for special planning for the unexpected.

The well-being of community residents and their environment during and after disasters is the responsibility of local and at times, state and federal governments, depending upon the seriousness of the occurrence. When a disaster occurs in a tourist destination, protection of visitors to the area is one of the responsibilities of the local tourism industry. And, when an emergency occurs during a special event, managing the situation as smoothly and with as little harm to individuals attending the event as possible, becomes a legitimate concern of organizers. Safety needs of people attending a special event must be considered by the organizers during planning stages. The impacts of an unexpected event or disaster could be devastating to a community, its residents, the local tourism industry, visitors, and organizers of special events. Special event organizers can deal with unexpected occurrences most effectively if they accept the reality that such occurrences take place and if they have a solid understanding of what they can entail. Organizers of festivals and special events should assess potential for various disruptive incidents in order to develop a plan of action to deal with them.

The purpose of this paper is to draw a parallel between crisis management in tourist destinations and special events, and to suggest that information useful in managing tourism disasters can be applied to managing unexpected occurrences at special events.

First, a review of selected natural and man-made disasters which have impacted the tourism industry is presented. Next, several interviews conducted with planners of special events and festivals regarding their crisis management plans are presented. The methodology used to develop a crisis management plan is then discussed. Finally, recommendations are made regarding the development of a crisis management plan suitable for special events.

Tourism Disasters

Special events are similar to tourist destinations, in that both receive large numbers of people who

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are passing through for an entertaining, relaxing or exciting experience, who require information and protection. The past decade has witnessed various natural and man-made disasters in tourism communities around the world. Parallels can be drawn between these tourism disasters and special events. It is possible for a special event to be disrupted by a number of events such as, natural or man-made disasters (e.g. storm, fire, earthquake, structural failure, equipment malfunction, social disruption, terrorism, harmful rumors).

A great deal has been written regarding disaster types, disaster technology, government disaster planning, and corporate crisis management (Drabek, 1987; Fink, 1986; Littlejohn, 1983; Ten Berge, 1990). However, very little of the literature focuses directly on methods of crisis management tailored for tourist destinations (Brockway, 1990; Drabek, 1991; Janiskee, 1990; Liming, 1990; Murphy & Bayley, 1989; Pizam & Pokela, 1983; Richter & Waugh, Jr., 1986; Scott, 1988; Snepenger & Karahan, 1991; Yandle, 1989). Although much has been written regarding festivals and special events (Getz, 1991; Getz & Frisby, 1988; Grimm, 1990; Hall, 1987; Jeong, 1988; MacAloon, 1984; McWilliams & Mills, 1985; Mitchell & Wall, 1986; Ritchie, 1984; Ritchie & Aitken, 1984; Ritchie & Smith, 1991; Ritchie & Beliveau, 1974; Ritchie, 1984; Shaw, Fenton, & Mueller, 1989; Uysal, Backman, Backman, & Potts, 1991; Wilson & Udall, 1982), very little notice has been given to crisis management at such events (Chang & Singh, 1990).

Some noteworthy disaster occurrences which affected the tourism industry include the Mount St. Helens Eruption in May, 1980, which killed fifty-nine persons, damaged outdoor recreational land, and the area's tourism business; the East Kootenay Park fires in British Columbia which occurred during the prime tourism month of July 1985 and resulted in millions of dollars spent to fight the fires and $8 million (Canadian) lost in tourism revenues for July alone; the Exxon-Valdez spill of eleven million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound on March 24, 1989 caused one of the worst environmental disasters in history as well as a major blow to the state's tourism industry; in September 1989 Hurricane Hugo made landfall on the South Carolina coast causing 13 deaths and $7 billion in damages to the state as it delivered the hardest blow ever encountered by the state's travel and

tourism industry; the disastrous fires which occurred at Yellowstone National Park in 1988 jeopardized the future of the park as a tourist destination; and the two military coups which took place in Fiji during the height of the 1987 tourist season, threatened to destroy the island's tourism industry.

While a disaster suggests difficulties during and immediately after the occurrence of a destructive event, a crisis indicates a longer lasting predicament; which involves anticipating a crisis, dealing with it upon impact, and managing its lingering effects smoothly until total recovery is achieved. This phase blends again into crisis anticipation, making crisis management an ongoing process necessary for tourist destinations. Basically, crisis management is a technique to avoid emergencies whenever possible and plan for unavoidable occurrences. It is also a method to deal with emergencies when they occur in order to alleviate their consequences (Fink, 1986; Littlejohn, 1983).

In summary, in a tourist destination a crisis may be viewed as any event having a direct relationship to the accomplishment of its goals. Crises can result from natural disasters, man-made disasters, energy or natural resource shortages, economic downturns, environmental problems, large industry strikes, rumors, media leaks, government regulatory problems, product tampering, political unrest, and terrorism. While some crises can be avoided, others are unavoidable even though they can be seen before they come, such as natural disasters.

Crisis management is a dynamic process which begins at a time of calmness and safety, increases its activity by expecting the unexpected, continues by managing a difficult situation, and proceeds to return conditions to normal as quickly as possible. While no crisis can be managed in a manner which prevents the environment and its residents from being affected, having a system in place which is aware of hazards and willing to manage the situation will alleviate impacts.

Special Events and Festivals

Community run festivals are considered to be a growing segment of the tourism attractions sector, and can include music, food, cultural, educational, and recreational activities, and entertainment (Getz & Frisby, 1988). Special events can involve contests, concerts, exhibitions, dancing, theater, sports,

children's events, parades, beauty contests, flea markets, raffles or lotteries, races, and tours. Getz and Frisby (1988) claim that neither the origins, management, nor effectiveness of these types of events are adequately understood. The authors believe that festivals and other special events not only function as tourist attractions, but are also viewed as such by promoters of tourism. From the viewpoint of host communities, festivals and special events are considered to be "social, cultural, or community celebrations" (Getz & Frisby, 1988).

Getz and Frisby (1988) consider the environment as a possible source of complexity and uncertainty for special events and festivals. Complexity refers to the relationship between the community and the organization coordinating the event, and uncertainty refers to the degree of stability and predictability of the organization's environment.

For special events the risks may be less devastating and of a more narrow scope than the unexpected occurrences described for tourist destinations. Therefore, the process of dealing with unexpected occurrences, regardless of their size and ability to disrupt, involves anticipating possible risks and developing plans to prevent or manage them. Such unexpected incidents can include bad weather for outdoor activities; health problems faced by the attendees, including heart attacks, epileptic seizures, or even sunstroke; a breakout of violence among individuals attending the event requiring police involvement; a fire occurring in a crowded area; or even food poisoning caused by food sold at the event. To assure that such disruptions are handled efficiently and without spreading panic to the rest of the attendees, organizers need to consider the possibility of their occurrence in order to plan solutions.

Method

The purpose of this study was to synthesize tourism information related to natural disasters and crisis management activities undertaken by planners of special events, into a comprehensive crisis management plan. A second purpose of this study was to initiate a sensitivity among tourism communities regarding the possibility of disaster occurrences as well as planners and coordinators of the numerous special events and festivals which take place around the country throughout the year, regarding the possibility of disruptive events.

Related literature was reviewed in order to understand the extent of attention given to the topic of crisis management in tourist destinations and special events. In order to gain greater insight into crisis management efforts in locations where tourism holds economic significance as the major industry, telephone interviews were conducted with leaders responsible for crisis management in communities where a disaster actually occurred or where the potential for a disaster exists. Calls were placed to officials at Prince William Sound, Alaska; Mount St. Helens, Washington; San Francisco; Alabama, Florida; Louisiana; Mississippi; Texas; Puerto Rico; Jamaica; and the U.S. Virgin Islands to locate tourism crisis management plans.

Inquiries regarding tourism crisis management plans were mailed to tourism officials around the United States. Letters were also mailed to the United States Travel and Tourism Administration (USTTA), United States Travel Data Center (USTDC), and the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA).

To understand the extent of crisis management planning for special events, telephone interviews were conducted with coordinators of several successful festivals regarding their preparation for unexpected incidents. All of the major events which take place annually, around the country, were considered too numerous to study for individual crisis management activities.

Literature Review

Very little literature is available which ties tourism with disasters or crises (Brockway, 1990; Drabek, 1991; Janiskee, 1990; Liming, 1990; Murphy & Bayley, 1989; Pizam & Pokela, 1983; Richter & Waugh, Jr., 1986; Scott, 1988; Snepenger & Karahan, 1991; Yandle, 1989). A few articles have been written by tourism professionals and academicians regarding natural disasters, political unrest, and terrorism in tourist destinations. The limited amount of literature on the topic certainly does not indicate that tourism communities do not experience crises, only that not enough attention has been given to such situations.

Murphy and Bayley (1989) write that "although any connection between tourism and disaster planning seems incongruous" disaster planning is especially important for tourism communities. They further explain that the tourism industry is especially vul-

nerable to occurrences ranging from natural disasters to man-made disasters, such as terrorism. The attachment tourism has to high-risk areas with exotic scenery increases potential damage from natural disasters such as hurricanes and volcanoes. The authors further note that the starting point of risk management is during the process of site analysis. Although it is undesirable to frighten tourists with local hazard risks, creating hazard awareness in visitors is advised. The authors focus on the link between tourism and irregular natural disasters in two case studies of the 1980 Mount St. Helens volcanic eruption in Washington and the 1985 East Kootenay forest fires in British Columbia.

It is recommended to tourist destinations, that they consider the needs of visitors by expanding disaster plans (Murphy & Bayley, 1989). The authors further recommend from their examination of the two case studies, "more comprehensive risk assessment and warning stages to ensure that tourism patterns are evaluated and that accurate information is passed to the industry." Murphy and Bayley (1989) also think that accurate and reliable media coverage is crucial during the impact and recovery stages.

Brockway (1990), recommends gathering as much information as possible, immediately after a crisis, to help determine the level of response. Brockway further suggests analyzing long lasting impacts of the crisis on the public and understanding public perceptions, because the image of safety and attractiveness of the destination, needs to be maintained among the traveling public, for the continued success of the destination.

Robert G. Liming, Tourism Director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism presented a case study of Hurricane Hugo, at the Travel and Tourism Research Association's Twenty-First Annual Conference in June, 1990. In his presentation, Liming focused on "managing and limiting the non-physical damage of a disaster" at a tourist destination as he explained the effects of Hurricane Hugo. Around midnight of September 21–22, 1989, Hurricane Hugo made landfall on the South Carolina coast, just north of Charleston. Damage and losses were recorded to be $5 billion, $1 billion of which reflected loss in timber alone. Hurricane Hugo is credited with having killed more trees than the combination of the Yellowstone fires and the Mount St. Helens eruption. Fortunately, in South Carolina, a well orchestrated disaster warning and public response system kept loss of lives to a minimum.

Three weeks before Hurricane Hugo made landfall, twice as many tourists were in the area as on September 21, if the hurricane came earlier, its effects could have been devastating. Liming (1990) explains that dealing with an unpredictable crisis could present greater public relations problems than natural disaster occurrences such as hurricanes.

Having a current and accurate inventory of hotels, restaurants, attractions and support services, heads the list of crucial crisis management information which provide industry members with important data and assess damage (Liming, 1990). Liming also recommends compiling a mailing list of critical decision makers and influencers in the industry and community for fund raising activities. Having this list prior to a crisis will save a great deal of valuable time after a crisis occurs. It is also advisable to anticipate what the media will want to know most, in order to prepare information dissemination.

On a more global scale, international tourism is believed to be highly sensitive to political instability as well as terrorist attacks (Abdoulwahab, 1990; Conant, Clark, Burnett, & Zank, 1988; D'Amore & Anuza, 1986; Gartner & Shen, 1992; Gu & Martin, 1992; Hurley, 1988; Richter, 1983, Richter & Waugh, Jr., 1986; Scott, 1988; Teye, 1986). Recent examples of political instability include the 1989 Tiananmen Square conflict, in the People's Republic of China (PRC), viewed internationally, just at a time when the PRC had officially opened its doors to international tourism (Gartner & Shen, 1992); and the 1991 Persian Gulf War, as a result of which Middle Eastern countries experienced a sharp drop in tourist arrivals from August through November, 1990 (WTO, 1991).

Scott (1988) focuses on a political situation as a tourism disaster in his account of two military coups in Fiji in 1987. Understandably, the coups affected Fiji's tourism industry very negatively, resulting in a constant flow of cancellations from expected tourists and hotel occupancy levels of 10% or less. Meanwhile, tourist industry leaders were in a state of shock and had no plan to deal with this type of crisis.

The Annual Fiji Tourism Convention took place on June 8–10, 1987 and served as a catalyst for the industry's recovery efforts, resulting in the formation of a crisis management team, within the National Tourism Office. Goals were established, including the removal of travel advisories, doubling of the marketing budget, organizing familiarization visits

for trade representatives, and marketing special air fares and packages in key markets. Air Pacific proposed the introduction of a "limited edition" package of specially reduced air fares from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Auckland, and special packages such as seven days for the price of five were offered.

The Tourism Action Group (TAG) was formed with the goal of "bringing back tourists as fast and as effectively as possible" (Scott, 1988). In order to achieve its goal to revitalize the tourist industry, TAG separated its activities into marketing (by communicating accurate, timely, and truthful information) and operations (to generate cash flow for the industry). TAG set up a ground rule for all its activities, to maintain credibility under all circumstances. Because Fiji was not prepared for the type of crisis it faced, a great deal of time was lost in getting out of the shock and taking action. TAG began its activities no sooner than one month after the coup and was established for a period of six months. The organization disbanded after eleven weeks once recovery got under way, returning its functions back to the national tourist authorities. Three weeks later, on September 25, a second coup took place and damaged the recovery of the industry. But experience gained after the first coup helped the management of the second crisis.

Scott (1988) explains that "in the case of man-made crises, there arises a need to manage its effects on a day-to-day basis, since its duration is of course unknown at the time . . . whereas a natural disaster such as earthquake or typhoon creates havoc and passes, a political crisis may last for days, months or even years." Scott (1988) confirms the necessity to have a crisis management plan, to have at least a framework to work from, and recommends setting clear goals, identifying resources to be used and preparing a "worst case" scenario. Management and distribution of information are regarded as the most important aspects of crisis management followed by the importance of ending crisis management activities "as fast as possible as a means of ensuring that an atmosphere of normality is rapidly restored" (Scott, 1988).

Literature on crises faced by special events was found to be extremely limited. Chang and Singh (1990) examined the risk management process used in the 1988 Olympic Winter Games, in Calgary. A two step risk management process was used by the XV Olympic Winter Games Organizing Committee

(OCO'88) to manage the Winter Games which concluded both peacefully and profitably, with a reported profit of $30 million (Canadian).

The first step involved identifying and analyzing risks by reviewing contracts, attending planning sessions, reviewing internal documents, conducting site inspections, and reviewing documentation of previous events; risks were identified as people, public, and property. The second step involved the management of the above three categories of risk, through risk financing and risk control programs. Organizers decided to finance potential losses with insurance and self-insurance, and control risks by proper safety training, emergency response planning, and corrective actions. The international nature of the event was considered when special efforts were decided on, to deal with terrorism.

Chang and Singh (1990) recommend beginning risk management efforts long before the event begins and having a "specific and visible status" in the organizational structure of the event. They further suggest keeping complete records of losses and problems to assist future risk management. For effective risk identification and control, the authors further recommend having proper communication and liaison with both internal and external bodies.

While a great deal of information regarding disasters and crises is available, it is difficult to find literature studying crises in relation to tourism or special events. More difficult than finding crisis management studies in tourism or festivals and special events, is to locate literature which actually provides tourism industry professionals and organizers of special events, with guidelines and instruction regarding crisis management.

Findings from the literature review reveal that all crises share certain basic characteristics. Problems which can emerge from a tourism community crisis can include the need for quick decision making, a limited number of options, close media or government scrutiny, the emergence of groups with conflicting objectives, the involvement of community leaders, escalation of the situation's intensity, and interference with normal operations of the tourism industry. If a destination's positive public image, good reputation or credibility are damaged, the bottom line will definitely be affected in terms of tourist revenues. When any one of the above possibilities threaten to become a reality, it becomes evident that a crisis situation is on the threshold. Crises faced by planners of special events have a more narrow

scope, although certainly not less disruptive effects. Planners and organizers of special events and festivals have more limited resources and time to work with in managing the unexpected. One idea emerges clearly from a review of related literature, whether it is a tourist destination, a festival, or other special event which must be managed, having a plan to deal with unexpected occurrences can be extremely important to its future success.

Telephone Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted with officials at tourist destinations and organizers of several festivals:

Tourist Destinations. Interviews conducted with tourism officials revealed the limitation of disaster preparedness among the listed tourist destinations. While most tourism officials admitted the possibility of disaster, they were reluctant to admit a disaster could occur in their community. A prevalent attitude of "it can't happen here" among tourist destinations was found and a large part of disaster planning was left up to local emergency preparedness departments. From the telephone interviews, only Alaska yielded a formal crisis management plan which was prepared after the 1989 oil spill.

Festivals. Organizers of several festivals in Pennsylvania were approached regarding crisis management planning. Krista Paternostro, Coordinator of the annual Susquehanna Boom Festival was contacted. The Susquehanna Boom Festival takes place in Williamsport between June 5 and June 13, to celebrate the city's log boom during the late 1800's. The festival includes a carnival, arts and craft booths, food booths, and various types of entertainment. Ms. Paternostro noted that emergency personnel was hired to be on standby throughout the duration of the festival and cooperation of the fire and police departments was assured. Each participant in the festival (i.e. food booths, arts and crafts booths) is covered by their own insurance which also covers the festival as a whole. Aside from the emergency personnel, fire and police, and insurance, planning for the festival does not include any type of crisis management. Ms. Paternostro commented that whatever comes along is handled spontaneously. Marie Sincavage, in charge of festival and special event development at the Pearl Buck Foundation was interviewed regarding crisis management planning. Ms Sincavage commented that the Foundation plans many

events and festivals throughout the year, but has no set plan to deal with unexpected incidents.

Phil Walsh, Executive Director of the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts who was also contacted, supplied very valuable information. The Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts has been taking place in State College, Pennsylvania for over twenty years. The festival includes arts and crafts booths, food booths placed strategically around the heart of State College, and live entertainment. The event continues for four consecutive days in the first week of July each year. The festival has grown in popularity and participation over the years, each year becoming more organized and smooth in its operations. As Executive Director, Phil Walsh is in charge of the planning and management of the event along with a Board of Directors, and a large number of volunteers.

Mr. Walsh commented that while no specific plan to deal specifically with crises exists, the possibility of numerous negative incidents is considered at board meetings and solutions to deal with each type of incident are planned and recorded in the meeting minutes. The final plan for each year's event is subject to approval by the Board of Directors, and a written emergency medical plan is required to be submitted to the state of Pennsylvania 60 days before the event.

Possible crises mentioned by Mr. Walsh include health emergencies, food poisoning, and bad weather. Mr. Walsh also explained the solutions planned by the Board of Directors for each type of emergency. To deal with the possibility of health emergencies (i.e. heart attacks) among senior attendees, the Board of Directors works with the senior centers around the city so that cool resting areas may be easily accessible. In addition, a bus shuttle is provided for senior citizens, so that they will not be forced to walk long distances in the summer heat; emergency medical teams are hired to stay ready for health emergencies; a helicopter pad is made available for emergency medical flights; and cold spring water is made available to everyone throughout the festival area, free of charge.

In terms of general security, State College and Pennsylvania State University campus police cooperate with the festival in patrolling the area; a system has been arranged which allows volunteers and festival coordinators to communicate through telephones and on-site walkie-talkies; and sales booths are placed far enough apart so that fire trucks may

approach them in case of a fire.

In case of unexpected bad weather, no rain date for the festival is announced. Instead, organizers have a steady communication with Acuweather, the weather bureau of State College, and keep generous amounts of hay on hand to soak up rain water, in case of heavy downpour. Mr. Walsh noted that despite some rainy days in past years, festival attendance has never been seriously affected.

The threat of food poisoning is managed by volunteer food tasters who inspect the food at every booth, each hour; and the sale of alcohol by participants is strictly forbidden to minimize problems due to intoxication. In addition, for the comfort of festival attendees, cool and clean areas are provided to parents to change their babies and possibly rest their children.

Mr. Walsh explained that no risk insurance is purchased for the festival, solutions planned to deal with possible emergencies are carried out to the letter, and expressed pride over the fact that since the first year of the festival, the organizers have not had a single death among its attendees.

Mailed Inquiries

Inquiries regarding the existence of a tourism crisis management plan were made to all coastal states in the United States, including the states in the Great Lakes region. Individual letters were mailed to tourism officials in Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Washington, D.C., Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. Letters were also mailed to the United States Travel and Tourism Administration (USTTA), United States Travel Data Center (USTDC), and Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA). Out of the total of 30 states inquiries were mailed to, only two (Arkansas and Hawaii) indicated having formal crisis management plans tailored to their tourism industries and forwarded a copy of their plan. California, Indiana, Maine, Minnesota, and Virginia mailed brochures and maps in reply, and Delaware and Washington, D.C. replied that disasters did not occur in their areas and were not anticipated. Two states forwarded the inquiries to other state offices. The remaining 18 states did

not reply. The USTTA, USTDC, and TTRA replied that they did not have information regarding tourism crisis management plans. Results of the overall search for tourism and special event crisis management plans, revealed that very few tourism communities actually have a plan of action. All state and local governments have emergency mitigation plans with abundant detail regarding evacuation, sheltering, communication, public information, training, and recovery procedures; however, a plan designed specifically for tourism recovery is rare. In sum, very few tourism communities and organizers of special events have an actual crisis management or recovery plan in place. The results from this exploratory review (phone calls, literature review, and mailed inquiries) reveal that to some extent an awareness exists regarding this issue. However, a crisis management plan to facilitate the smooth handling of disaster situations in tourist destinations and at special event needs to be designed.

Crisis Management Plan Development

Recommendations

While each tourism community and special event has special crisis management needs, certain basic underlying characteristics are shared by them. Recommendations for the development of a tourism crisis task force and plan of action can be generalized to practically all circumstances. Most importantly, it is recommended that a crisis task force be established, to organize the management of unexpected occurrences. The task force should be established at the outset of special events or during non-crisis times at tourist destinations, to be activated when necessary.

Managing an emergency or crisis entails identifying, studying and forecasting risks and setting forth ways to enable tourism managers and special events organizers to prevent or cope with problems. An accurate assessment of possible risks is crucial to the management of unexpected situations. All crises do not evolve out of natural disasters, social disruption, or terrorism, but can also be caused by a false rumor, image problems, health emergencies, or even food poisoning. Therefore, crisis managers should judge the situation correctly before deciding on management strategies. Crisis management must determine to what extent a crisis will affect the tourist destination or special event, if impacts will be sig-
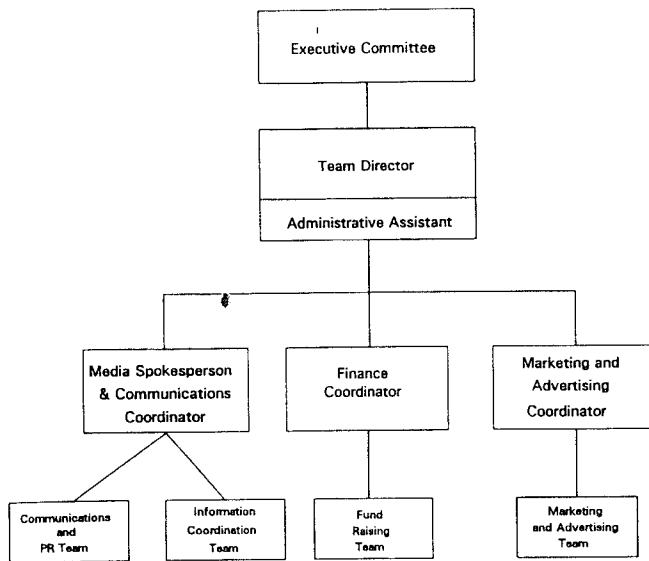
Figure 1. Tourism Crisis Task Force Organizational Chart.

nificant, and also if they will pose a major threat to the future of the industry or particular special event. Safety of visitors and attendees and protection of credibility and reputation are the ultimate goals of crisis management.

Crisis management begins with the formation of a task force to deal with unexpected and harmful occurrences. After a crisis management task force is in place, members need to develop a crisis management plan to save time and avoid confusion, should an emergency actually occur.

Task Force Structure. The crisis management task force requires a director to orchestrate the efforts of team members. Tasks of a similar nature are best assigned to teams, which are headed by team leaders. This structure allows responsibilities to be shared, strengthens the team, and thus assures greater success. The team structure also guarantees an effective balance of authority among different component members. Subdivision of the crisis management task force into four teams is recommended also because not all crises may necessitate activating all members of the team. Figure 1 provides an organizational chart which illustrates the relationship of teams to each other and the team director.

Tasks assigned to teams involve communications, public relations, fact finding, damage assessment, fund raising, marketing, and advertising; for special events crisis management, a "risk assessment" team is required. Table 1 provides a brief overview of responsibilities assigned to each of the teams in the task force.

Time limitations faced by organizers of special events require that crisis management for festivals and special events focus on assessing risks and planning preventive measures to deal with them. Therefore, crisis management for special events involves a state of readiness for unexpected incidents and preparation to deal immediately with each situation, in order to prevent the situation from getting out of control.

Crisis Management Plan. The organization of the crisis task force should be followed by the development of the crisis management plan, which should clarify crisis management's goals and objectives, present a complete hazards analysis, and provide strategies for managing the situation to achieve full recovery. An effective plan of action must be clear to all those involved in its implementation and avoid unnecessary complications. The crisis management plan should be cost-effective, in other words, the cost incurred by the crisis management team must outweigh the consequences of having no crisis management. It is desirable that the crisis management plan be tested in a trial run to assess its effectiveness. Finally, the dynamic nature of tourist destinations and particularly special events requires periodic modifications to update the plan.

Implications

It is clear that crisis management planning is not only an important component of management but also seriously needed by the tourism industry and special events planners. Crisis management plans need to be developed to reflect specific needs of the situation and managers who will be implementing the plan. The manner in which a tourism community or a special event manages a crisis, protects its guests as well as residents, and publicizes recovery efforts can affect its image. The fragile concept of image is crucial in marketing a tourism community and also a special event; and careful planning can help to minimize rumors which can destroy a positive image, and as a result, the future business of the community.

The fact that little information is available regarding special event crisis management indicates a serious need to research crisis management activities of special events. It should be noted here that disaster planning or crisis management by tourist destinations translates into risk assessment and risk management for special events. The topic of crisis management

Table 1

Task Force Teams and Responsibilities.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE	
TASK FORCE DIRECTOR:	Orchestrates efforts of all teams into one cohesive effort.
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM:	Headed by Public Spokesperson, this team represents the local tourism industry to relevant audiences by providing factual data to the media.
INFORMATION COORDINATION TEAM:	Gathers all factual data regarding the crisis to channel to the Communications and Public Relations Team for information dissemination. Contacts tourism industry members in order to assess damage and estimate recovery period.
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND FUND RAISING TEAM:	Contacts industry and community leaders to communicate task force efforts and raise funds to finance recovery efforts.
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING TEAM:	Carries out strategies to rebuild the local economy by marketing, advertising, and publicity efforts to help the local tourism industry get back on track.
RISK ASSESSMENT TEAM:	Considers all possible disruptive incidents which could occur at a tourist destination or special event. A list of potential threats to the smooth running of a tourist destination, festival, or special event is necessary to prepare solutions.

in tourism communities and special events requires further research which would be useful for future planning. The most useful aspect of research on this topic may be the integration of results into overall planning procedures. Various components of tourism and special events enter the process of crisis management planning, however, the safety of visitors, hazard awareness and education among tourism industry members and special event organizers, and policies regarding disaster and emergency management is an area which needs further input from travel and tourism and special events researchers.

Factors which affect the traveling public's perceptions of a community's image or special event need to be investigated. Perceptions may be affected by several factors: (a) the type of crisis—while a natural disaster is something which cannot be controlled, civil disobedience or terrorism may cause visitors to feel unprotected and blame the situation on the community or event organizers, (b) the efficiency of crisis management and the honesty of community leaders and organizers, (c) the existence of a crisis management team and plan, which show the concern of the area or special event for its visitors or attendees. Resulting information can be ex-

tremely useful input into marketing and advertising strategies.

Conclusions

This article has tried to provide examples of crises in the travel and tourism industry, which can also occur at special events. It is safe to say, crises can develop at any time and in any environment; regardless of the circumstances of the crisis situation, it must be managed as efficiently as possible and be resolved with as few lingering effects as possible. Because the tourism industry and special events, depend greatly on the perceptions of its consumers for its economic success, the need for competent crisis management is urgent. Crisis management for the tourism industry and event tourism, considers not only the success of the industry, but the safety and comfort of visitors. In essence, it can be viewed as an extension of the hospitality and concern a community or event shows its guests.

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