

Creative Business Project Report

LOCALZ Media | Eastern Styria



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1. Executive Summary

This report aims to devise all the necessary components for the implementation of a marketing and communication agency for small to medium-sized (music) events in the Austrian province of Styria in an academic context. The agency's mission is to spotlight precisely those events that otherwise do not claim the same amount of (media) attention or communication services for themselves and their (potential) visitors. In doing so, care is always taken to ensure that the cultural relevance of the respective region or community also plays an important role. To realise this, in addition to literature research on relevant or related topics, four interviews were conducted, with a self-employed event manager, a self-employed consultant for content marketing, PR, and storytelling as well as two chairpersons of non-profit associations in the city of Gleisdorf – the hometown of this work's author and thus of the prospective founder.

After the idea behind the agency as well as the targeted client segments – such as independent event promoters or agencies, municipal authorities, or non-profit associations – have been discussed in more detail, an overview of relevant qualifications and previous projects in this field follows. Other key professionals for successful implementation are also mentioned. The next step is an analysis of the current (music) event market in Austria and Styria, from which conclusions are drawn at the micro level, i.e. the market in the provincial capital of Graz or, representative of smaller (East) Styrian municipalities, in the city of Gleisdorf. This is followed by a list of concrete competitors in this area as well as a discussion of the unique selling proposition and the strengths and weaknesses of the company in the course of a SWOT analysis. Afterward, the services offered by the marketing and communications agency, which is given the name LOCALZ Media, are listed, which essentially consist of PR measures and digital offers, including above all content strategy and management. The different price categories are followed by insights into the marketing strategy of the agency itself, in the course of which the project is given a concrete look and feel, i.e. a specially designed logo, a first press release, and an overview of the core messages represented. In the chapter on sales strategy, it becomes clear why a well-thought-out and consistent approach with concrete suggestions for improvement and concepts is needed, especially for organisers of smaller events. Finally, there are projected or targeted turnover figures as well as a conclusion and a reflective summary of the implementation of the entire project.

2. Company description

LOCALZ Media is a marketing and communications agency whose services focus in particular on small to medium-sized (music) events in (Eastern) Styria in Austria. The aim is to support organisers and institutions in these areas, who usually devote less time and attention to communication, PR, and related aspects – either because of limited financial, human or time resources or because the additional benefits of these activities have not yet been recognised. Small (approximately 20-150 attendees) to medium-sized (approximately 150-1,000 or up to 2,000-3,000 attendees in larger Styrian districts such as Graz) events should also be given the level of attention they deserve, and their significance should be brought to the fore, especially in their local environment. In a digitally networked world, in which jobs in pretty much every field can now be outsourced to all possible places and workforces in the world thanks to platforms like Fiverr (Fiverr, n.d.) and similar providers, the aim of LOCALZ Media is to bring together marketing and communication professionals who actually come from or at least have lived in the respective environment – in this case (Eastern) Styria. Only these can truly understand both the respective clients and, above all, the event visitors and their conscious or unconscious needs. In the long term, the goal would be to inspire further marketing and communication experts in other areas to form similar associations and, at best, to operate under the umbrella brand LOCALZ Media at various other locations in Austria and beyond. But before that happens, the foundations are to be laid in (Eastern) Styria.

Even though most of the related literature deals with dedicated marketing events – i.e. happenings organised by brands or companies for marketing purposes only – and not with events as the product itself, valuable fundamental approaches can be derived from it. For a basic definition, Wood (2009, p. 248) describes an event as “a live ‘occurrence’ with an audience” in which “a message or experience is being shared, transmitted, generated and, therefore, all events can potentially communicate something.” In their article, Martensen and Grønholdt (2008, pp. 44-45) also talk about “creating experiences” and add that events would be all about activating emotional responses to reach a high level of involvement. When it comes to event marketing in specific, according to Hoyle (2002, p. 2) there would be three important pillars: entertainment, excitement, and enterprise. Referring to the entertainment aspect in specific, the author (ibid.) argues that, even though it might seem intangible, it would still be real and “key to making an event memorable.” This is exactly where LOCALZ Media comes in: With the

help of targeted communication and marketing measures, more and more people should be able to enjoy unforgettable goosebump moments thanks to great events and be provided with appealing content in the best possible way.

According to Allen (2000, p. 21), event organisers per se must first decide on the type(s) of events they would like to be involved in organising. At the same time, it is said that one must decide whether one wants to specialise in a certain type of event or whether one would rather cater to a diverse range. The same is true for an event marketing and communications agency. As an advantage of the diversification approach, Allen (ibid.) cites that if there is a lull in a certain area, not all business would stagnate and adds that it would be valuable to learn “skills that are interchangeable as you move through doing different styles of events.” This statement is also supported by Schreiner (2023), who has been working as a self-employed event manager in Austria and beyond for more than two decades, stating that event agencies usually serve just as many different commissioned jobs from sports to culture to corporate events and therefore also expect this flexibility from external providers they work with – for example from the field of marketing and communication. In general, LOCALZ Media (Eastern Styria) always gives priority to events that have a musical or artistic connection (concerts, dance, or theatre performances, etc.). Active customer and order acquisition is also carried out predominantly in this direction. However, to have as broad a portfolio as possible and to be able to bridge any slumps, not only these projects but also events from other areas (sporting events, conferences, weddings, etc.) are targeted as needed. In fact, however, it is less about the specified type of event and more about the (potential) client segments.

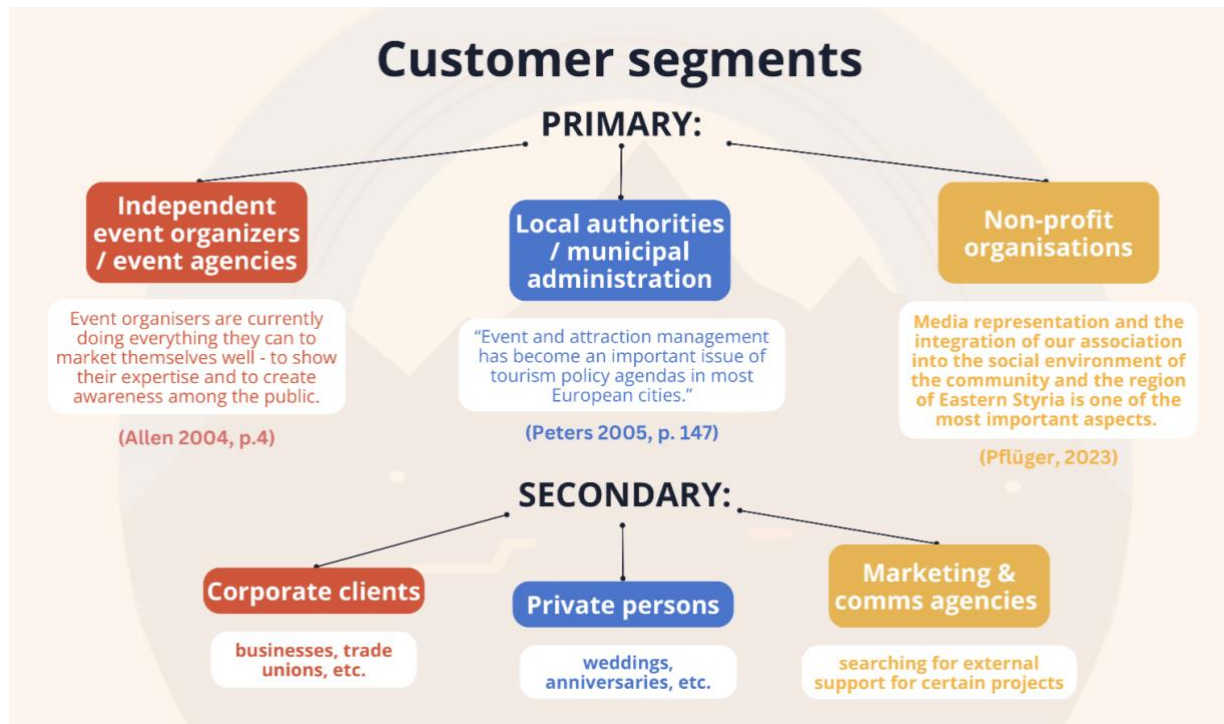


Figure 1: Graphical representation of (potential) customer segments divided into primary and secondary targeted groups including respective relevance assertion.

The operational processes of LOCALZ Media can be compared quite well with a structure that Bauer (2011, p. 2) describes as “telephone band”, where there is no “fixed line-up” but “instead, musicians are only included in the band for a specific performance.” Sticking to her example, I would be the focal organisation as a one-person company (at the beginning) and would bring in other freelancers for certain projects if I cannot implement all the requested tasks myself. According to Schreiner (2023), this structure also makes sense in the event business, as he believes that an agency would need to have and accept an incredibly high number of job orders to be able to hire such freelancers permanently for their own company and keep them long-term. Furthermore, Bauer (2011, pp. 15-16) mentions the following as typical characteristics of such a variable structure: independency, focus on core competencies, project orientation, temporariness, and low formalisation. Each of these characteristics would also apply to LOCALZ Media and its desired jobs. This way of working makes it possible to use the company’s strengths – namely individual, personal communication services with a local touch – for the benefit of small to medium-sized events and clients.

3. Company profile

LOCALZ Media will initially be a sole proprietorship based in Gleisdorf, which is located just over 20 kilometres outside the Styrian capital Graz. Thus, the agency is based in my hometown, where the majority of the clients of previous projects are located, but at the same time it is also located very close to Graz and its almost 300,000 inhabitants, where numerous events take place throughout the year. Regarding the question of what qualifies me as a founder, I can say that I have a bachelor's degree in journalism and PR as well as a diploma in event management. Apart from working as a content manager and head of marketing and PR for a Styrian start-up for more than three years, I also worked at an agency for PR and storytelling in Berlin for three months. In addition, I successfully completed other courses at the University of Graz, such as Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship or Innovation Management and Business Model Development. Another highlight was my participation in the Transatlantic Entrepreneurship Academy (TEA) – a one semester innovation and entrepreneurship bootcamp hosted by the University of Graz and Montclair State University in New Jersey, USA (Universität Graz, n.d.). Regarding the first commissioned jobs for LOCALZ Media, however, apart from my education, as already briefly indicated, it is above all my already successfully completed projects that are likely to play an important role, as it would be obvious to win the corresponding clients back as customers. Previous projects and clients include but are not limited to the following:

Event / occasion	Client	Tasks
<u>Radgipfel Steiermark (Styrian Cycling Summit)</u>	City of Graz / Province of Styria	Videographic support (keynote recording, image video creation)
<u>Fifteen Seconds Festival</u>	Fifteen Seconds GmbH	Communication services (customer support care)
<u>Lendwirbel (Neighbourhood festival in the Lend district of Graz)</u>	LENDWIRBEL – Association for Neighbourly Urban Development	Podcast recording
<u>spleen*graz (International Theatre Festival for Young Audiences)</u>	ARGE spleen*graz (working community)	Writing magazine texts for a one-week festival (daily circulation)

Faschingsshow Gleisdorf (Carnival Show Gleisdorf)	Gleisdorfer Faschingsverein (Gleisdorf Carnival Club)	Social media strategy and management (before, during and after the event); photography (during the event)
Anniversary	Haus der Musik Gleisdorf (music school Gleisdorf)	Videography (image video creation)
<u>Sing & Dance Anniversary</u> (closing performance)	Sing & Dance Workshop	Videography (image video creation)
Benefizkonzert Ars Harmoniae (benefit concert)	Ars Harmoniae (ensemble of music school Gleisdorf)	Videography (image video creation)
Rebranding	Point25 (Teilzwei Betriebs GmbH)	Design (flyer, brochure)
Rebranding	PureSurf (startup; EIC Transition funded project)	Digital and design (website development; logo creation)
Website revision	DSA ⁱⁿ Barbara Ertl (independent consultant)	Digital (copywriting and structural revision of website; SEO analysis and keyword- mapping)

Figure 2: An excerpt of previous jobs completed as one-off work orders based on the occasion including the name of the respective client and corresponding activities in tabular form.

Those projects that are underlined in the table above I worked on together with a team, i.e. with at least one other colleague. It is noticeable that these were mainly projects that required support at an event directly on site. That is why my local network also plays an important role. Depending on the needs of the respective client, I can, for example, draw on the services of the following professionals from the Graz area with their respective focus areas:

- Lisa Drekonja: Content marketing
- Jessica Gauster: Web design, print design

- Christina Harrich: Media design, corporate publishing, PR, social media
- Hannes Mautner: (Event) photography (Mautner, 2022)
- Johannes Sommer: Photography, videography, CI creation (herzblut, 2022)
- David Wiestner: Brand communications, PR, (event) photography, videography (Wiestner, 2023)

According to Allen (2004, p. 1), a solid network of potential collaborators (and later employees) is important not only for the implementation of individual projects, but for the company's general standing, saying that "bringing marketable employees onboard" would make "the company more attractive to future clients, as well as giving it an advantage over its competition." Lisa Drekonja deserves special mention here, as she has expertise and practical experience in (payroll) accounting and recruiting in addition to her knowledge of content marketing. Accordingly, she can support me in these areas as a bridge while there is not yet enough budget or demand to hire more staff. Due to numerous overlapping interests, Lisa would also be considered as a potential co-founder, should it come to a spin-off as a limited liability company sooner or later. In principle, only a spin-off of this kind would require a significant amount of start-up capital, usually 35,000 euros (WKO, 2023). In general, however, since no physical product or similar is sold, no fundraising is necessary. In fact, with the completion of the business plan, the proof of concept and the company registration as a sole proprietorship, everything would be ready for the start of order acquisition. The last key person to be mentioned in this context is Martin Pflueger, who was also interviewed for this report. Due to his many years of expertise not only as a musician himself, but also as a lecturer at the University of Graz and his position as chairman and creative director of the Gleisdorf Carnival Association (Pflueger, 2023), he has agreed to act as an advisor as well as an intermediary to (potential) LOCALZ Media clients.

4. Market analysis

Before analysing the targeted market in terms of figures, general trends in the areas of events and marketing/communication will be briefly touched upon. According to the Martensen and Grønholdt (2008, p. 44), there was hardly any research on event marketing per se by the time their article was published about 15 years ago. This claim is supported by Wood (2009, p. 248) who refers to McCole (2004, cited in *ibid.*) and his possible justification, that the connection between theory and practice would often be lacking in the field. Even though quite some research seems to have been done in the event marketing industry in the meantime, this report and the company LOCALZ Media itself should serve as yet another example of how this gap can be closed by combining the best of proven theories and practical experience. Moreover, Allen (2004, p. 3) argues that small, specialised companies shall be particularly successful in the field. This statement is also supported by Kreutschmann (2023), who in the course of his work as a self-employed consultant for content marketing, PR and storytelling in the leisure industry has noticed the same phenomenon with smaller clients. As an example, he mentions Escape Rooms, whose providers must deal with the area of marketing and public relations more intensively than, for example, large amusement parks due to the large competition in often close local distance. Therefore, especially for smaller clients – such as those targeted by LOCALZ Media – more specialised, creative solutions must be found. In addition, the specialisation in small to medium-sized events makes sense because – as Kreutschmann (2023) further argues – unknown and smaller event organisers and artists in particular have a hard time filling their venues. However, they should be able to concentrate fully on the content of their respective event, while LOCALZ Media takes on the task of achieving as much attention, high attendance figures and, above all, a high level of satisfaction as possible through coherent, personal communication. Another trend that is particularly relevant for small and medium-sized events in specific is the “Word-of-Mouth (WOM) phenomenon”, as Dams (2019, p. 3) calls it. According to the author (*ibid.*, p. 4), personal experiences and the reports about them gained immense influence and only what someone saw and experienced would be certain to be true. Therefore, word of mouth has an even more important role, especially in the local event sector, as people trust the opinions of those they know well.

4.1. Market size

The two artifacts below demonstrate the market analysis that was carried out and its respective steps.

MARKET ANALYSIS

In order to be able to assess the market potential of services for small to medium-sized events in (Eastern) Styria, one has to work from the macro to the micro level.

EVENT MARKET AUSTRIA

- Estimated revenue in the event tickets market for 2023: approx. **€ 333.20m**
- Projected market volume in 2027: **€373.60m** (= annual revenue growth of **2.9%**; CAGR 2023-2027)
- Projected number of event ticket users 2027: **2.2Mio.**
- Largest market: **music events** (expected volume in 2023: €217.50m)

(Statista Market Insights, 2023b)

MUSIC EVENT MARKET AUSTRIA

Projected market volume in 2027: **€244,20m** (= annual revenue growth of **2.94%**; CAGR 2023-2027)

Projected number of event ticket users 2027: **2.2Mio.**

(Statista Market Insights, 2023a)

NUMBER OF FESTIVALS* 2021

(STATISTIK AUSTRIA, 2023a)

- Total number of performances (Austria): **2,009**
- Total number of visits (Austria): **1,119,225**
- Total number of performances (Styria): **392**
- Total number of visits (Styria): **77,036**

*In this context, the term "festival" stands for contemporary performances (opera, operetta, musical, show, dance, ballet, spoken word, cabaret, concerts).

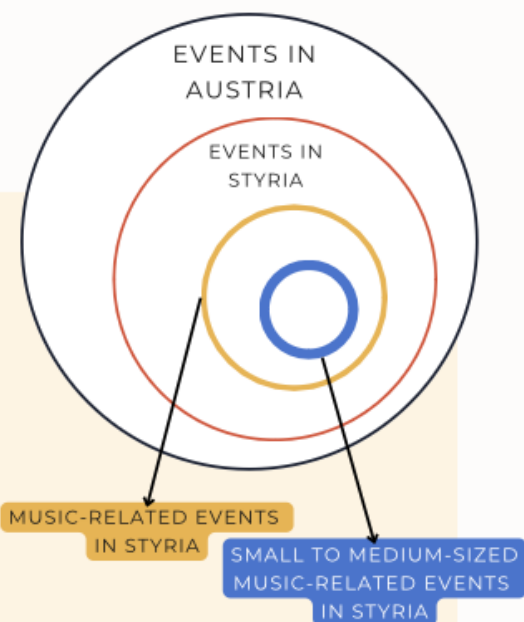


Figure 3: Market volume and growth of (music) events, part 1: Austria and the federal state of Styria.

SEASON 2020/21 PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE FIGURES FROM ...

- Austrian theatre and concert stages:
 - **4,486** performances
 - **1,010,714** visits
- Graz (capital of the province of Styria) stages:
 - **238** performances
 - **41,094** visits

(STATISTIK AUSTRIA, 2023b)

Conclusions

- ▶ Performances in Styria account for 19.5% of the Austrian performances.
- ▶ Attendance at events in Styria corresponds to 6.9% of the Austrian total.
- ▶ Artistic performances in Graz account for 5.3% of the Austrian total.
- ▶ Attendance at artistic events in Graz corresponds to 4.1% of the Austrian total.



€42.4M

ROUGHLY ESTIMATED
MARKET VOLUME OF
ARTISTIC EVENTS IN
STYRIA IN 2021

€11.5M

ROUGHLY ESTIMATED
MARKET VOLUME OF
ARTISTIC EVENTS IN
GRAZ IN 2021

If we now take into account that the province of Styria is divided into 13 different districts and that the town of Gleisdorf is one of 31 municipalities in one of these districts (Weiz), we finally arrive at the following figures:

€3.3M

ROUGHLY ESTIMATED
MARKET VOLUME OF
ARTISTIC EVENTS IN THE
DISTRICT OF WEIZ IN 2021

€105,000

ROUGHLY ESTIMATED MARKET
VOLUME OF ARTISTIC EVENTS
IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF
GLEISDORF IN 2021

Figure 4: Market volume and growth of (music) events, part 2: the provincial capital Graz and the municipality Gleisdorf in context.

It should be emphasised at this point that the figures are from the year 2021 or the 2020/21 festival season. As the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic could still be significant here and

Statista Market Insights (2023a, 2023b) predicted a stable growth until 2027, it can be assumed that the above figures are in the low to moderate range.

4.2. (Potential) market share

To find out the potential market share, the next step would be to look at the marketing and communication sector in specific. To make reliable statements in this regard, one can rely exclusively on the records of the Statistics Department of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber on the Professional Association of Advertising and Communication. Accordingly, figures related to non-members can unfortunately not be included in this report.

Active division memberships (advertising and communication)	2021	2022
Austria	28,958	29,825
Province of Styria	3,168	3,317

Figure 5: Records of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber on the number of active professional memberships of the advertising and communication sector from the years 2021 and 2022 (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – Abteilung für Statistik, 2023, p. 10).

Looking at the individual professional branches of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce's professional association for advertising and market communication statistics, Austria had a total of 31,675 members in 2022, whereby one person can also be a member of several professional branches. Double counting can therefore occur. In Styria, there were a total of 3,377 active professional branch members in 2022 (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – Abteilung für Statistik, 2023, p. 11). For LOCALZ Media, the following occupational branches including their membership figures are the most relevant:

	Austria	Province of Styria
Advertising agency	16,930	1,912
PR consultant	2,163	116
Multimedia agency	1,275	105
Event marketer	582 (1.83% of total members in Austria)	29 (0.86% of total members in Styria)

Figure 6: Extract from the statistics on active professional branch members in 2022 by federal province, in this case Austria and the federal province of Styria contrasted (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – Abteilung für Statistik, 2023, p. 11).

It is worth mentioning at this point that companies in the size category 0 to 9 employees (excluding marginal employees) account for 97% of all companies in the Professional Association of Advertising and Communication (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich – Abteilung für Statistik, 2023, p. 16). Accordingly, about 30,725 active professional members in Austria including 1,855 members in Styria would be part of a company of this size. This suggests that Allen's (2004, p. 3) perception of the success of small, specialised businesses from 2004 is still valid today. For the purposes of this calculation, it is assumed that the same percentage also applies to the profession of "event marketer", which means that there would be around 565 Austrian and 28 Styrian members in this branch. Assuming that those members work in said smallest companies with an estimated average of five employees each, we arrive at 113 companies in the field of "event marketers" in Austria and around six in Styria.

While companies belonging to the Austrian Advertising and Market Communication Association generated a total of 7.483 billion euros in turnover (excluding VAT) in 2021, 2.41 billion (32,2 %) of this was generated by the category of the smallest companies (0-9 employees without marginal employees) (ibid., p. 20). If we now take the percentage from the above table (Figure 6), i.e. the share of event marketers in all active professional members in the field of advertising and market communication, this shows that small (0-9 employees) event marketer companies in Austria generated around 44.1 million euros in sales revenue in 2021. Of this, 20.7 million would have gone to such companies in Styria. If this would now be divided among the 13 districts of Styria and finally into the 31 municipalities of the district of Weiz (see Figure 4), this comes to 1.59 million euros for a respective company in said district and about 51,290 euros of sales revenues for event marketer businesses in the municipality of Gleisdorf. The district of Graz, which is also relevant along with Weiz, has even more municipalities, but due to the higher population density and the fact that it is the provincial capital hosting more events and possibly event marketers, the amount would probably be higher in this area.

Assuming that there were in fact already six companies in Styria in the same field as LOCALZ MEDIA is aiming for, one could assume that one or two of those companies have been established for a long time and therefore occupy 65% of the market. Due to already completed projects, one can nevertheless propose that LOCALZ Media will be strong enough to divide the remaining market equally with the other companies and therefore comes to a rough

estimated market share of about six to seven percent. However, if one believes the growth rate of (music) events in Austria until 2027 (Statista Market Insights, 2023a, 2023b) and expects LOCALZ Media to be able to expand to further districts in Styria, a market share of over 10% would be realistic by 2027.

4.3. Related markets

For the sake of completeness, it should be noted here that markets related to some of the customer groups whose events, for example, are not large or public enough to be surveyed statistically, must, of course, also be considered. However, since LOCALZ Media focuses predominantly on artistic or musical events, the analysis was primarily designed for these areas. As demand increases, the markets of other event types, such as sporting events, conferences or private gatherings like weddings or anniversaries, would also need to be analysed in more detail.

5. Competitor analysis

Regarding possible competitors of LOCALZ Media, a distinction must be made between direct and indirect competitors. The following sub-chapters show which companies or individuals belong to these groups, including concrete examples.

5.1. Direct competitors

At first glance, direct competitors could be the following:

1. Other marketing and communication agencies with a focus or specialisation on musical and cultural events.
2. Event management companies that also offer marketing services.
3. PR agencies with a specialisation in music, culture, or entertainment.
4. Local agencies offering similar services to the same target market.
5. Creative agencies or design studios that develop branding and advertising for musical and cultural events.

After intensive research, however, one discovers that there are no dedicated marketing and communication agencies that concentrate solely on the marketing of music or artistic events in proximity. The two companies that come closest to LOCALZ Media's concept and are therefore the biggest competitors are shown below (see Figure 7 and 8). If one were to combine the strengths of both – i.e. the thematic focus of Sugar Office (2023) and the different services for concerts (and other events) as well as the high-quality presentation of brandmood (2023) – it would be the ideal representation of what LOCALZ Media strives to be. In that case, however, both companies are based in the Austrian capital city Vienna, which is about 200 kilometres away from the Styrian capital Graz.

brandmood

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• high-quality appearance • services for various types of events (including concerts) • four different locations spread throughout Austria	• no thematic specialisation

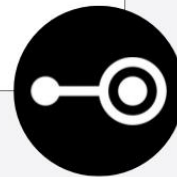


Figure 7: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company brandmood relevant to LOCALZ Media.

Sugar Office

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• clear thematic focus (show, entertainment, music) • Individual offers and solutions • renowned customers	• solely content-related offers (event conception instead of marketing or communication)



Figure 8: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company Sugar Office relevant to LOCALZ Media.

What is more common than agencies for (music) event marketing are event management or concert promotion agencies, which sometimes also offer certain services from the fields of marketing and communication. While the headquarters of one of these examples is again in

Vienna, the other company is located in Klagenfurt, i.e. the capital of the neighbouring province of Carinthia.



Figure 9: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company Happy&Ness relevant to LOCALZ Media.

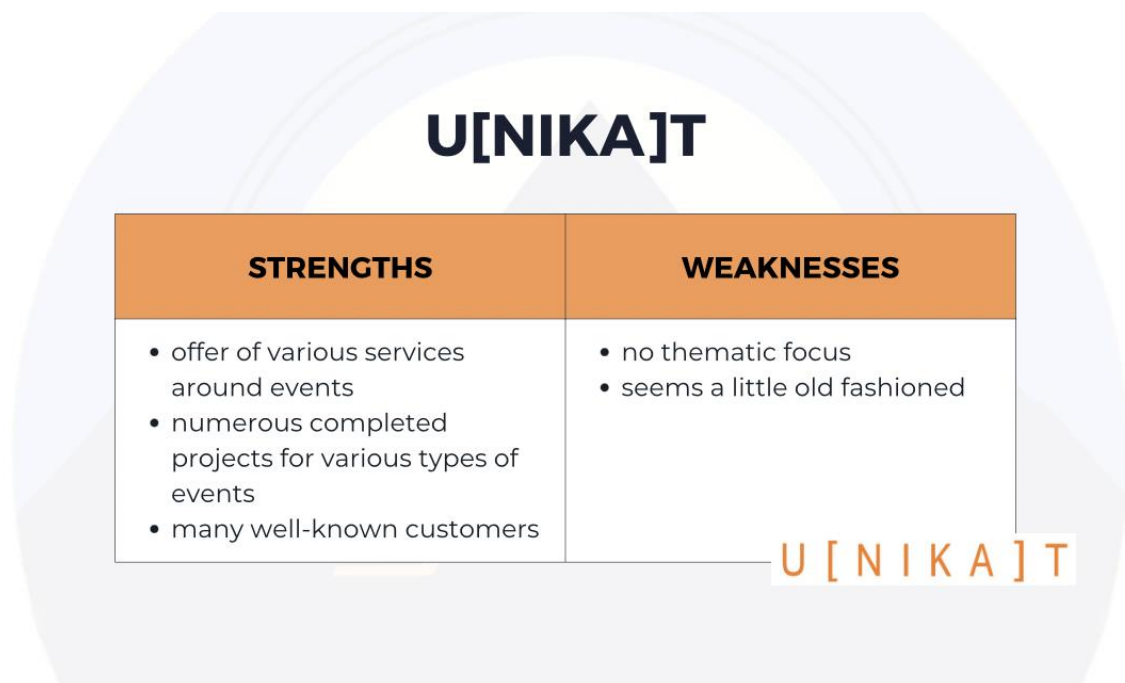


Figure 10: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company U[NIKA]T relevant to LOCALZ Media.

Thirdly, there are roughly a dozen established marketing and communication agencies in the local area, such as the one shown as an example on Figure 11, but which have neither an event nor a music or culture focus. The same applies to the advertising and internet agency from Gleisdorf shown as an example (see Figure 12).



Figure 11: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company Short & Sweet relevant to LOCALZ Media.



Figure 12: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company INTOUCH relevant to LOCALZ Media.

5.2. Indirect competitors

At first glance, indirect competitors could be the following:

1. Large, general marketing and communications agencies that offer a broader range of services and occasionally manage cultural events.
2. Freelancers or independent consultants working in marketing, PR, or event management.
3. Online platforms or software solutions that offer tools for event promotion or ticketing.
4. Social media influencers or bloggers who can promote or sponsor events even if they do not offer traditional marketing services.
5. Venues that have their own marketing or promotions departments and provide services in-house rather than outsourcing them.

Here, too, more detailed research could only find noteworthy examples for two of the points mentioned above. On the one hand, numerous agencies have taken up event marketing in the classic sense – that is, as a communication instrument to promote a product or brand that is not in itself an event. These seem to almost exclusively serve medium-sized to large corporate events, have a wide range of clients, and appear to be very established and successful, especially in Vienna.



Figure 13: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company pi five relevant to LOCALZ Media.

IDEAL Live Marketing

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• claims to be the most awarded (event and live marketing) agency in Austria • large, well-known clients • includes the environmental aspect in its work	• no recognisable thematic focus



Figure 14: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company IDEAL relevant to LOCALZ Media.

In terms of freelancers or independent marketing/PR consultants, on the one hand, there would be an example of an entrepreneur with a local relevance but without an event/music focus (see Figure 15). On the other hand, there would be a freelancer who is active in the more distant federal state of Tyrol, but apparently also specialises in musical or artistic events on a smaller scale (see Figure 16). Said freelancer seems to address a similar customer group and event type – at least in her region – but the presentation does not seem to be as young and modern as LOCALZ Media is aiming for.

Communify One

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• professional appearance • clearly declared focus (on innovative B2B customers) • concentrated service portfolio	• no team support (sole trader)



Figure 15: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company Communify One relevant to LOCALZ Media.

MARIVA

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• clearly declared thematic focus (planning and marketing for small events) • seemingly very cordial presentation • numerous completed projects	• seems quite playful and therefore not too professional but rather amateurish



Figure 16: Overview of the strengths and weaknesses of company Mariva relevant to LOCALZ Media.

5.3. USP and SWOT

A first factor why the LOCALZ Media company is predestined to succeed is that it will close the gap between theory and practice in event marketing that McCole (2004, cited in Wood,

2009, p. 248) mentioned, not least because of my music and entertainment-related education as a founder. Thus, it can be argued to clients that practical experience and current theories or industry trends are always taken into account in the creation of marketing and communication concepts as well as in their implementation. For example, in their latest research paper, Munawaroh and Nurjanah (2023, p. 1074) explicitly state that the “regular evaluation and development of marketing strategy” would be “very important in increasing effectiveness of music event promotion in the future.” This argument can be made, for example, to the organisers of already established events. Returning to the comparison of LOCALZ’s structure with a “telephone band”, Bauer (2011, p. 61) cites as weaknesses of such an organisation, for example, the dependence of the entire company on one person and the possibility of this one person being overburdened. The self-employed content marketing and PR consultant Kreutschmann (2023) also cites this as a potential danger, adding that it could also jeopardise the quality of certain projects. It can be countered at this point that the existing network of possible collaborators, which Bauer (2011, p. 61) also cites as a strength, can compensate for such peaks. In principle, it would still be conceivable to bring Lisa Drekonja on board as a co-founder right from the start. In this way, flexibility and reliability – two characteristics that were also rated as particularly important by the self-employed event manager Schreiner (2023) – could be ensured even sooner from the beginning onwards. For example, with a second founder it would be easier to work through as many tasks as possible before the respective event actually takes place or to prepare them as far as possible, which Bauer (2011, p. 63) also sees as an opportunity for an improved managerial process. Another point in favour of LOCALZ Media’s potential success is its local proximity to the organisers. Kreutschmann (2023) mentions the fast and direct availability on site as an advantage, especially in the area of public relations and in particular press support.

In addition to these success factors and the specialisation or prioritisation of certain types of events, the ultimate unique selling point is the focus on local relevance. Peters and Pikkemaat (2006, p. 152) also argue that an “event has to contribute to the overall targeted corporate identity of a city.” Thus, when event organisers are supported in public relations by professionals who are actually from the area and not only claim to be able to put themselves in the target group’s shoes, but actually do so, this opens up new possibilities in terms of authentic, personal, emotional and thus successful communication with (potential) visitors. The following

illustration provides a summary as well as an overview of the possible advantages, disadvantages, risks, and opportunities of the LOCALZ Media agency that have just been discussed.



Figure 17: SWOT analysis of the LOCALZ Media agency.

6. Products and services

Hoyle (2002, pp. 18-19) answers the question of why marketing and communication measures are relevant for events at all as follows: “No event can be effectively sold until a marketing plan is developed. The marketing plan will likely be the predicate that determines success or failure.” This applies not only, but especially, to smaller events, some of which may not even charge admission but instead, all costs are covered by exhibitors, sponsors, or other supporters (ibid., p. 20). Especially here, a positive, authentic image to the outside world is very important to keep these supporters and thus allow the event to take place. Graf and Kalina-Klensch (2007, pp. 36-37) also claim that it would be important, especially in times of increasing information competition and the unbroken flood of advertising messages, to recognise the importance of communication as a competitive factor and to turn it into advantages. Regarding the interplay between events and PR, Hoyle (2002, pp. 16-17) argues that the core of a PR campaign would be that it never came to a complete standstill, and further asserts: “You must care what people say, and your message to the public must be carefully crafted to reflect the character and strategy of your event.” The author (ibid., p. 17) also adds that successful event marketers would use every opportunity that comes their way to reinforce credible and positive perceptions, as only “sporadic public relations efforts” could be seen through by the potential audience and therefore be reputationally damaging (ibid., p. 51). With this knowledge in mind, the following core competencies and services that are offered to customers were derived:

Category	Services in more detail
PR & Storytelling	
	Writing press articles, guest articles and similar material
	Addressing or contacting and networking with relevant media (print, online, radio)
	Creating (electronic) press kits
Digital	
	Content strategy and management
	SEO analysis and keyword mapping
	Website management and copywriting (blog posts, short texts etc.)
	Social media: Content creation and management

Figure 18: Tabular presentation of the fundamental core competencies and services of the LOCALZ Media Agency by category.

It should be noted at this point that Martensen and Grønholdt (2008, p. 45) state that the message communicated – regardless of whether storytelling elements, informative content, or emotions are used – would be essential for the effect and reception of an event. About social media and events in particular, Munawaroh and Nurjanah (2023, p. 1074) also conclude that their use “as an effective means of promotion is also proven to influence visitor participation.” However, to be able to provide an even broader portfolio, the following additional services are offered and implemented either internally or externally:

- Photography / Videography
- Brand development/management
- Design (flyer, logo, posters, etc.)

The additional services that do not correspond to the core of my educational background can usually also be handled by me directly in-house as I have already completed projects in these areas. However, it depends entirely on the individual (quality) requirements as well as the time and financial resources of the respective client. For example, if a client only needs an additional flyer or a poster for their event, it would be feasible for me to take care of this as a founder, although I am not a designer per se. If, on the other hand, someone wishes to rebrand their event or their entire business with a new logo, for example, and has more budget available, I will refer this client to a designated expert from my network. Depending on how much I am or the company LOCALZ is then still involved in the implementation, there is either a split (see Chapter 9) or I receive a referral fee. This concept is explained in more detail in the following chapters. Schreiner (2023), a self-employed event manager, also sees a separation between communication and, above all, graphic design as meaningful. Even though these two areas are often discussed together, they usually require fundamentally different fields of expertise and practical skills. However, Schreiner (2023) also describes it as common practice in event organisations that external providers are bought in for individual tasks if the competencies are not (sufficiently) available in-house.

Regarding the needs of (potential) clients, it can be said that organisers of events of any size generally have a desire for their project to be successful. According to Hoyle (2002, p. 30), it is precisely this success that “will largely depend on promotion”, regardless of the type of the respective event. Accordingly, it is important to use as many available channels as possible to

market an event well and, in turn, to use the event itself to provide all possible channels with content. This concept is illustrated in the graphic below.

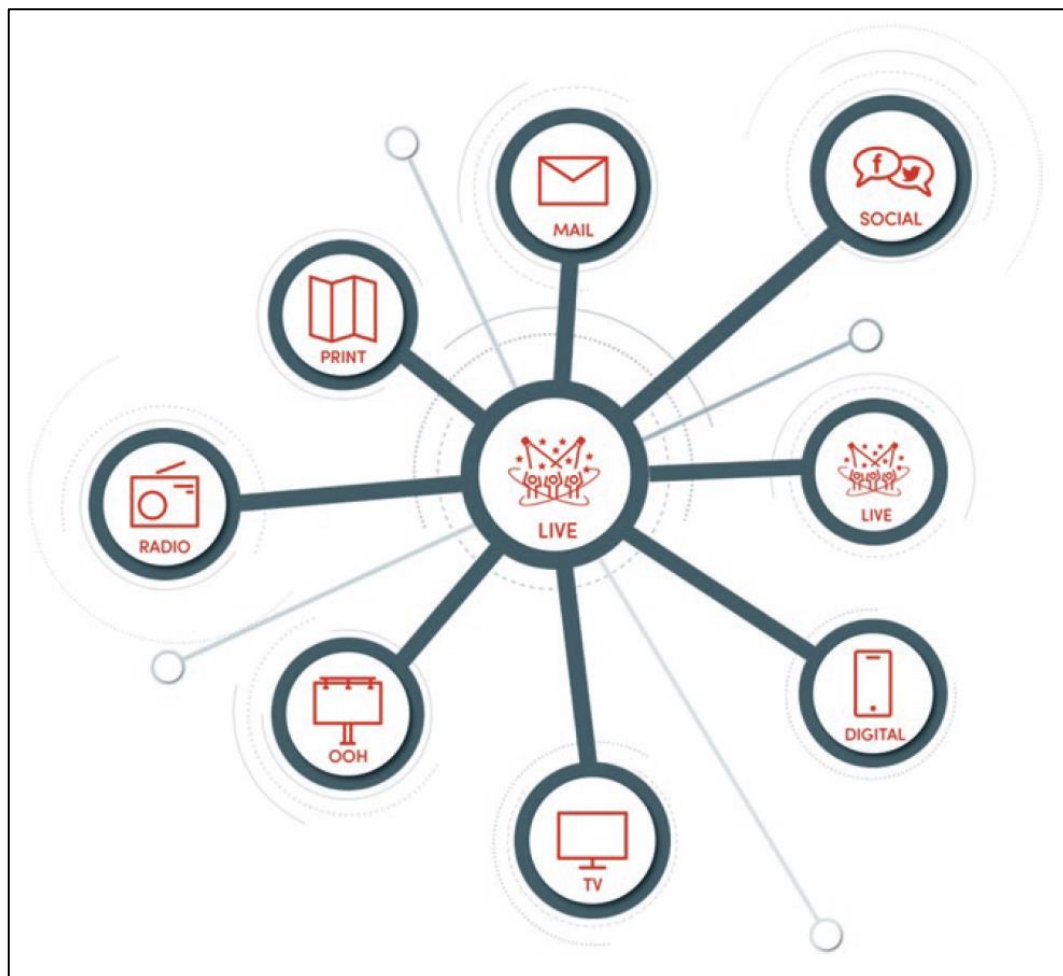


Figure 19: Illustration of the interplay between live events and possible content platforms (Source: VOK DAMS, cited in Dams and Luppold, 2019, p. 9).

Another obvious need of event organisers would be to increase visitor numbers, and effective marketing has also been shown to play a key role in this (Munawaroh and Nurjanah, 2023, p. 1074). What if organisers of predominantly small to medium-sized events do not feel this need on their own because, for example, they have been reasonably satisfied so far from a financial point of view? In this case, they can be actively made aware that, as Allen (2004, p. 51) also argues, successful events are not solely about attendance figures or financial return on investment, but that reputation enhancement or prestige can also be worthwhile in the long run. As already mentioned, image plays an important role for sponsors, cooperating companies, or other supporters, who are often the main financial backers. Once again, this applies above all

to the local event sector, since it is often only thanks to these external supporters that smaller happenings can take place. Other clients might also wish to pursue the goal of better integrating their events and their marketing activities into the overall tourism concept of the respective city or district, as Graf and Kalina-Klensch (2007, p. 96) suggest. LOCALZ Media, with its direct reference to the home region, can support this objective with its services.

To ensure that the potential needs of clients can continue to be satisfied in the future, it is necessary on the one hand, as Graf and Kalina-Klensch (2007, p. 98) also suggest, to constantly extend or replace the communication instruments offered with innovative new ones. This would be particularly desirable for a young agency like LOCALZ Media, whose creator has been confronted with social media, AI, VR, and similar novel technologies from the beginning of her professional life onwards. According to Allen (2004, p. 65), it would also be advisable to create “a niche by acquiring areas of expertise” as this “can result in building a demand for your services.” A continuous further development of the services offered in specific directions would therefore also be envisaged. Concerning to copyright matters, it should be noted that it would be desirable to protect the concept of “LOCALZ Media” – i.e. the association of local professional practitioners from the broad subject area of marketing and communication in a certain environment. At best, this concept could be sold to other agencies that emerge under a similar pretext in the distant future. In this way, the brand could hopefully develop into a kind of quality seal for the successful marketing of small to medium-sized events.

7. Pricing

According to Hoyle (2002, pp. 13-14), events have different financial philosophies. He argues that some events are created to make a lot of profit, some are designed to break even, and in others, the organisers accept that there will be financial losses if there are “wins” elsewhere, such as in terms of increasing membership numbers or promoting a positive image within a certain community. Nevertheless, in the case of LOCALZ Media, it must be ensured that the work done is remunerated accordingly. Kreutschmann (2023) even advises never to get paid after an event, but to at least agree to a down payment in advance – regardless of how well the event is supposed to perform financially. As already indicated in the previous chapter, Schreiner (2023) argues that it is common practice for event organisers to buy graphics or communication services from external providers if they cannot cover the demand themselves. Nevertheless, it is conceivable that special attention should be paid to this when working with organisers of small to medium-sized events, who may first have to be convinced of the usefulness of such communication measures. Accordingly, it would make sense from a strategic standpoint to set prices lower in the beginning and steadily increase them with increasing success rates and more specific, meaningful references. In the beginning, the LOCALZ Media agency will offer its clients the following packages.

 PRICING TABLE 	
BASIC	800 €
Working time: up to 20 hours Team: 1 person Services: Planning and preparation before the event.	
STANDARD	2,000 €
Working time: up to 50 hours Team: up to 2 persons Services: Planning and preparation before the event, support during the event.	
PREMIUM	3,200 €
Working time: up to 80 hours Team: up to 4 persons Services: Planning and preparation before the event, support during the event, follow-up and evaluation after the event.	

Figure 20: Rough price table including corresponding workload in hours, team size, and associated services.

Depending on requirements, individual packages can also be adapted in some cases. In addition, there are two more “hidden” packages entitled “Express”, namely one for non-profit associations for 500 euros and one for private individuals from the direct or extended circle of

acquaintances for 250 euros. Both include 15 working hours and are used when it is a matter of very small orders and clients who truly cannot afford or do not want to invest more. The price of 500 euros for non-profit associations was mentioned by both Kowatsch (2023) and Pflüger (2023) – chairmen of non-profit associations in the city of Gleisdorf – in separate interviews as a realistically feasible entry hurdle.

Regarding the three main packages, an hourly rate of 40 euros should be considered fair for a start, considering my education as a founder as well as previous projects. For example, a digital agency in Graz, which I am not allowed to name for legal reasons, charged just under five hundred euros for a four-hour workshop on search engine optimisation in October 2023, which corresponds to an hourly rate of over 120 euros and thus three times the amount LOCALZ Media is aiming for. The agency mentioned already has several locations in Austria and around 70 employees, so it is quite established and can charge this price. The goal here would be to increase the hourly rate to 50 euros after one or two years. Lastly, another (small) income stream should come from referred work orders. That is, if I get a request from a client in an area that is too foreign to what LOCALZ Media has to offer, I refer them to an external partner from my network. If this job is then not carried out jointly, but I no longer have anything to do with it from then on, I would charge a minimal referral fee.

8. Marketing

Whether marketing should be a high priority for the LOCALZ Media agency itself depends on how the term is defined. According to Schreiner (2023), many collaborations and job opportunities in the Austrian event organisation scene come about thanks to personal experience and recommendations. At this point, the high value of what Dams (2019, p. 3) calls the “Word-of-Mouth (WOM) phenomenon” should be mentioned again. Accordingly, the best marketing strategy would be to complete as many projects as possible as successfully as possible and ask clients to talk about them. However, even apart from this, there are a few ways in which the LOCALZ Media agency can market itself well. Since it is all about personal relationships paired with a good recognition value, especially in the regional environment, the following aspects would have priority:

- 1. Distinctive logo and corporate design**
- 2. Clear, simple brand messages**
- 3. Networking and partnerships:**
 - a. Industry events: participate in relevant trade fairs, conferences, etc.
 - b. Local engagement: active involvement in local events and cultural projects
 - c. Partnerships: seek cooperation with other service providers
- 4. Customer reviews & references:**
 - a. Testimonials: share reviews from satisfied customers
 - b. Case studies: detailed presentation of project successes
- 5. Public relations (PR):**
 - a. Press releases: inform regional media about significant developments or achievements of the agency
 - b. Media relations: build relationships with journalists or other relevant personalities from the events sector
- 6. Build long-term customer loyalty:**
 - a. After-sales service: stay in touch after project completion
 - b. Loyalty programmes: offer regular customers special conditions or extras

The first two points listed require more detailed discussion. Firstly, the following logo was developed to represent the values of the company as accurately as possible and to ensure a uniform, professional appearance.



Figure 21: Detailed main logo of the LOCALZ Media agency with elements reflecting the personal story of me as founder.

The guitar in the logo can be traced back to my uncle, who let me play his guitar from a young age onwards and took me to many of his gigs. Thanks to him, I was able to discover my passion for (music) events at a very early age and therefore I would like to integrate this aspect into the project as the agency's own storytelling element. However, since for some uses and occasions, a logo with many small details is impractical, there are also two other variations of the main logo that focus more on the lettering and thus the name of the agency. The deliberately chosen colour scheme always remains the same. The bright colours are intended to reflect the variety of different events in a region and their associated emotions.



Figure 22: Simplified but still very colourful version of the LOCALZ Media agency logo as an additional asset for specific use cases.



Figure 23: Simplified, text-based version of the LOCALZ Media agency logo as an additional asset for specific use cases.

A first press release on the “opening” of the agency, which in this case is planned for December 2023 to still have enough time for consultations with experts in the fields of taxes, law, or state subsidies, has also been formulated. That press release would logically be sent out in German, but for this report, the content has been translated accordingly.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM LOCAL TO LUMINOUS: LOCALZ MEDIA RAISES THE CURTAIN!

New marketing and communications agency opens in Gleisdorf

Gleisdorf, 4 December 2023 - The City of Gleisdorf welcomes LOCALZ Media, a fresh and innovative marketing and communications agency that specialises in shining a spotlight on local musical and cultural events. With a customised service package offering, the agency has made it its mission to highlight smaller, often overlooked events and give them the attention they deserve.

The vision behind LOCALZ Media was born out of a passion for music, culture, and the Gleisdorf community. The network of professionals, headed by 24-year-old Anja Wilawitzer, understands the importance of supporting local event organisers and thus offers tailored marketing strategies that deliver real results.

The main objective of LOCALZ Media is to promote the cultural diversity of Gleisdorf and the entire East Styrian region. Special emphasis is placed on tailor-made solutions, close cooperation with clients, and a deep local connection. With the opening of this agency, it aims to fill a gap in the local market and enrich the cultural scene of the region.

Interested parties and media representatives are cordially invited to contact Anja Wilawitzer and learn more about the exciting opportunities this new agency offers to event organisers and cultural professionals in the region.

PREPARED BY

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December 2023

Figure 24: Draft for a possible first press release for the opening of the LOCALZ Media agency in English.

Regarding the second point made, namely coherent brand messaging, it should be noted that, according to Martensen and Grønholdt (2008, pp. 47-48), the positive as well as negative emotions that visitors feel towards an event would also influence the brand itself. When LOCALZ Media is involved in an event, especially on-site, these emotions can therefore also

have an impact on the agency's brand. Thus, the agency's core messages should not only reach potential customers, i.e. event organisers in various fields but in the next step also potential customers of the customers, i.e. event visitors. According to the agency's focal points, the core messages could be as follows:

- **Highlighting smaller events:**
 - “Every event has a story. Let us tell yours.”
 - “Great things are happening right on our doorstep – we bring them into the spotlight.”
 - “Small but mighty – we amplify the voice of local highlights.”
- **Personal and individual solutions:**
 - “Your event is unique – just like our solutions for you.”
 - “We listen, we understand, we implement – tailor-made for you.”
 - “Nothing off the peg: with us, there is marketing that really suits you.”
- **Emphasis on the importance to the local community:**
 - “Events that shape community – we bring it into focus.”
 - “Together we strengthen the culture of our city.”
 - “Your event touches hearts – and we make sure it's seen.”

This is not to say that these exact statements must be communicated directly in this way. Nevertheless, the values conveyed by these statements should be recognisable in all end products – be it videos, written documents, or communication services on site. Allen (2004, p. 132) argues not for nothing that one should not only pay attention “to what is being said and seen but how the marketing message is delivered to the client.” When approaching potential clients per se, it should also always be directly addressed how the agency's services can concretely improve an event and bring it forward. Pflüger (2023), in particular, emphasises several times that especially for clients with limited financial resources, such as non-profit associations, a clear and efficient concept must demonstrate what a marketing and communications agency can contribute to and how it can improve their events. In addition, Schreiner (2023) states that creative approaches and more sophisticated ideas and concepts are increasingly needed to land sponsors for an event, for example. The same applies to customer acquisition at LOCALZ Media. Clients must recognise that one has engaged with them and wants to contribute something meaningful. Further marketing measures, which should be

considered especially when the first commissioned jobs have been successfully concluded through personal contacts, for example from previous projects, could be as follows:

- **Digital presence:**
 - Website: enable a modern, mobile-optimised, and search engine-friendly web presence
 - Social media: active profiles on relevant platforms to build networks and share content
 - Email marketing: regular newsletters or updates for customers and prospects
- **Content marketing:**
 - Blog: share expertise, industry trends, case studies, and success stories
 - Video content: create video content, e.g. interviews, how-to videos, or project showcases
- **Search engine optimisation (SEO):**
 - Keyword optimisation: make sure the LOCALZ Media website is found for relevant terms
 - Backlink building: get high-quality backlinks from other websites
- **Paid advertising:**
 - Google/Facebook ads: run targeted ads to raise the agency's profile and generate leads
 - Retargeting: reach people who have already shown interest in LOCALZ Media
- **Further education and thought leadership:**
 - Webinars and workshops: offer training or information sessions when there is just a slump in orders
 - Guest articles: write articles for industry publications or blogs

Since these areas of activity correspond mainly to the skills of LOCALZ Media itself, it is better to take a few weeks, if not two to three months, more time to prepare the agency's channels, platforms, and measures as well as possible before accepting external projects. This way, one has much more free resources and can fully concentrate on potential clients and their events later. Especially at the beginning, i.e. during the first four to six months, order acquisition should also be handled exclusively on a generic basis, i.e. via contacts, previous clients, or generic search queries, and without financial investment in digital advertisements or the like.

9. Sales

According to Getz (2002, cited in Peters and Pikkemaat, 2007, p. 152), “inadequate marketing and promotion” would be one of “the main sources of festival management failure.” The sales strategy will therefore be precisely to point out to (potential) clients where there would be concrete room for improvement to ensure that their event will also be successful in the long term. For example, the image enhancement (Graf and Kalina-Klensch, 2005, p. 19) of an organiser or an event itself could enable its long-term refinancing without the client being aware of it yet. A regional example of this would be the Solar City Lauf, which Kowatsch (2023) mentioned in the interview for this report. It was a regionally significant sporting event in Gleisdorf with over a thousand people involved – including the non-profit association of which Kowatsch is now the chairman. Unfortunately, the event could no longer take place since 2013 because of repeated financial losses and the corresponding lack of a budget for its hosting. Even though the various organisers, such as the municipality of Gleisdorf and non-profit associations, were not financially dependent on the success of the event, it is nevertheless a pity for the town and the surrounding area to “lose” something which was perceived by children and adults as a significant sporting event right in their hometown, just because not enough revenue could be generated. Considering in the last step that according to Allen (2004, p. 30), it would be very important “to be prepared to meet your clients on their own turf and at their level”, the following steps would be conceivable for a possible sales strategy:

1. Select a potential client who fits LOCALZ Media’s service portfolio and values.
2. Find concrete possibilities for improvement and put them into a rough concept.
3. Making an appointment for a personal meeting with the respective organiser (possibly including an unofficial “heads-up” via joint contact in advance).
4. Find out how the respective event is currently perceived by the organiser himself/herself.
5. Find out whether the organiser is aware of the cultural significance but also of the “danger” of maintaining or financing the event in the long term if marketing and communication opportunities are missed.
6. Present a concrete concept and respond honestly to questions, criticism, or other opposition.

7. Include the agency's overarching goals (spotlighting smaller events, emphasising local relevance, etc.) in the conversation.

According to Kreutschmann (2023), it often takes more convincing to conclude a contract or sale, especially with smaller customers, because they would usually look for the most obvious and cheapest solution. This is also confirmed by Pflüger (2023), who, regarding non-profit associations, claims from experience that people first look in the immediate environment of the association members to see if someone can support them in a certain area – in this case, marketing and communication – for no or very little money. Nevertheless, both association chairmen claim independently of each other that they would be happy to work with more professional agencies in these areas if the price is right and the added value or benefits are clearly presented. The fact that associations are nevertheless a relevant target group for aspiring young companies is shown, for example, by the start-up “Vereinsplaner” from Linz in Upper Austria. This online management tool for club boards was already used by 4,500 clubs in German-speaking countries in 2022 and two of the four founders of the successful Austrian company “Runtastic” even invested half a million euros in the start-up (Gschwandtner, 2022).

At this point, it would be useful to list the first targeted sales goals, considering the set package prices from Chapter 7. Suppose I, as a founder, want to pay myself a monthly salary of 2,500 euros. For the standard package with 2 people, the additional employee could receive a share of 1,000 euros, and for the premium package with 4 people, the additional three employees could receive a share of 2,400 euros (800 euros each). Furthermore, it is assumed that the monthly operating costs (marketing, software, etc.) are 1,000 euros and that an additional 500 euros should be left in the company every month. Consequently, the monthly costs are as follows:

- Founder's salary: 2,500€
- Operating costs: 1,000€
- Desired profit: 500€
- Total costs (without additional “Express” packages): 4,000€

Assuming that on average one express package for clubs and one express package for acquaintances is sold per month, 3,250 euros would have to be earned through main packages. Realistically, in some months there are probably no Express Packs sold, but at some times,

when a lot of events are taking place at once, there will be more. This now results in the following figures for required package sales and corresponding working hours:

	Basic package	Standard package	Premium package
Package price	800€	2,000€	3,200€
Working hours	20h	50h	80h
Needed monthly			
Packages sold	5	2	1
Working hours	100h	100h	80h
Needed quarterly			
Packages sold	15	6	3
Working hours	300h	200h	240h
Needed yearly			
Packages sold	60	24	12
Working hours	1,200h	1,200h	960h

Figure 25: First forecast for required turnover figures according to packages to be sold including required working hours.

In summary, the LOCALZ Media agency would have to sell either five basic packages, two standard packages, or one premium package (or a correspondingly different composition of packages, the value of which comes back to 3,250 euros in total) every month to cover all costs and achieve the desired profit of 500 euros.

10. Financial projections

To make forecasts for the first five business years at least, many estimates must be made, of course, because even with a solid network and well-thought-out strategies, unforeseen slumps or obstacles can occur. To remain as realistic as possible, it is assumed for the first business year that the calculation from the previous chapter will work out with a profit of 500 euros in eight out of twelve months, that the break-even point will be reached in two months, and that a loss of 500 euros will be booked in two remaining months. Based on the extensive preparatory work in the course of this report and beyond, it is assumed that the LOCALZ Media agency will manage to generate steady growth. Accordingly, it is assumed for the second business year that in ten months it will be profitable, in one month it will reach break-even and in only one month it will make losses. From then on, it should be possible to make a profit every month and finally increase the hourly wage from 40 to 50 euros in the fourth and fifth business years. For these two years, it is also assumed that 650 Euros in profit can be made, and another employee can be hired at a salary of 2,000 euros to be able to handle the increasing number of commissioned jobs. Based on these assumptions, the following projected turnover figures result for the first five financial years.

Time frame	Profit / loss	Monthly turnover	Cumulative annual turnover
Year 1			
8 months	+€500	€8,500	€68,000
2 months	0 (break-even)	€8,000	€16,000
2 months	-€500	€7,500	€15,000
Annual turnover 1			€99,000
Year 2			
10 months	+€500	€8,500	€85,000
1 month	0 (break-even)	€8,000	€8,000
1 month	-€500	€7,500	€7,500
Annual turnover 2			€100,500
Year 3			
12 months	+€500	€8,500	€102,000
Annual turnover 3			€102,000

Year 4			
12 months	+€650	€12,650	€151,800
Annual turnover 4			€151,800
Year 5			
12 months	+€650	€12,650	€151,800
			€151,800
Total turnover (after five years)			€605,100

Figure 26: Rough forecasts for the targeted and realistic turnover figures for the first five business years of LOCALZ Media.

It should be possible to compensate for any slumps with the minor referral fees not considered in this calculation or with the help of workshops or similar offers as a bridging measure. From that point on, i.e. from the sixth business year onwards, growth should continue at about the same rate or a little below, and at some point, it would be conceivable for the LOCALZ Media concept to gain a foothold in other locations in Austria or perhaps even beyond. To put these figures into perspective, the relevant figures from the sixth chapter on market analysis should be used again. Specifically, one would have to take the estimated amount that event marketer companies in the district of Weiz, where LOCALZ Media's headquarters are located, generate annually, and offset this against the agency's projected turnover figures. Those said companies from the district of Weiz generated an estimated 1.59 million euros in 2021. With a projected turnover of 99,000 euros in the first business year, the market share would consequently correspond to a percentage of 6.2. This is also consistent with the initially predicted market share of between six and seven percent from Chapter 6. After the third business year, it would be 6.4%, and after the fifth year even 9.5%, which would be a desirable development.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the profit of a company in Austria is subject to corporation tax (for limited liability companies) or income tax (for sole proprietorships). In addition, there are other tax aspects such as turnover tax, social security contributions, and similar levies. This requires detailed knowledge of Austrian tax law and a close look at the business model to consider all tax-relevant factors, for which a trained tax advisor would be consulted in the actual implementation.

11. Conclusion

The marketing and communications agency LOCALZ Media positions itself as a key player in highlighting musical and cultural events in communities such as Gleisdorf and throughout the (Eastern) Styrian region. The main mission of the agency is to make hidden local treasures visible and to bring smaller events that are often overlooked to the fore. The agency's offer is divided into different service packages depending on the scope and complexity of the respective event. The focus is always on individual solutions that meet the specific needs of the clients. In addition to the main offers, smaller "Express" packages for non-profit organisations and the extended circle of acquaintances are available at reduced prices. The financial forecast shows the viability of the suggested business model. Based on an hourly wage of 40 euros and the expected sales of the packages, a stable profit is expected in the first three years. Investments in marketing and staff are foreseen to support the agency's growth and further penetrate the local market. LOCALZ Media's marketing approach emphasises personal relationships and referrals and the core marketing messages represent local connection, individuality, and the importance of events to the local community. In the coming years, there are plans to widen the range of services, recruit staff, and adjust prices to meet increasing demands and the expanded range of services. In conclusion, LOCALZ Media positions itself as a solution provider that fills a gap in the local market. The specialised services, deep ties to the community, and commitment to cultural diversity make the agency the preferred partner for event organisers in the Gleisdorf area and beyond.

Reflective Summary

A combination of passion for mainly musical events as well as the goosebumps that go with them and a deep connection to my home region – that is how the idea behind the LOCALZ Media agency began. As the founder of the agency, I was already involved in various events that I appreciate about my hometown of Gleisdorf, so it was difficult to take a certain distanced position from what was happening in order to build a profitable business model out of a hobby. In the end, this proved to be an important step in finally giving the image-building and the communicative appearance of smaller events the attention they deserve. I would have expected that it would be more difficult to transfer the content learned from Tileyard Education, which was after all focused on the English-speaking or rather global music and event industry, to a company in a small town like Gleisdorf or an Austrian province in general. However, it was very enriching to bring together the personal experiences from the seemingly small-scale local environment with the globally relevant learning from Tileyard.

In terms of market research, however, it was not so easy to break down the figures for the whole of Austria (STATISTIK AUSTRIA, 2023a and 2023b) or, if necessary, for the province of Styria to a district, municipality, or city. In addition, it was difficult to decide whether the analysis should focus on musical events and to find out what is supposed to belong to this category. Despite the musical and cultural focus of the agency, jobs for events from other areas will likely also be necessary, especially at the beginning. Regarding the thematic focus in particular, there were contradictions between the literature, which suggested that it would be good to specialise in certain services or event types (Allen, 2004, p. 3), while for example, the self-employed event manager Schreiner (2023) proposed that it would be important for organisers that a provider can cover as many topics as possible. However, Schreiner usually manages larger events, such as the ATP500 tennis tournament “Erste Bank Open” in the Vienna Stadthalle with over 70,000 visitors, rather than smaller, local events. Thus, it was assumed that for the latter, a specialisation with demand-based involvement of professionals from related disciplines would make sense. During more detailed research, it became clear that there seemed to be no agency in the area that specialised in (music) events and offered similar services. If there are any similar ones, they are not located in Styria, which is of course an advantage for LOCALZ Media. On the other hand, there are various communication and marketing agencies in the region, especially in Graz but one even directly in Gleisdorf (INTOUCH, n.d.), which

may not have a real thematic or event focus but already do have a certain standing and recognition value. This realisation rather strengthened my resolve to start the suggested business and additionally sparked the idea that I should also get in touch with those agencies that had already been able to gain a foothold in the area. Financial planning turned out to be quite a challenge, as a lot is based on assumptions and probabilities. However, the combination of my own experience as a client of external providers in the city of Graz – thanks to my previously employment as Head of Marketing and PR – as well as the references to previous completed projects in the Gleisdorf area should have contributed to estimates that are as close to reality as possible in the end. In addition, one must consider the uncertainties one will have to deal with in the next few years, thinking back to the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic or the unstable situation in Ukraine, which is not too far away from Austria or central Europe in general.

When considering the positioning and target group approach, it became clear that the agency's uniqueness lies in its focus on local cultural and musical events. This focus offers crucial added value, as smaller, local events are often overlooked by larger advertising agencies (Allen, 2004, p. 54) or not considered commercially viable. The conscious decision to fill this gap created a clear market niche and underlined the importance of authenticity and proximity to the community in brand communication. The role of personal relationships and referral marketing was also identified as central. Due to the specific market segment and the intimacy of the local event scene, word of mouth seemed to be the most natural and effective form of customer acquisition. It was recognised that trust in this market segment is built not only through quality services but also through genuine human connections. However, despite the power of face-to-face relationships, it was not overlooked how digital marketing – especially in the form of social media – could serve as a complement to reach a wider audience and increase brand awareness. Product portfolio design and pricing were also central to defining the agency's value and uniqueness in the market. It became clear that a flexible and modifiable service approach was crucial to both meet the diverse needs of smaller organisers and remain competitive. Therefore, different package options were developed to reflect both the quantity and quality of services. In setting prices, a balance was sought between marketability, cost recovery, and value proposition. This process required a detailed analysis of the cost structure, competitive environment, and perceived value. Regarding the chosen company form, the question remains

open as to whether it would not make more sense to establish LOCALZ Media as a limited liability company from the beginning onwards to avoid the later change of legal form. Such a project requires a certain amount of time and effort, considering that at best a tax advisor should be consulted. If this is to happen in a phase in which extensive job offers are already coming in regularly and must be processed, this could be more difficult to implement than before the actual start of sales. It would probably make sense to consult a tax advisor about this dilemma already before the final decision is made. Regardless of the legal form chosen, however, it should remain the case that for the first few years, the agency will essentially consist only of me as the founder, with colleagues from my network being called in depending on the job. This way, I can work as cost-efficiently as possible during the first period and gather experience on whether and for which assignments or in which areas more staff would be helpful.

Regarding the interviews, it became clear relatively quickly, especially during the conversation with Johannes Schreiner, that it is very difficult to make general statements for events overall, as every event has its circumstances and challenges. Nevertheless, he provided important insights into how event organisers work and what is most important for them when working with external providers. The statements by Harald Kowatsch and Martin Pflüger, representing non-profit associations, were also valuable in understanding what matters when approaching these associations. Even though they repeatedly mention the limited financial resources, there was also repeated encouragement from their side and the assertion that the desire to work with professional agencies in the field of marketing and communication was also given. Since the customer portfolio of the self-employed consultant for content marketing and PR, Liam Kreutschmann is also predominantly focused on smaller clients, he provided valuable insights into the fact that in some cases, a lot of convincing must be done before a contract is signed, and that in some cases you simply will not get through with your offer. In general, however, it can be said that the interviews provided valuable insights into a wide range of relevant topics for the successful implementation of LOCALZ Media – including financial aspects, the right approach, the need for concrete proposals and concepts as well as common practices in the event organisation industry. In retrospect, it would have been interesting to get the views of municipal representatives, but unfortunately, despite repeated enquiries, no feedback was received from either the City of Gleisdorf or the City of Graz. To get answers from these representatives, it would probably be more helpful to ask for an appointment on-site or a phone

call even further in advance. Apart from this, no significant difficulties were encountered in the preparation and production of this report. However, the fact that LOCALZ Media is an “ordinary” marketing and communications agency and not a disruptive start-up using artificial intelligence or other new technologies has, according to the research, the consequence that the company does not qualify for much or any government funding. Here, too, it is worth consulting an advisor who deals with precisely this topic and is therefore much more familiar with it. The good thing, however, is that normally no start-up capital is needed, as basic equipment (laptop, camera, microphone, tripod, light, etc.) is already privately owned by me and some of the colleagues from the network I mentioned.

For my personal growth and learning, I can only say that at the beginning I would not have trusted myself to independently develop a business plan that is steadfast enough to be implemented. Precisely because my roots go back to copywriting and strategic conceptualisation rather than to the deeply economic aspects, I had great respect for the areas of pricing structure as well as financial forecasting. The strategic preparatory work from the macro level (the state of Austria) to the micro level (the municipality of Gleisdorf) provided important relief. It was also interesting to learn how the processes behind events work and what is particularly important in their marketing according to the literature. In terms of feedback, initial constructive feedback from Steve Cole and Adé Adefolalu, representing Tileyard itself, was very helpful. In this way, the service portfolio, and the idea of the agency itself could be broken down to the most essential and the strongest assets, so that there would be no misunderstandings. At the following point, Martin Pflüger and Johannes Schreiner deserve special mention. Many acquaintances and other contacts from my environment were enthusiastic about the idea from the very beginning, as they were involved in my previous projects, partly through stories or in the role of co-organisers or event visitors. For them, it was obvious that I would find this or a similar path to self-employment or entrepreneurship. For this reason, it was even more important that Martin Pflüger, on the one hand, originally perceived the opportunities in non-profit associations as rather critical due to the low available budget and the basic idea of associations that a lot should be created by the members themselves with few resources. On the other hand, the discussion with Johannes Schreiner, who simply could not do anything with some of the questions I asked him because they were simply too far removed from reality, was enormously important for the creation of the business plan. Last but not least,

those people who are part of my network and who have therefore repeatedly agreed to help me with the most diverse projects should not go unmentioned. I could and can always learn something new from their skills.

After a hopefully successful start, the overarching vision behind LOCALZ Media is of course to eventually become the one-stop shop for event marketing and communication in the region and to find like-minded people to join the agency. However, the focus on smaller musical and cultural events should never be lost. In the distant future, it is also conceivable that the agency will organise its own “showcase” events, where the clients of successful projects are brought together and once again put in the spotlight. At first, however, it is important to meet the forecast expectations and goals for the first few years of business and to constantly expand the service portfolio to remain competitive in this dynamic market. Despite the challenges encountered along the way, this report has reinforced the belief that the LOCALZ Media agency can add significant value to the cultural landscape. It is a reminder that passion, coupled with thorough research and careful planning, can lay the foundation for success. This business plan is not only a document but also a testament to the commitment to local events and the vision for the Gleisdorf area and other communities in Eastern Styria for the years to come.

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Annex

Questionnaire A, original German version: **MARKETING/COMMS EXPERT**

Befragter: Liam Kreutschmann, 15. Oktober 2023, Graz

1. *Wie lange sind Sie bereits als Dienstleister für Content Marketing, Social Media, PR und Brand Storytelling in der Freizeitindustrie tätig? In welcher Größenordnung befindet sich der Großteil Ihrer Kunden (kleine, mittelgroße und/oder große Unternehmen)?*

Antwort: Ich mache das bislang seit ungefähr zweieinhalb Jahren selbstständig und spezialisiert auf die Freizeitbranche, davor eben vier Jahre ohne Spezialisierung und nicht selbstständig. Ich konzentriere mich in der Selbstständigkeit vor allem auf kleine und mittelgroße Unternehmen. Das größte Unternehmen, das ich betreue, hat in Summe ungefähr zwei-, dreihundert Angestellte. In der Freizeitbranche sind die meisten jedoch Mini-Jobber, das sollte man berücksichtigen. Aber grundsätzlich sind es immer kleine bis mittelgroße Unternehmen.

2. *Ist die Zahlungsbereitschaft Ihrer Erfahrung nach bei kleinen, mittelgroßen und/oder großen Unternehmen gegeben bzw. erkennen diese den Mehrwert darin, sich im Bereich Marketing und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit externe Unterstützung zu holen?*

Antwort: Logischerweise erkennen alle meine Kunden einen Mehrwert darin, in Öffentlichkeit und Marketing zu investieren, sonst würden sie nicht mit mir zusammenarbeiten. Wobei ich gerade in der Freizeitbranche festgestellt habe, dass – und hier gilt das insbesondere für kleine und mittelgroße Unternehmen – der Aufwand des Beibringens des eigenen Nutzens beim Kunden doch vorher nicht ganz unerheblich ist. In dieser Branche sind viele familiengeführte Unternehmen unterwegs, oft bereits in der X-ten Generation und gerade bei den Unternehmen ist der Mehrwert erst zu vermitteln. Wenn sie dann Kunden sind, logischerweise, sind sie das gerne und verstehen auch, worum es geht. Wenn sie das nicht sind, dann ist es ein gewisser Weg ihnen das beizubringen und bei einigen wird man auch auf taube Ohren stoßen.

3. *Aus welchen Gründen entscheiden sich vor allem kleine bis mittelgroße Unternehmen Ihrer Einschätzung nach gegen externe Dienstleister im Bereich Marketing und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit? (entsprechende Punkte kennzeichnen und/oder ergänzen)*
 - a. **Die Unternehmen haben in-house genügend Leute angestellt, die alle Bereiche ausreichend abdecken.**
 - b. **Die Unternehmen halten es nicht für nötig, in diesem Bereich mehr zu machen.**
 - c. **Die Unternehmen haben auch ohne zusätzliche Marketing-Maßnahmen genügend Besucher:innen/Aufmerksamkeit und/oder wollen gar nicht mehr.**
 - d. **Die finanziellen Ressourcen sind nicht vorhanden.**

- e. *Aktuelle Anbieter (Agenturen, Selbstständige etc.) in dem Bereich sind zu teuer.*
- f. *Sonstige:*

Antwort: Unternehmen entscheiden sich aus ganz verschiedenen Gründen gegen externe Unterstützung, meistens sind zwei Hauptgründe herauszukristallisieren. Erstens, der Nutzen wird schon erkannt, es wird aber vor allem auf interne Hilfe gesetzt. Also entweder machen es die Betreiberfamilien noch selbst, das kommt sehr oft vor, vor allem bei kleineren Parks oder auch anderen Anbietern wie Escape Rooms, zum Beispiel. Da machen es die Gründer einfach selbst, weil nicht unbedingt die Zahlungsbereitschaft da ist, um noch jemand Externen einzustellen. Oder es soll jemand intern beschäftigt werden. Gerade kleine und mittelgroße Unternehmen sind, was das angeht, oftmals recht konservativ und wissen natürlich, wenn sie intern jemanden angestellt haben – sei es ein Vollzeitmitarbeiter, sei es ein Teilzeitmitarbeiter – haben sie natürlich eine gewisse größere Kontrolle. Darüber hinaus gibt es bestimmte Vorteile, wenn man jemanden intern einstellt. Beispielsweise ist jemand viel schneller greifbar, Dinge können schneller geklärt werden. Bei Marketing und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit geht es ja oft um Content Produktion und da ist es natürlich von Vorteil, wenn man das direkt machen kann – auch Pressebegleitung etc., da ist es wichtig, dass jemand vor Ort ist. Das sind so die Vorteile, die dafürsprechen, jemanden intern anzustellen.

Es gibt einige, die erkennen noch nicht wirklich den Nutzen. Es wird schon der Nutzen in Marketing erkannt, aber das wird in diesen Fällen auf klassische Kanäle konzentriert. Das wären bei Freizeitattraktionen oft Prospekte oder Out-of-Home Werbungen, zum Teil auch noch Radio, das hat einen recht hohen Stellenwert. Bei Out-of-Home wären das Spezialfälle wie Hinweisschilder, die man draußen aufstellen kann. Das ist ein ganz wichtiges Instrument gerade bei Freizeitparks, ist jedoch eine sehr aufwendige Marketingmaßnahme. Vor allem im digitalen Bereich ist das sehr von den Attraktionen abhängig, wie gut der Nutzen erkannt wird. Hier ist festzustellen, dass der Bedarf in einem Bereich, wo besonders hohe Konkurrenz besteht, schneller erkannt wird. Vor allem Escape Rooms, beispielsweise, sind in punkto Marketing und Kommunikation größeren Freizeitparks oftmals überlegen, weil das Konkurrenzverhältnis bei Escape Rooms viel höher ist. Es gibt oft verschiedene Anbieter in derselben Stadt – überhaupt gibt es beinahe in jeder Stadt welche. Qualitätsunterschiede sind auch noch da und die Umsatzerlöse nicht allzu hoch. Gerade bei Escape Rooms ist die Konkurrenz und daher der Marketing-Need sehr schnell erkannt. Bei kleineren Freizeitparks ist das oft nicht so, weil sie wissen, dass sie teils seit Jahrzehnten bestehen und die Leute rundherum kommen von allein – zumindest ist das der Erwartungswert. Zum Teil ist das auch so, weil die Besucher teils als Kind schon dort waren und dann als Erwachsene wiederkommen mit ihren eigenen Kindern. Also eine gewisse Grundbekanntheit ist immer da, und das wissen die [Anm. Inhaber] auch. Kleinere Parks leben stark von Jahreskarten, da hat man auch wiederholte Umsätze, wenn die Leute wiederkommen – gerade über Food und Beverage. Das ist einfacher zu vermarkten und

läuft von selbst – glauben zumindest die Anbieter und erkennen dann nicht unbedingt das Potenzial, dass noch mehr möglich wäre.

4. Was waren bisher oder sind derzeit Ihre größten (beruflichen) Herausforderungen? (entsprechende Punkte kennzeichnen und/oder ergänzen)
- a. Begrenzte finanzielle und/oder zeitliche Ressourcen der (potenziellen) Kunden
 - b. Integration verschiedener Dienstleistungen (kohärente und effektive Botschaften über alle Kanäle oftmals nicht möglich, da nur Unterstützung für einen Teilbereich angefordert wird)
 - c. **Skalierung (Überlastung aufgrund eines wachsendes Kundenportfolios)**
 - d. Fachkräftemangel (Qualifizierte Fachkräfte im Bereich Marketing und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit sind sehr gefragt und es ist schwierig, gute Mitarbeiter:innen zu finden und zu halten.)
 - e. **Qualitätssicherung (Mit wachsender Klientenzahl wird es schwieriger, eine konstant hohe Qualität der Dienstleistung sicherzustellen. Daher kann es vorkommen, dass Kunden wieder abspringen.)**
 - f. Sonstige: **Bewusstseins-schaffung bei den Kunden, dass ihr Geld in diesem Bereich sinnvoll eingesetzt ist.**

Antwort: Die derzeit größten Herausforderungen sind dreierlei aus der genannten Auswahl. Das wäre Skalierung auf jeden Fall zum einen – größer werden, aber sich selbst nicht überlasten und zum richtigen Zeitpunkt jemanden dazu holen und dennoch zu wissen, dass die bestehenden Umsätze auch bleiben. Das ist bei Agenturen manchmal sehr volatil, da können Kunden oftmals schnell gehen, aber auch schnell kommen. Qualitätssicherung ist tatsächlich auch ein Ding, gerade dann, wenn man selbst sehr viel zu tun hat, dann muss man erst recht darauf achten, dass die Qualität bestehen bleibt. Nachlassende Qualität hieße schließlich unzufriedener Kunde und unzufriedener Kunde heißt, es besteht die Möglichkeit, dass dieser weggeht. Das ist also tatsächlich eine Herausforderung, wenn man sich mehr Kunden anläßt. Und das letzte ist natürlich das, was ich in anderen Antworten auch schon dabei hatte, nämlich, dass man Kunden von seinen Dienstleistungen erst überzeugen und dementsprechend das Bewusstsein dafür schaffen muss, dass Geld in dem Bereich sinnvoll eingesetzt ist.

5. Inwiefern unterscheiden sich die Marketing- und Kommunikationsstrategien bzw. -maßnahmen in der Freizeitindustrie von jenen in anderen Branchen? Könnten hier Parallelen zur Vermarktung von (Musik-)Veranstaltungen gezogen werden?

Antwort: Der Unterschied zwischen Freizeit und Musik besteht möglicherweise darin, dass es in der Freizeitbranche darum geht, einen permanenten Kundenstrom zu erhöhen. Natürlich zu besonderen Anlässen nochmal mehr, wie zum Beispiel zu Halloween, zu Weihnachten, an Black Friday, zu Ostern, in den Ferien allgemein, dafür gibt es eigene Kampagnen. Dann hat man natürlich saisonale Unterschiede, bei Indoor-Attraktionen ist im Winter viel los und im Sommer wenig, bei Outdoor-Attraktionen ist das genau umgekehrt.

Insgesamt geht es aber darum, dass der Kundenstrom generell und die Markenbekanntheit erhöht wird. Gerade bei Musikveranstaltungen oder im Veranstaltungsbereich konzentriert sich der Punkt, wo Kunden angesprochen werden sollen natürlich auf ein ganz bestimmtes Event, was ab einer gewissen Zahl ausverkauft ist. Bei Freizeitattraktionen ist das eigentlich sehr unwahrscheinlich, dass man wirklich alle Termine, alle Slots, alle Tickets komplett ausverkauft hat. Da geht normal immer noch mehr oder die Dienstleistung, also die Freizeitattraktion kann erweitert werden – das ist im Veranstaltungsbereich nicht unbedingt so, also es ist ein begrenzt skalierbarer Effekt. Aber dafür muss es natürlich immer zu einem gewissen Zeitpunkt dann einfach funktionieren, ich glaube, das ist so der große Unterschied.

Vielleicht sei noch zu ergänzen, dass gerade Freizeitattraktionen in der Regel auch Events anbieten. Also es gibt wenige, die nicht mal irgendein Sonderevent haben. Es überschneidet sich schon deshalb in einigen Bereichen, weil natürlich auch diese Events verkauft werden müssen.

6. *Haben Sie Ideen, auf welche Herausforderungen man bei Marketing- und Kommunikationsmaßnahmen für Kultur- und Musikveranstaltungen stoßen könnte? Wie könnten diese bewältigt werden?*

Antwort: Mögliche Herausforderungen gibt es immer zahlreiche, also auch bei Veranstaltungen ist das oftmals das Wetter. Vor allem bei Outdoor-, aber auch bei Indoor-Veranstaltungen spielt das eine Rolle. Zweitens steht den Menschen immer ein begrenzt hohes Budget für Veranstaltungen zur Verfügung. Man sieht ja gerade so ein bisschen den Effekt, dass die ganz großen Touren von Taylor Swift und Co. oft im Nu ausverkauft sind und die Zahlungsbereitschaft der Menschen dafür sehr hoch ist. Gleichwohl haben es kleinere Künstler aktuell schwerer denn je und kriegen ihre Venues nicht voll. Also es ist eine sehr unterschiedliche Zahlungsbereitschaft da bei Künstlern. Das Nächste bei Veranstaltungen ist, dass man immer bis zu einem gewissen Grad abhängig von anderen Menschen ist. In dem Fall von Künstlern, zum Beispiel, weißt du nie, ob eine Krankheit dazwischenkommt oder die Band sich zerstreitet. Insofern ist man immer ein bisschen davon abhängig, wie andere gerade so im Leben stehen und dann performen. Das ist sicherlich eine Sache.

Und eine Schwierigkeit ist natürlich immer: Das Produkt muss am Ende stimmen. Als Marketing-Agentur hast du immer nur begrenzte Auswirkungen auf das Produkt am Ende, das ist bei mir bei Freizeitattraktionen dasselbe. Ich weiß, einige Sachen, die meine Kunden anbieten sind nicht die tollsten Attraktionen, für die ich persönlich Geld ausgeben würde. Gleichwohl muss man diese aber natürlich verkaufen und das negative Feedback verarbeiten und vernünftig damit umgehen. Man sollte es nicht unterdrücken und das gibt es bei Veranstaltungen natürlich auch. Die Veranstaltung kann mal nicht so gelungen sein und das kommt im Endeffekt dann auch wieder bei dem an, der sie vermarktet hat. Man kann natürlich auch Dinge übervermarkten, wenn man schon weiß, diese Veranstaltung

wird den Erwartungen nicht standhalten können. Das ist also auch eine Schwierigkeit, die Abhängigkeit von den Leuten, die das Produkt am Ende gestalten.

Eine weitere Herausforderung bei der Vermarktung von Kultur- und Musikveranstaltungen ist, dass du natürlich nie die hundertprozentige Sicherheit hast, dass das Event am Ende auch stattfinden wird. Du willst als Dienstleister aber natürlich nicht auf deiner Arbeit und damit auf den Rechnungen sitzenbleiben, sozusagen. Man muss also irgendwie ein Agreement finden, was passiert, wenn die Veranstaltung abgesagt wird – sei es, wegen zu wenig Leuten, wegen zu wenig Interesse, wegen Krankheit, wegen einer plötzlichen staatlichen Auflage, wegen Lärmschutz oder weil das Wetter nicht mitspielt. Also man muss immer auch bedenken, was passiert, wenn das Produkt am Ende gar nicht mehr verkauft werden kann.

Wie kann man das nun bewältigen? Vielleicht zum ersten Punkt, also der Abhängigkeit vom Produkt: Da würde ich sagen man sollte realistisches Marketing machen, die Veranstaltung nicht überverkaufen, sondern ehrlich bleiben aber das Event dennoch attraktiv machen – darum geht es ja beim Marketing. Aber am Ende tut man sich keinen Gefallen, wenn man zu sehr übertreibt oder das zu groß erzählt, für das, was es am Ende ist. Bezüglich der vielen Unsicherheitsfaktoren würde ich sagen, dass man sich nie ausschließlich nach der Veranstaltung bezahlen lassen sollte. Auch wenn die Liquidität bei den Veranstaltern davor vielleicht ein bisschen schwierig ist und sie behaupten, dass erst danach Geld reinkommt, muss man ein Agreement für eine Vorauszahlung oder monatliche Retainer oder etwas Ähnliches finden. Irgendwie muss man sich selbst auf jeden Fall davor schützen, dass man am Ende auch wirklich sein Geld bekommt.

Questionnaire A, translated English version: MARKETING/COMMS EXPERT

Respondent: Liam Kreutschmann, 15 October 2023, Graz

1. *How long have you been active as a service provider for content marketing, social media, PR, and brand storytelling in the leisure industry? What is the size range of most of your clients (small, medium, and/or large companies)?*

Answer: I have been self-employed and specialised in the leisure industry for about two and a half years; before that, I was self-employed for four years without specialisation. In my self-employment, I concentrate mainly on small and medium-sized companies. The largest company I work for has a total of about two or three hundred employees. In the leisure industry, however, most of them are mini-jobbers, so you have to take that into account. But basically, they are always small to medium-sized companies.

2. *In your experience, do small, medium-sized, and/or large companies have the willingness to pay, or do they see the added value in getting external support in the field of marketing and public relations?*

Answer: Logically, all my clients see an added value in investing in publicity and marketing, otherwise they would not work with me. However, in the leisure industry in particular, I have noticed that – and this is especially true for small and medium-sized companies – the effort required to convince the customer of one's benefits is not inconsiderable beforehand. There are many family-run companies in this sector, often already in the Xth generation, and it is precisely with these companies that the added value first has to be conveyed. If they are then customers, logically, they are happy to be so and also understand what it is all about. If they don't, then it is a certain way to teach them and with some, you will also fall on deaf ears.

3. *In your estimation, for what reasons do small to medium-sized companies in particular decide against external service providers in the field of marketing and public relations? (Mark and/or complete the corresponding points)*
- a. **The companies have employed enough people in-house to cover all areas adequately.***
 - b. **The companies do not consider it necessary to do more in this area.***
 - c. **The companies have enough visitors/attention without additional marketing measures and/or do not want any more.***
 - d. **The financial resources are not there.***
 - e. **Current providers (agencies, self-employed, etc.) in the field are too expensive.***
 - f. **Other:***

Answer: Companies decide against external support for a variety of reasons, but there are usually two main reasons. Firstly, the benefit is already recognised, but the focus is mainly on internal help. So, the operating families still do it themselves, which happens very often, especially with smaller parks or other providers like Escape Rooms, for example. The founders simply do it themselves because there is not necessarily the willingness to pay to hire someone else. Or they want to employ someone internally. Small and medium-sized companies in particular are often quite conservative when it comes to this and know, of course, that if they have employed someone internally – be it a full-time employee or a part-time employee – they naturally have a certain amount of control. In addition, there are certain advantages to hiring someone internally. For example, if someone is much more readily available, things can be sorted out more quickly. In marketing and public relations, it is often about content production and there is, of course, an advantage to being able to do that directly – also press support, etc., someone must be on site. These are the advantages of employing someone internally.

Some don't really see the benefit yet. The benefit of marketing is already recognised, but in these cases, it is concentrated on classic channels. In the case of leisure attractions, this would often be brochures or out-of-home advertisements, sometimes also radio, which has quite a high value. In the case of out-of-home, these would be special cases such as signs that can be put up outside. This is a very important instrument, especially for amusement parks, but it is a very costly marketing measure. Especially in the digital area, it depends

very much on the attractions, and how well the benefit is recognised. Here, it can be seen that the need is recognised more quickly in an area where there is particularly high competition. Escape rooms, for example, are often superior to larger amusement parks in terms of marketing and communication, because the competition ratio is much higher for escape rooms. There are often different providers in the same city – in fact, there are some in almost every city. There are also differences in quality and the turnover is not too high. Especially with Escape Rooms, the competition and therefore the marketing need is very quickly recognised. This is often not the case with smaller amusement parks because they know that they have existed for decades in some cases and the people around them come by themselves – at least that is the expectation. It's also partly because the visitors were there as children and then come back as adults with their own children. So, there is always a certain basic familiarity, and they [ann. owners] know that. Smaller parks live strongly from annual passes, and you also have repeated sales when people come back – especially through food and beverages. That's easier to market and runs by itself – at least that's what the providers believe and then don't necessarily recognise the potential that more could be possible.

4. *What have been or are currently your greatest (professional) challenges? (Mark and/or complete the corresponding points)*

Limited financial and/or time resources of (potential) clients

Integration of different services (coherent and effective messages across all channels are often not possible because support is only requested for one sub-area)

Scaling (overload due to a growing customer portfolio)

Shortage of skilled workers (skilled workers in marketing and public relations are in high demand and it is difficult to find and keep good staff).

Quality assurance (As the number of clients grows, it becomes more difficult to ensure a consistently high quality of service. Therefore, clients may drop out again).

Other: Raising awareness among customers that their money is well spent in this area.

Answer: The biggest challenges at the moment are threefold from the selection mentioned. That would be scaling in any case – getting bigger, but not overburdening yourself and bringing in someone at the right time and still knowing that the existing turnover will stay. That's sometimes very volatile with agencies, where clients can often go quickly, but also come quickly. Quality assurance is indeed also a thing, especially when you have a lot to do yourself, then you must make sure that the quality remains the same. After all, a decline in quality means an unhappy customer and an unhappy customer means that there is a possibility that the customer will leave. So that's actually a challenge in getting more customers. And the last thing is, of course, what I have already mentioned in other answers, namely that you first must convince customers of your services and accordingly create awareness that money is well spent in this area.

5. *To what extent do the marketing and communication strategies or measures in the leisure industry differ from those in other industries? Could parallels be drawn here with the marketing of (music) events?*

Answer: The difference between leisure and music is possibly that the leisure industry is about increasing a permanent flow of customers. Of course, on special occasions, like Halloween, Christmas, Black Friday, Easter, and holidays in general, there are special campaigns for that. Then of course there are seasonal differences, with indoor attractions a lot is going on in winter and not much in summer, with outdoor attractions it's the other way around. Overall, however, the aim is to increase the flow of customers in general and brand awareness. Especially with music events or in the event sector, the point where customers are to be addressed is naturally concentrated on a very specific event, which is sold out after a certain number. With leisure attractions, it is actually very unlikely that all dates, all slots, and all tickets are completely sold out. Normally, you can always do more, or the service, i.e. the leisure attraction, can be expanded – that's not necessarily the case in the event sector, so it's an effect that can be scaled to a limited extent. But of course, it always has to work at a certain point in time, I think that's the big difference.

Perhaps it should be added that leisure attractions in particular usually also offer events. So, few don't even have some kind of special event. It overlaps in some areas because of course these events also have to be sold.

6. *Do you have any ideas about the challenges one might encounter in marketing and communication measures for cultural and music events? How could these be overcome?*

Answer: There are always many possible challenges, so even at events it is often the weather. Especially for outdoor events, but also for indoor events, it plays a role. Secondly, people always have a limited budget for events. You can see the effect that the really big tours of Taylor Swift and co. are often sold out in no time and people are very willing to pay for them. At the same time, smaller artists are having a harder time than ever and can't get their venues full. So, there is a very different willingness to pay among artists. The next thing with events is that you are always dependent on other people to a certain extent. In the case of artists, for example, you never know if an illness will intervene, or the band will fall out. In this respect, you are always a bit dependent on how others are doing in life and then perform. That is certainly one thing.

And one difficulty is of course always: the product must be right in the end. As a marketing agency, you always have a limited impact on the product, in the end, it's the same for me with leisure attractions. I know some of the things my clients offer are not the greatest attractions I would personally spend money on. Nevertheless, of course, you must sell them, process the negative feedback, and deal with it sensibly. You shouldn't suppress it and of

course, there is that with events. The event may not have been so successful and that ultimately comes back to the person who marketed it. Of course, you can also over-market things if you already know that the event will not live up to expectations. So that's also a difficulty, the dependence on the people who ultimately design the product.

Another challenge in marketing cultural and musical events is that you can never be 100% sure that the event will take place in the end. But as a service provider, you don't want to be stuck with your work and the bills, so to speak. So somehow you have to find an agreement on what happens if the event is cancelled – be it because of too few people, too little interest, illness, a sudden government requirement, noise protection, or because the weather doesn't cooperate. So, you always have to consider what happens if the product can't be sold at the end.

How can you cope with that? Maybe on the first point, the dependence on the product: I would say you should do realistic marketing, not oversell the event, but stay honest but still make the event attractive – that's what marketing is all about. But in the end, you don't do yourself any favours if you exaggerate too much or tell it too big for what it is in the end. Regarding the many uncertainty factors, I would say that you should never get paid exclusively after the event. Even though liquidity might be a bit difficult with the organisers beforehand and they claim that money only comes in after, you have to find an agreement for an advance payment or monthly retainers or something like that. Somehow you have to protect yourself from getting your money in the end.

Questionnaire B, original German version: POTENTIAL CLIENTS (non-profit association)

Befragter: Martin Pflueger, 9. Oktober 2023, Gleisdorf

1. *Wie lange sind Sie bereits Teil des Gleisdorfer Faschingsvereins und was zeichnet diesen aus?*

Antwort: Seit mittlerweile sechs Jahren bin ich als Akteur Teil der Show des Gleisdorfer Faschingsvereins. Dieser zeichnet sich dadurch aus, dass er jährlich ein Showprogram auf hohem Niveau produziert, obwohl es sich bei den Akteuren um Amateure handelt. Lediglich Regie und Band werden aus dem Profi-Bereich zugekauft.

2. *Seit wann haben Sie die Position des Obmanns inne, warum haben Sie sich für diese Position entschieden?*

Antwort: Ich bin seit einem Jahr als Obmann des Gleisdorfer Faschingsvereins tätig. Ich habe mich dazu entschieden diese Position anzunehmen, da ich seit 35 Jahren als Musiker und Gitarrist auf der Bühne stehe und dieser Leidenschaft stets als Hobby und nicht als Profimusiker nachgegangen bin.

3. *Waren Sie bereits oder sind Sie auch außerhalb des Gleisdorfer Faschingsvereins künstlerisch tätig und/oder in (musikalische/kulturelle) Veranstaltungen involviert? Falls ja, in welche bzw. um Veranstaltungen welcher Größenordnung handelt es sich? (grobe Besucheranzahl, Regelmäßigkeit des Events etc.)*

Antwort: Neben meinem Beruf als Vertriebsleiter in einer Industriefirma unterrichte ich seit 30 Jahren an der Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst und habe in diesem Zusammenhang schon mehrere Konzerte mitorganisiert. Hierbei handelte es sich um Veranstaltungen für ein Publikum von 20 bis 100 Personen. Mit meiner eigenen Band habe ich über rund 15 Jahre hinweg in Grazer Lokale für zehn bis 50 Zuschauer gespielt.

4. *Könnten Sie sich vorstellen, dass bei gemeinnützigen Vereinen der Bedarf bzw. die Zahlungsbereitschaft für (zeitlich begrenzte) Unterstützung im Bereich Marketing/Öffentlichkeitsarbeit gegeben ist, sofern diese – wie im Fall des Gleisdorfer Faschingsvereins – selbst Veranstaltungen organisieren?*

Antwort: Ja, das kann ich mir natürlich vorstellen. Es wäre auch sicher für viele Vereine sehr hilfreich, in diesem Bereich eine professionelle Unterstützung zu haben. Hierzu erscheinen mir die nachfolgenden Punkte wesentlich:

Vereine haben üblicherweise wenig Geld zur Verfügung, was wiederum bedeutet, dass das Geschäftspotential pro Verein nicht sehr hoch ist. Dadurch tendieren Vorstandsmitglieder dazu, jemanden im Verein zu finden, der eine derartige Aufgabe gratis übernimmt. Um in diesem Umfeld also überhaupt ins Geschäft zu kommen, benötigt man eine passende Verkaufsstrategie. Man muss den Verein zuallererst davon überzeugen, dass sich die

externe Unterstützung wirklich lohnt. Die Services würde ich daher gestaffelt anbieten, beispielsweise im Zuge eines günstigen Basispakets um 500 Euro. So könnte die Einstiegshürde leichter bewältigt und zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt zusätzliche Leistungen angeboten werden. Die erste Schwierigkeit besteht daher sicherlich darin, einmal „den Fuß in die Tür“, also ein Erstprojekt bei einem Verein, zu bekommen. Ich persönlich könnte mir vorstellen, dass derartige Services für andere Organisationen, wie Gemeinden interessanter wären, da einfach mehr Budget vorhanden ist als bei Vereinen.

5. *Können Sie sich vorstellen, dass ein gewisses Budget dafür eingesetzt werden kann? Falls ja, können Sie einen groben Rahmen des ggf. verfügbaren Budgets abstecken? (definitiv im dreistelligen Bereich, ggf. auch vierstellig möglich etc.)*

Antwort: Wie bereits kurz erwähnt haben wir uns für den Gleisdorfer Faschingsverein dafür entschieden, uns in zwei Bereichen professionelle Leistungen zuzukaufen. Dies wären einmal die Regie um 3.000 Euro sowie eine Band bestehend aus fünf Musikern um 5.000 Euro. Eine gute Regie ist essenziell für eine gelungene Show. Im Umfeld des Vereines haben wir auf dem Gebiet keine Expert:innen, daher müssen wir diese Leistung eben zukaufen. Die beteiligten Musiker müssen ebenso Profis sein, da die musikalische Begleitung sonst nicht professionell genug klingt.

Als Nächstes kämen auf unserer Liste sicherlich die Bereiche Marketing und Grafik, um extern zugekauft zu werden. Hier ist es jedoch immer noch leichter jemanden im Umfeld des Vereines zu finden, die oder der das „hobbymäßig“ mitmacht. Nun wären wir wieder bei der Marketing-Strategie. Ich würde das für unseren Verein gerne um einen Einstiegspreis von ca. 500 Euro zukaufen. Der externe Anbieter müsste allerdings ein Konzept sowie ein Netzwerk vorlegen, aus dem eindeutig hervorgeht, dass dieser Weg effektiver ist als jemanden aus dem Vorstand zu bitten, derartige Aufgaben in ihrer Freizeit zu übernehmen.

6. *Falls Sie in Erwägung ziehen würden, externe Marketing- und Kommunikationsdienstleistungen für Ihre (musikalischen und kulturellen) Veranstaltungen in Anspruch zu nehmen, welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung bei der Auswahl? (z.B. aussagekräftige Referenzen, Kosten, Umfang der angebotenen Services, örtliche Nähe, o.Ä.)*

Antwort: Entscheidend ist hierbei, dass der Preis zu unserem Budget passt und dass der angebotene Service einfach und klar beschrieben ist. Aus dem Konzept muss also deutlich hervorgehen, worin der Mehrwert für den Verein besteht, wenn Aufgaben im Bereich Marketing und Kommunikation extern vergeben werden.

7. *Wie wichtig ist Ihrer Meinung nach die Rolle von Marketing und Kommunikation für Veranstaltungen wie die Gleisdorfer Faschingsshow (oder Events ähnlicher Größenordnung)?*

Antwort: Hier sind zwei Faktoren von entscheidender Bedeutung: Erstens muss das Produkt, also in unserem Fall die Show selbst gut sein. Zweitens muss das Marketing gut sein. „Marketing“ ist ein weitläufiger Begriff, unter dem man viel verstehen kann. Es gibt unterschiedliche Auffassungen darüber, welche Tätigkeiten tatsächlich in diesen Bereich fallen. Für unseren Verein wären in diesem Zusammenhang die folgenden Punkte wichtig:

Mit Abstand am wichtigsten sind für den Gleisdorfer Faschingsverein die Sponsoren. Ohne deren Geld könnten wir unsere Show in dieser Form nicht finanzieren. An zweiter Stelle kämen die Medien und im Anschluss die Integration des Vereins in das soziale Umfeld der Gemeinde bzw. der Region Oststeiermark.

8. *In welchen Bereichen könnten Sie sich am ehesten vorstellen, als zusätzliche Unterstützung auf externe Dienstleister zurückzugreifen? (entsprechende Punkte bitte kennzeichnen und/oder ergänzen)*

- a. *Content Creation (Videoaufnahmen, Fotografie, etc.)*
- b. *PR (Presseartikel, Medienpartnerschaften, etc.)*
- c. *Social Media Strategie/Management*
- d. *Markenentwicklung/-management*
- e. *Web-/Grafik-Design*
- f. *Sonstige:*

Antwort: Alle diese Punkte sind wichtig und es wäre gut Profis dabei zu haben. Wie jedoch vorhin erwähnt, geht es in erster Linie um das Geld. Wir müssen sehr auf das verfügbare Budget achten und wenn wir jemanden kennen, der beispielsweise bereits in Pension ist und sich für wenig Geld um die Videoaufzeichnung der Show kümmert, verlassen wir uns darauf. Dann nehmen wir auch in Kauf, dass das Video am Ende nicht den höchsten Qualitätsansprüchen entspricht.

Den Bereich Markenentwicklung bzw. Strategie decken wir selbst ab, das würde ich nicht nach außen vergeben wollen. Social Media Strategie und Management müssten wir uns zukaufen, wenn wir nicht jemanden im Vorstand hätten, der sich damit auskennt. Doch auch hierfür gibt es in der Regel immer Leute im Verein, die jemanden kennen, der diese Aufgabe gratis übernehmen würde. Das Prinzip von Vereinen besteht ja meines Verstandes darin, dass man mit wenig Budget etwas auf die Beine stellt und dass möglichst alles von Vereinsmitgliedern selbst gemacht wird. Das ist der „Spirit“ sozusagen, weshalb der Zukauf externer Services nicht ganz der Idee eines Vereins per se entspricht. Zumindest ist das meine Meinung. Der Faschingsverein in Gleisdorf ist hierbei ohnehin schon recht fortschrittlich unterwegs, da wir eben Regie und Band zukaufen. In umliegenden Städten, wie zum Beispiel in Weiz und Kirchberg gibt es viel mehr Akteure bei den Faschingssitzungen. Da werden die Kindertanzgruppe, die Blasmusik, der Sportverein, der Bienenzüchterverein und generell einfach viele verschiedene Personen und Institutionen

gleichermaßen involviert. Regie gibt es keine und das Ganze ist sehr „amateurhaft“ gemacht. Es ist herzlich und lustig, aber amateurhaft.

Da wir in Gleisdorf ohnehin schon einen Schritt näher an einer professionellen Show mit wenigen Akteuren und Sketches auf teils hohem Niveau sind, wäre für uns ein Zukauf im Bereich Marketing wahrscheinlich eher ein Thema. Wir haben Shows an drei aufeinanderfolgenden Abenden und deutlich mehr Einnahmen durch Sponsoring. Andere Städte hätten hierfür nicht genügend Zuseher. Was ich damit sagen möchte, ist also, dass es bei Vereinen, bei denen so ziemlich alles von den Mitgliedern selbst gemacht wird, nochmal schwieriger wird, als externe Marketingfirma Aufträge zu ergattern.

9. *Welche Bedenken oder Vorbehalte haben Sie bei der Zusammenarbeit mit externen Agenturen für Eventmarketing und -kommunikation im kulturellen und musikalischen Kontext?*

Antwort: Ich würde liebend gerne mit einer professionellen Agentur zusammenarbeiten, allerdings nur dann, wenn ich den Eindruck habe, dass sie effizient arbeitet und einen wahren Mehrwert bringt. In der Realität bin ich jedoch von der Kostenfrage geleitet.

10. *Was sind Ihrer Meinung nach die Schlüsselfaktoren, die zum Erfolg Ihrer Musikveranstaltungen beitragen, und wie können Marketing und Kommunikation dazu beitragen, diese Faktoren zu erreichen?*

Antwort: Marketing ist im Grunde genommen einer der beiden entscheidenden Faktoren, es muss gut gemacht sein. Auch das Produkt muss gut sein. Ein gutes Produkt mit schlechtem Marketing funktioniert also nicht, ein gutes Marketing mit einem schlechten Produkt aber ebenso wenig.

Questionnaire B, translated English version: POTENTIAL CLIENTS (non-profit association)

Respondent: Martin Pflueger, 9 October 2023, Gleisdorf

1. *How long have you been part of the Gleisdorf Carnival Association and what makes it special?*

Answer: For six years now, I have been part of the show of the Gleisdorf Carnival Association as an actor. This is characterised by the fact that it produces an annual show programme at a high level, although the actors are amateurs. Only the director and the band are bought in from the professional sector.

2. *Since when have you held the position of chairman, why did you choose this position?*

Answer: I have been the chairman of the Gleisdorf Carnival Association for a year. I decided to accept this position because I have been on stage as a musician and guitarist for

35 years and have always pursued this passion as a hobby and not as a professional musician.

3. *Have you already been or are you also artistically active and/or involved in (musical/cultural) events outside the Gleisdorf Carnival Association? If yes, in which ones or in events of what size are they? (Rough number of visitors, regularity of the event, etc.)*

Answer: Besides my job as a sales manager in an industrial company, I have been teaching at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz for 30 years and have co-organised several concerts in this context. These were events for audiences of 20 to 100 people. With my band, I have played for about 15 years in Graz pubs for audiences of 10 to 50.

4. *Could you imagine that there is a need or willingness to pay for (temporary) support in the field of marketing/public relations for non-profit associations if they organise events themselves – as in the case of the Gleisdorf Carnival Association?*

Answer: Yes, of course, I can imagine that. It would certainly be very helpful for many associations to have professional support in this area. The following points seem essential to me:

Associations usually have little money available, which in turn means that the business potential per association is not very high. As a result, board members tend to find someone in the association to take on such a task for free. So, to do business at all in this environment, you need a suitable sales strategy. First, you have to convince the association that external support is worthwhile. I would therefore offer the services in stages, for example in the course of a low-priced basic package of around 500 euros. This would make it easier to overcome the entry hurdle and offer additional services at a later stage. The first difficulty is therefore certainly to get “one’s foot in the door”, i.e. an initial project at an association. Personally, I could imagine that such services would be more interesting for other organisations, such as municipalities because they simply have more budget than associations.

5. *Can you imagine that a certain budget can be used for this? If so, can you give a rough idea of the budget that might be available? (definitely in the three-digit range, possibly also four-digit possible, etc.)*

Answer: As already briefly mentioned, we have decided for the Gleisdorf Carnival Association to buy professional services in two areas. These are the director for 3,000 euros and a band consisting of five musicians for 5,000 euros. Good directing is essential for a successful show. We don’t have any experts in this field within the association, so we have to buy this service. The musicians involved must also be professionals, otherwise the musical accompaniment will not sound professional enough.

Next on our list would certainly be the areas of marketing and graphics, to be bought in externally. Here, however, it is still easier to find someone in the association's environment who can do this at hobby level. Now we are back to the marketing strategy. I would like to buy this for our club at an entry price of about 500 euros. However, the external provider would have to present a concept and a network that clearly shows that this way is more effective than asking someone from the board to take on such tasks in their spare time.

6. *If you would consider using external marketing and communication services for your (musical and cultural) events, what factors influence your decision in choosing them? (e.g. meaningful references, costs, scope of services offered, local proximity, etc.)*

Answer: It is crucial that the price fits our budget and that the service offered is described simply and clearly. The concept must therefore clearly show what the added value is for the association when tasks in the area of marketing and communication are outsourced.

7. *How important do you think the role of marketing and communication is for events like the Gleisdorf Carnival Show (or events of a similar scale)?*

Answer: Two factors are crucial here: First, the product, in our case the show itself, has to be good. Secondly, the marketing must be good. "Marketing" is a broad term that can be understood to mean many things. There are different understandings of which activities fall into this area. For our association, the following points would be important in this context:

By far the most important thing for the Gleisdorf Carnival Association is the sponsors. Without their money, we would not be able to finance our show in this form. In second place would be the media and then the integration of the club into the social environment of the community or the region of Eastern Styria.

8. *In which areas could you most imagine using external service providers as additional support? (please mark and/or complete the corresponding points)*
- a. *Content creation (video recordings, photography, etc.)*
 - b. *PR (press articles, media partnerships, etc.)*
 - c. *Social Media Strategy/Management*
 - d. *Brand development/management*
 - e. *Web / Graphic Design*
 - f. *Other:*

Answer: All these points are important, and it would be good to have professionals involved. However, as mentioned earlier, it is first and foremost about the money. We have to pay a lot of attention to the available budget and if we know someone who is already retired, for example, and who will take care of the video recording of the show for little money, we rely on that. Then we also accept that the video may not meet the highest quality standards in the end.

We cover the area of brand development and strategy ourselves; I wouldn't want to outsource that. We would have to buy into social media strategy and management if we didn't happen to have someone on the board who knows about it. But even for this, there are usually always people in the association who know someone who would take on this task for free. As I understand it, the principle of associations is that you get something going with a small budget and that, as far as possible, everything is done by association members themselves. That's the "spirit", so to speak, which is why buying external services doesn't quite correspond to the idea of an association per se. At least that is my opinion. The carnival association in Gleisdorf is quite progressive in this respect anyway, because we buy in the direction and the band. In surrounding towns, such as Weiz and Kirchberg, there are many more actors at the carnival sessions. The children's dance group, the brass band, the sports club, the beekeepers' association, and generally many different people and institutions are equally involved. There is no direction and the whole thing is done very "amateurishly". It is heartfelt and funny, but amateurish. Since we in Gleisdorf are already one step closer to a professional show with a few actors and sketches at a partly high level, an additional purchase in the area of marketing would probably be more of an issue for us. We have shows on three consecutive evenings and significantly more income through sponsoring. Other cities wouldn't have enough audience for this. So, what I'm saying is that for clubs where pretty much everything is done by the members themselves, it's even more difficult to get contracts as an external marketing company.

9. *What concerns or reservations do you have about working with external agencies for event marketing and communication in a cultural and musical context?*

Answer: I would love to work with a professional agency, but only if I feel that they work efficiently and add real value. In reality, however, I am driven by the question of cost.

10. *What do you think are the key factors that contribute to the success of your music events and how can marketing and communication help to achieve these factors?*

Answer: Marketing is one of the two decisive factors; it has to be done well. The product also has to be good. So, a good product with bad marketing doesn't work, but neither does good marketing with a bad product.

Questionnaire C, original German version: POTENTIAL CLIENTS (non-profit association)

Befragter: Harald Kowatsch, 16. Oktober 2023, Gleisdorf

1. *Wie lange sind Sie bereits Teil des Gleisdorfer Turnvereins und was zeichnet diesen aus?*

Antwort: Ich bin bereits seit 37 Jahren Mitglied und seit rund 20 Jahren ehrenamtlich für den Gleisdorfer Turnverein tätig. Diesen zeichnet aus, dass er für alle Altersgruppen Rahmenbedingungen für diverse Sportarten schafft, damit sich so viele Personen wie möglich sportlich betätigen können. Dieses Sportangebot soll auch für alle Interessenten leistbar sein.

2. *Seit wann haben Sie die Position des Obmanns inne, warum haben Sie sich für diese Position entschieden?*

Antwort: Obmann des Vereins bin ich seit dem Jahr 2022. Ich habe diese verantwortungsvolle Position übernommen, da mir ein erfolgreiches Fortführen des Vereines sehr wichtig war, damit ein breites Sportangebot in Gleisdorf aufrechterhalten bleibt.

3. *Waren Sie bereits oder sind Sie auch außerhalb des Gleisdorfer Turnvereins in die Organisation von Veranstaltungen involviert? Falls ja, in welche bzw. um Veranstaltungen welcher Größenordnung geht es? (grobe Besucher:innenanzahl, Regelmäßigkeit des Events etc.)*

Antwort: Vor einiger Zeit gab es den Gleisdorfer Solar City Lauf und auch Feierlichkeiten zu Weihnachten mit bis zu 1.000 Besuchern, bei deren Organisation ich mitbeteiligt war.

4. *Könnten Sie sich vorstellen, dass bei gemeinnützigen Vereinen der Bedarf bzw. die Zahlungsbereitschaft für (zeitlich begrenzte) Unterstützung im Bereich Marketing/Öffentlichkeitsarbeit gegeben ist, sofern diese – wie im Fall des Gleisdorfer Turnvereins – selbst Veranstaltungen organisieren? (z.B. Schauturnen, Solar City Lauf etc.)*

Antwort: Dies kann ich mir gut vorstellen, da erfolgreiche Veranstaltungen mit einem großen Publikum allen Mitgliedern etwas bringen. Die Kosten müssten sich aber natürlich in einem Rahmen befinden, der vertretbar ist.

5. *Können Sie sich vorstellen, dass ein gewisses Budget dafür eingesetzt werden kann? Falls ja, können Sie einen groben Rahmen des ggf. verfügbaren Budgets abstecken? (definitiv im dreistelligen Bereich, ggf. auch vierstellig möglich etc.)*

Antwort: Dies hängt stark von der Veranstaltung an sich ab. Ein Schauturnen mit ein paar hundert Zuschauern wird wahrscheinlich weniger Marketing-Aktivitäten benötigen als ein

Solar City Lauf mit über 1.000 Beteiligten. Ich denke 500 Euro sollten zu Beginn für eine Veranstaltung möglich sein.

6. *Falls Sie in Erwägung ziehen würden, externe Marketing- und Kommunikationsdienstleistungen für Ihre Veranstaltungen in Anspruch zu nehmen, welche Faktoren beeinflussen Ihre Entscheidung bei der Auswahl? (z.B. aussagekräftige Referenzen, Kosten, Umfang der angebotenen Services, örtliche Nähe, o.Ä.)*

Antwort: Am wichtigsten wäre für meine Entscheidung definitiv der Umfang des angebotenen Services und die zugehörigen Kosten. Die örtliche Nähe des Anbieters wäre auf jeden Fall ein Bonus.

7. *Wie wichtig ist Ihrer Meinung nach die Rolle von Marketing und Kommunikation für Veranstaltungen wie das Schauturnen des Gleisdorfer Turnvereins (oder Events ähnlicher Größenordnung)?*

Antwort: Ich denke, dass diese Bereiche heutzutage sehr wichtig sind. Mit einem guten Marketing erreicht man definitiv mehr Leute und bekommt auch für den Verein eine bessere Bekanntheit. Dies bringt wiederum mehr Menschen zum Sport und mehr Einnahmen über Sponsoren.

8. *Was würden Sie von einer Event-Marketing- und Kommunikationsagentur in Bezug auf Dienstleistungen für Veranstaltungen erwarten? In welchen Bereichen könnten Sie sich am ehesten vorstellen, als zusätzliche Unterstützung auf externe Dienstleister zurückzugreifen? (entsprechende Punkte kennzeichnen und/oder ergänzen)*

- a. **Content Creation (Videoaufnahmen, Fotografie, etc.)**
- b. PR (Presseartikel, Medienpartnerschaften, etc.)
- c. **Social Media Strategie/Management**
- d. **Markenentwicklung/-management**
- e. Web-/Grafik-Design
- f. Sonstige:

9. *Welche Bedenken oder Vorbehalte haben Sie bei der Zusammenarbeit mit externen Agenturen für Eventmarketing und -kommunikation im sportlichen Kontext?*

Antwort: Prinzipiell habe ich hier keine Bedenken. Für uns steht nur immer der gemeinnützige Gedanken im Vordergrund. Sollte hierbei alles im Rahmen bleiben, kann eine solche Zusammenarbeit nur von Vorteil sein.

10. *Was sind Ihrer Meinung nach die Schlüsselfaktoren, die zum Erfolg Ihrer (Sport-)Veranstaltungen beitragen, und wie können Marketing und Kommunikation dazu beitragen, diese Faktoren zu erreichen?*

Antwort: Der Inhalt der Veranstaltung per se muss viele Menschen interessieren. Dafür muss die Qualität der Veranstaltung (Inhalt, Rahmenprogramm, Verpflegung etc.) sehr gut sein, damit sich umfangreiche Marketing-Aktivitäten überhaupt rentieren. Wenn die Veranstaltung prinzipiell solide ist, wird das von den Besuchern auch so weitergegeben. Wenn man dann noch ein gutes Marketing- bzw. Kommunikationskonzept hat, steht einer erfolgreichen Veranstaltung nichts im Wege.

Questionnaire C, translated English version: POTENTIAL CLIENTS (non-profit association)

Respondent: Harald Kowatsch, 16 October 2023, Gleisdorf

1. *How long have you been part of the Gleisdorf Gymnastics Club and what distinguishes it?*

Answer: I have been a member for 37 years and have been working voluntarily for the Gleisdorf Gymnastics Club for about 20 years. The club is characterised by the fact that it creates framework conditions for various sports for all age groups, so that as many people as possible can be active in sports. This range of sports should also be affordable for all interested parties.

2. *Since when have you held the position of chairman, why did you choose this position?*

Answer: I have been the chairman of the club since 2022. I took on this responsible position because it was very important to me to ensure the successful continuation of the club so that a wide range of sports can be maintained in Gleisdorf.

3. *Have you been or are you involved in organising events outside the Gleisdorf Gymnastics Club? If yes, which events or events of what size are you involved in? (approximate number of visitors, regularity of the event, etc.)*

Answer: Some time ago there was the Gleisdorf Solar City Run, and also festivities at Christmas with up to 1,000 visitors, which I helped to organise.

4. *Could you imagine that non-profit associations would need or be willing to pay for (temporary) support in the field of marketing/public relations if they organise events themselves – as in the case of the Gleisdorf Gymnastics Club? (e.g. showcase event, Solar City Run, etc.)*

Answer: I can well imagine this, as successful events with a large audience bring something to all members. However, the costs would of course have to be within a reasonable range.

5. *Can you imagine that a certain budget can be used for this? If so, can you give a rough idea of the budget that might be available? (definitely in the three-digit range, possibly also four-digit possible, etc.)*

Answer: This depends very much on the event itself. A showcase with a few hundred spectators will probably need fewer marketing activities than a Solar City Run with over 1,000 participants. I think 500 euros should be possible for an event at the beginning.

6. *If you would consider using external marketing and communication services for your events, what factors influence your decision to choose them? (e.g. meaningful references, costs, scope of services offered, local proximity, etc.)*

Answer: The most important factor for my decision would be the scope of the service offered and the associated costs. The proximity of the provider would definitely be a bonus.

7. *In your opinion, how important is the role of marketing and communication for events like the Gleisdorf Gymnastics Club's showcase (or events of a similar scale)?*

Answer: I think these areas are very important nowadays. With good marketing, you definitely reach more people and also get better exposure for the club. This in turn brings more people to the sport and more income through sponsors.

8. *What would you expect from an event marketing and communication agency in terms of services for events? In which areas could you most imagine using external service providers as additional support? (Mark and/or complete the corresponding points)*

- a. **Content creation (video recordings, photography, etc.)**
- b. PR (press articles, media partnerships, etc.)
- c. **Social Media Strategy/Management**
- d. **Brand development/management**
- e. Web / Graphic Design
- f. Other:

9. *What concerns or reservations do you have about working with external agencies for event marketing and communication in a sporting context?*

Answer: In principle, I have no reservations here. For us, the charitable idea is always in the foreground. If everything remains within the framework, such cooperation can only be beneficial.

10. *What do you think are the key factors that contribute to the success of your (sports) events and how can marketing and communication help to achieve these factors?*

Answer: The content of the event per se must interest many people. For this, the quality of the event (content, supporting programme, catering, etc.) must be very good so that extensive marketing activities are profitable at all. If the event is solid, the visitors will pass that on. If you have a good marketing or communication concept, nothing stands in the way of a successful event.

Befragter: Johannes Schreiner, 13. Oktober 2023, Graz

1. *Welche Rolle nehmen Sie bei der Organisation von Veranstaltungen wie dem ATP500 Tennisturnier „Erste Bank Open“ in Wien oder ähnlichen Events ein? Werden Ihre Leistungen als Selbstständiger zugekauft oder sind Sie Teil der e|motion group?*

Antwort: Ich bin grundsätzlich selbstständiger Eventmanager und werde für das angesprochene Event von der Agentur e|motion Management beauftragt.

2. *Ist in dem Fall die Agentur e|motion selbst für den Aufgabenbereich Marketing zuständig?*

Antwort: Das kann man so nicht beurteilen. Wir machen größere und kleinere Veranstaltungen und bei größeren Events ist klarerweise das Projektteam größer und es werden Teilgebiete ausgelagert. Bei den Erste Bank Open in Wien gibt es beispielsweise ein eigenes Marketing- und Kommunikationsteam. Da bringt man sich als Veranstalter vorab natürlich schon ein, aber gerade in der Umsetzung ist eben das ausführende Team zuständig. Bei kleineren Veranstaltungen, wie zum Beispiel beim Davis Cup in Wien, das war natürlich keine kleine Veranstaltung, aber da war ich selbst Projektleiter und habe über alle Bereiche geschaut, darunter auch über den Marketing- und Kommunikationsbereich. Bei Firmenveranstaltungen kann es vorkommen, dass wir in dem Bereich gar nichts machen, manchmal übernehmen wir als Veranstalter alles. Wir unterstützen beispielsweise gerade die Bewegungsrevolution in der Steiermark, da übernehmen wir viele Marketing- und Kommunikationsleistungen für sie. Es ist also sehr unterschiedlich, so pauschal kann man das nicht sagen.

3. *Ist dieses ausführende Team, welches die Marketing- und Kommunikationsmaßnahmen beispielsweise bei den Erste Bank Open umsetzt, Teil des Kernteams von e|motion oder handelt es sich hierbei auch um Selbstständige?*

Das ist vollkommen unterschiedlich. Gerade im Eventbereich gibt es sehr viele Freiberufler, die mitarbeiten. Es gibt Agenturen, die man sich zur Hilfe holt. Bei den Erste Bank Open haben wir beispielsweise unterschiedliche Logos, die zum Einsatz kommen. Bei der internen Grafikabteilung, die dafür zuständig ist, handelt es sich auch nicht um, sagen wir, zehn Angestellte. Das sind teilweise Grafiker, die angestellt sind, teilweise Grafiker, die extern nur für dieses eine Projekt arbeiten und so weiter. Das alles herunterzubrechen auf Angestelltenverhältnis und Selbstständigkeit wäre ein bisschen mühsam. Ich bin mir auch nicht sicher, was der Hintergrund dieser Fragestellung ist. Im Endeffekt ist es nämlich egal, da es nur auf den Output ankommt. Im Endeffekt nutzen wir bei Bedarf auch klassische Kommunikationsagenturen oder Grafikagenturen, die tagtäglich nichts anderes machen als das Erstellen und Designen von Logos oder anderen grafischen Elementen. Das ist also ganz unterschiedlich. Beim Davis Cup gibt es beispielsweise Grafik-Guidelines, die

vorgegeben werden vom internationalen Tennisverband, dessen Sitz in London ist. Umgesetzt wird das Ganze dann bei uns. Man kann es also pauschal nicht sagen. Bei Firmenveranstaltungen ist es so, dass die Unternehmen oft selbst eine Marketing- und Kommunikationsabteilung haben und dadurch oft Dinge vorgegeben sind.

Bei Eventagenturen werden jedenfalls sicher externe Leute hinzugezogen. Es kommt auch immer auf die Auftragslage an. Wenn man wenig zu tun hat, wird man diese Themen eher hausintern abwickeln, wenn die entsprechenden Mitarbeiter vorhanden sind. Ansonsten zieht man diese extern hinzu. Wenn man von einem Unternehmen spricht, das selbst Veranstaltungen für Firmen, Marken oder Produkte organisiert, dann haben die zumeist eigene Grafik- oder Marketingabteilungen und es wird eher weniger externen Zugriff geben.

4. *Handelt es sich beim ausschlaggebenden Faktor, ob externe Unterstützung in einem gewissen Bereich zugezogen wird, darum, ob eine Eventagentur oder eine Firma selbst genügend Mitarbeiter zum Abarbeiten der unterschiedlichen Aufgabe angestellt hat?*

Das ist ebenfalls unterschiedlich. Rückblickend gab es bei meinem Hauptauftraggeber, elmotion Management, teils eigene Angestellte, beispielsweise Grafiker, und dann gab es zeitweise wieder keine eigene Grafikabteilung, sondern vermehrt externe Leute. Das hat alles seine Vor- und Nachteile. Der Vorteil wäre beispielsweise, dass man von externen Leuten vielleicht neue Blickwinkel bekommt, die man selbst nicht hat. Zeitlich ist man wahrscheinlich bei externen Agenturen ebenfalls flexibler. Grundsätzlich ist diese Fragestellung jedoch vielschichtig, man kann sie nicht an zwei oder drei Gesichtspunkten festmachen.

Grundsätzlich ist klar zu unterscheiden, ob es sich um eine Kommunikations- oder eine Grafikagentur handelt. Das sind für mich zwei sehr unterschiedliche Dinge. Gerade bei Grafikleistungen geht es darum, ob man eher jemanden braucht, der einfach gewisse Dinge nach den entsprechenden Vorgaben, wie einem Brandbook, abarbeitet. Das lässt sich meiner Meinung nach gut mit internen Grafikern abwickeln, wenn sie genaue Vorgaben bekommen. Sogenannte „Freigeister“, die quasi eigene Ideen und Grafikkonzepte erstellen, hat man eher nicht in der eigenen Agentur, sofern sie nicht eben auf diese Dinge spezialisiert ist. Eventagenturen wie wir sind sehr vielschichtig. Wir brauchen von der Organisations- und Infrastrukturseite alles, wir brauchen von der Kommunikationsschiene möglichst alle Facetten, die da reinspielen können. Um für all diese Bereiche Personen in der Eventagentur selbst zu halten, dafür müsste man extrem viele Aufträge haben, die in genau diese Richtung gehen. Diese besagten Freigeister fühlen sich definitiv wohler in der Selbstständigkeit oder in dezidierten Kommunikations- bzw. Grafikagenturen, die den ganzen Tag nichts anderes machen als eben Aufgaben ihrer entsprechenden Bereiche.

Um überhaupt genügend Aufträge zu haben, um derartige Positionen intern zu füllen, muss man grundsätzlich eine sehr große Eventagentur sein, damit man sich die Mitarbeiter als Unternehmen einerseits leisten kann und sie sich auch wohlfühlen und ihre Tätigkeiten in unterschiedlichen Bereichen und Themengebieten ausführen können. Hinzu kommt noch, dass oftmals viele Dinge gleichzeitig passieren. Viele Events finden zum selben Zeitpunkt statt und in dem Fall würde man sich mit einer Person, beispielsweise mit einem Teilzeit-Grafiker schwertun, alle Aufgaben innerhalb des vorgegebenen Zeitrahmens abzuarbeiten. Außerdem könnte diese eine Person dann auch nicht non-stop durcharbeiten, sondern müsste sich auch an gewisse Arbeitszeiten halten. Aus diesem Blickwinkel heraus ist diese Frage zu betrachten. Es ist wahrscheinlich von Agentur zu Agentur unterschiedlich, aber ich glaube, so ist das für Eventagenturen.

Wenn ich noch ein anderes Beispiel hernehme: Letztes Jahr bei den Erste Bank Open mussten wir für einen Partner eine große Wasserinstallation abwickeln. Dafür hat sich die Eventagentur auch keinen Installateur ins Unternehmen geholt, sondern diese Leistung extern zugemietet. Wenn ich den Bedarf an zusätzlichem Grafik- oder Kommunikationsinput habe, den ich intern nicht abdecken kann, dann miete ich das zu. Das ist gängige Praxis. Wenn ich aber kontinuierlich Neukonzeptionen an Brandbooks, Firmen- oder Markenpositionierungen oder Logos entwickeln muss, kann es auch Sinn machen, das in-house abzuwickeln. So sehe ich das, aber die Frage wird sich wahrscheinlich von Jahr zu Jahr aufs Neue stellen.

5. *Warum greift e|motion Management beispielsweise auf dich zurück? Wie bekommt man als externer Dienstleister anfangs einmal den Fuß in die Tür einer Eventagentur?*

Bei e|motion und mir war das ein wenig unüblich. Ich habe immer schon projektbezogen mitgearbeitet, schon während meiner Schullaufbahn und während meines Studiums. Nach Beendigung meines Studiums war die Frage, wie ich weitermachen möchte und da haben sich Möglichkeiten aufgetan, in diese Richtung weiterzugehen und ich habe mich dazu entschlossen, das dann auch zu tun. Es hat sich bewährt, hoffentlich auch für meinen Hauptauftraggeber. Ich denke aber schon, sonst würden wir nicht schon so lange zusammenarbeiten.

Grundsätzlich kann man das so salopp aber nicht beantworten. Ich glaube, dass die Branche in Österreich und vor allem im Grazer oder Wiener Raum generell nicht so groß ist. Wenn man Flexibilität und Verlässlichkeit mitbringt – und auf die kommt es neben den eigenen Fähigkeiten auch an – spricht sich das in der Branche recht rasch herum. Dann bekommt man von der einen Seite Aufträge und von der anderen Seite Aufträge.

6. *Wenn feststeht, dass in einem gewissen Bereich der Bedarf für externe Unterstützung vorhanden ist, basiert die Auswahl des Anbieters dann auf Erfahrungswerten von Beteiligten bei der Organisation oder gibt es andere Kriterien?*

Mittlerweile muss ich sagen, wenn man zehn, fünfzehn Jahre zurückblickt haben sich explizit für den Eventbereich Firmen und Freiberufler etabliert, die eigentlich nichts anderes machen als das. Es gibt beispielsweise Elektrounternehmen die nur Eventelektrik machen und sonst nichts. Es gibt Grafiker, die ausschließlich für Veranstaltungen Grafiken erstellen. Es gibt Medien- und Kommunikationsmitarbeiter, die nichts anderes machen als eben die Kommunikation für Events oder Testimonials, die genau in dieser Branche sind und daher genau wissen, was man als Veranstalter braucht. Wenn ich einen Elektriker brauche, brauche ich keinen Hausinstallateur, sondern Verkabelung und generell Lösungen, die für Events passen. Dasselbe gilt für Grafik und Kommunikation, da brauchen wir Lösungen für Veranstaltungen und die sind oftmals anders, als wenn man ein Industriebetrieb ist oder ein anderes Dienstleistungsgewerbe hat. Diese Spezialisierungen gibt es und sie werden immer stärker. Wir im Eventbereich suchen natürlich auch nach Mitarbeitern, die genau das können. Es gibt in dem Bereich oftmals eine gewisse Anzahl an Personen, die eine spezielle Aufgabe übernehmen und an die wendet man sich. Wenn die besagte Person Zeit hat und die Zusammenarbeit passt, empfiehlt man die im Anschluss weiter und wenn nicht, dann eben nicht.

7. Kann man sagen, dass es sinnvoll und zielführend ist, sich in seinem jeweiligen Tätigkeitsbereich auf Events zu spezialisieren, wenn man mit Sicherheit in dieser Branche Erfolg haben möchte?

Ich würde das ein bisschen anders formulieren. Wir hatten auch Grafiker, die wirklich nur ihre Grafik-Schiene machen wollen. Angenommen jemand möchte nur Aufträge annehmen, die im Manga-Stil gestaltet sind, weil das sein Interessensgebiet ist, und es gäbe eine Convention, zu der genau dieser Schwerpunkt passt, ist das super. Ich glaube jedoch, dass die klassische Eventagentur die verschiedensten Aufträge abwickelt – Sport, Kultur, Wirtschaft, Corporate, möglicherweise Politik – und man daher offen sein muss, um potenziell alle Bereiche abdecken zu können. Diese Flexibilität benötigen wir als Veranstalter. Wenn man kein derartig flexibler Anbieter ist, sondern sich auf einen speziellen Fall fokussieren möchte, beispielsweise nur Social Media und dafür keine Webseitenerstellung oder umgekehrt, hat man kaum eine Chance bei der Eventagentur, weil wir uns natürlich an den Zielen, den Zielbotschaften und den Zielgruppen der Kunden orientieren müssen und nicht unsere individuellen Vorstellungen umsetzen können.

8. Nehmen Marketing und Kommunikation bei Events – unabhängig von ihrer Größe – eine wichtige Rolle ein oder haben grundlegend organisatorische Tätigkeiten eine höhere Priorität?

Sie spielen eine sehr große Rolle. Dass das Event an sich funktioniert ist eine Grundvoraussetzung, aber wir wollen bei unseren Veranstaltungen natürlich auch die entsprechenden Personen, die Kunden vor Ort haben und die gilt es anzusprechen. Wenn wir es nicht schaffen, darüber zu informieren, dass das Event überhaupt stattfindet, oder ihnen nicht das Gefühl vermitteln, bei der Veranstaltung müsse man dabei sein, dann

stunden wir vor einer leeren Halle. Wir haben das Glück, dass wir bei den Erste Bank Open beispielsweise sehr gut verkauft sind und das ist natürlich auch darauf zurückzuführen, dass wir ein sehr gutes Produkt verkaufen, glaube ich, und auch eine gute Kommunikationsstrategie für alle Kanäle haben – seien es die klassischen Kanäle mit Medienkooperationen, Plakatwerbung, Radio oder auch die nicht-klassischen Tools, die wir nutzen. Wir wurden auch nicht umsonst 2021 zum besten Turnier der ATP 500er Serie gewählt. Das wählen die Tennisspieler selbst und ich glaube dafür haben wir schon sehr viel richtig gemacht. Ich glaube also, dass diese Themengebiete einen sehr, sehr hohen Stellenwert haben und dementsprechend auch bestmöglich umgesetzt werden müssen.

9. *Ist es notwendig oder wichtig, sich insbesondere bei bereits etablierten Events immer wieder neue Maßnahmen oder Strategien im Bereich Marketing und Kommunikation zu überlegen?*

Ich glaube, es gibt gewisse Tendenzen und Trends, denen man folgen kann. Das eine ist natürlich, dass auf Social Media vor zehn Jahren wahrscheinlich noch deutlich weniger los war als heute. Allein dadurch, dass die Spieler – und um die geht es bei einem Tennisturnier natürlich zum größten Teil – mittlerweile oftmals selbst schon Influencer oder Botschaftsüberbringer sind und wenn man diese Personen mit nutzt, hat man natürlich einen größeren Raum. Das versucht man also zu verstärken, hat man aber vor zehn Jahren wahrscheinlich noch nicht so betrieben. Natürlich gibt es auch Geschichten, die man versucht einzubauen. Klassisches Sponsoring, das vor Jahren noch funktioniert hat, wird heute nicht mehr funktionieren. Die Aktivierung beim Sponsoring ist viel schwieriger geworden, man muss viel kreativer werden und eine ausgeklügelte Story dahinter setzen, damit das funktioniert. Was auch gut funktioniert, ist, wenn man Events innerhalb eines Events macht. Mit Red Bull haben wir beispielsweise etwas am Laufen, bei dem das Turnier das ganze Jahr über gespielt wird und nicht nur in dieser einen Oktoberwoche. Da hat sich also definitiv sehr viel weiterentwickelt und getan, im positiven Sinne.

Questionnaire D, translated English version: EVENT ORGANIZERS/MARKETERS (potential clients/partners)

Respondent: Johannes Schreiner, 13 October 2023, Graz

1. *What role do you play in the organisation of events such as the ATP500 tennis tournament “Erste Bank Open” in Vienna or similar events? Are your services bought in as a self-employed person or are you part of the e|motion group?*

Answer: I am basically a self-employed event manager and for said event, I am accordingly commissioned by the e|motion Management agency.

2. *In this case, is the e|motion agency itself responsible for marketing?*

Answer: You can't assess that like that. We do larger and smaller events and for larger events the project team is obviously larger, and some areas are outsourced. At the Erste

Bank Open in Vienna, for example, there is a separate marketing and communications team. Of course, as the organiser you get involved in advance, but it is the implementing team that is responsible for the realisation. For smaller events, such as the Davis Cup in Vienna, which was of course not a small event, but there, I was the project manager myself and looked over all areas, including the marketing and communications area. With corporate events, it can happen that we don't do anything in that area, sometimes we as organisers take over everything. For example, we are currently supporting the "Bewegungsrevolution" in Styria, and we do a lot of marketing and communication for them. So, it varies a lot, you can't say that as a general rule.

3. *Is this executive team, which implements the marketing and communication measures at the Erste Bank Open, for example, part of the core team of e|motion or are they also self-employed?*

That differs. Especially in the event sector, there are a lot of freelancers who help. Some agencies are brought in to help. At the Erste Bank Open, for example, we have different logos that are used. The internal graphics department, which is responsible for this, does not have, let's say, ten employees. Some of them are employed graphic designers, others work externally only for this one project, and so on. To break it all down into employment and self-employment would be a bit tedious. I'm also not sure what the background to this question is. In the end, it doesn't matter, because it's all about the output. In the end, we also use classic communication agencies or graphic agencies that do nothing but create and design logos or other graphic elements every day. So, it very much differs. For the Davis Cup, for example, there are graphic guidelines that are set by the International Tennis Federation, whose headquarters are in London. The whole thing is then implemented by us. So, you can't make a general statement. With corporate events, the companies often have their own marketing and communications departments, which means that things are often predefined.

In any case, external people are certainly brought in for event agencies. It also depends on the order situation. If you don't have a lot to do, you're more likely to deal with these issues in-house if you have the right staff. Otherwise, they are brought in externally. If you are talking about a company that organises its own events for companies, brands, or products, then they usually have its own graphics or marketing departments and there will be less external access.

4. *Is the deciding factor in whether to call in external support in a certain area whether an event agency or a company itself has enough staff to handle the different tasks?*

That also varies. Looking back, my main client, e|motion Management, sometimes had its own employees, for example, graphic designers, and then there were times when it didn't have its own graphics department but increasingly had external people. That all has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage would be, for example, that you might get

new perspectives from external people that you don't have yourself. In terms of time, you are probably also more flexible with external agencies. However, this is a complex issue that cannot be broken down into two or three points of view.

Basically, there is a clear distinction between whether it is a communications agency or a graphics agency. For me, these are two very different things. Especially with graphic services, it's about whether you need someone who simply works on certain things according to the corresponding specifications, such as a brand book. I think that can be handled well with in-house graphic designers if they are given precise specifications. So-called "freethinkers" who create their own ideas and graphic concepts, so to speak, are not likely to be found in your own agency unless it specialises in these things. Event agencies like ours are very complex. We need everything from the organisation and infrastructure side, we need as many facets as possible from the communication side that can play a role. To keep people in the event agency itself for all these areas, you would have to have an extremely large number of orders that go in exactly this direction. These freethinkers definitely feel more comfortable in self-employment or in dedicated communication or graphic agencies that do nothing else all day but work in their respective fields.

To have enough orders at all to fill such positions internally, you basically have to be a very large event agency, so that on the one hand you can afford the employees as a company, and they also feel comfortable and can carry out their activities in different areas and subject areas. On top of that, there are often many things happening at the same time. Many events take place at the same time and in this case, it would be difficult for one person, for example, a part-time graphic designer, to complete all tasks within the given time frame. In addition, this one person would not be able to work non-stop but would also have to adhere to certain working hours. This is the point of view from which this question has to be considered. It probably varies from agency to agency, but I think that's how it is for event agencies.

If I take another example: Last year at the Erste Bank Open we had to handle a large water installation for a partner. The event agency did not bring a plumber into the company for this but hired this service externally. If I need additional graphic or communication input that I can't cover internally, then I hire it out. That is common practice. But if I have to continuously develop new concepts for brand books, company or brand positioning, or logos, it can also make sense to do it in-house. That's how I see it, but the question will probably arise anew from year to year.

5. *Why does e|motion Management use you, for example? How do you get your foot in the door of an event agency as an external service provider?*

With e|motion and me, that was a little unusual. I have always worked on some of their projects, even during my school career and during my studies. After I finished my studies, the question was how I wanted to continue, and opportunities arose to go in that direction

and I decided to do that then. It worked out, hopefully for my main client as well. But I think it has, otherwise, we wouldn't have been working together for so long.

Basically, you can't answer that so casually. I think that the industry in Austria, especially in the Graz or Vienna area, is generally not that big. If you are flexible and reliable – and that's what counts in addition to your own skills – word gets around quite quickly in the industry. Then you get orders from one side and orders from the other.

6. *If it is determined that there is a need for external support in a certain area, is the selection of the provider based on the experience of stakeholders in the organisation or are there other criteria?*

Nowadays, I have to say that if you look back ten or fifteen years, companies and freelancers have established themselves explicitly for the event sector that don't really do anything else. For example, there are electrical companies that only do event electrics and nothing else. Some graphic designers create graphics exclusively for events. There are media and communication workers who do nothing but communication for events or testimonials, who are exactly in this line of business and therefore know exactly what you need as an event organiser. If I need an electrician, I don't need a house installer, but cabling and generally solutions that fit events. The same goes for graphics and communication, there we need solutions for events, and they are often different than if you are an industrial company or have another service trade. These specialisations exist and they are becoming stronger. Of course, we in the event sector are also looking for employees who can do just that. There are often a certain number of people in the field who take on a specific task and you turn to them. If the person in question has time and the cooperation works out well, you recommend them to others, and if not, then you don't.

7. *Can one say that it is sensible and purposeful to specialise in events in one's respective field of activity if one wants to be successful in this industry with certainty?*

I would put it a little differently. We also had graphic designers who only wanted to do their graphic track. Let's say someone only wants to take on commissions that are designed in manga style because that's their area of interest, and there would be a convention that exactly fits that focus, that's great. However, I believe that the classic event agency handles a wide variety of commissions – sports, culture, business, corporate, and possibly politics – and therefore you have to be open to potentially covering all areas. We need this flexibility as event organisers. If you are not such a flexible provider but want to focus on a specific case, for example only social media and no website creation for it, or vice versa, you hardly have a chance with the event agency. Because of course we have to orient ourselves to the goals, the target messages, and the target groups of the clients and cannot implement our ideas.

8. *Do marketing and communication play an important role in events – regardless of their size – or do basic organisational activities have a higher priority?*

They play a very big role. That the event itself works is a basic prerequisite, but of course, we also want to have the relevant people, the customers, on-site at our events and we have to address them. If we don't manage to inform them that the event is taking place at all or don't give them the feeling that they have to be at the event, then we will be faced with an empty hall. We are lucky that we are very well sold at the Erste Bank Open, for example, and that is of course also because we sell a very good product, I think, and also have a good communication strategy for all channels – be it the classic channels with media cooperations, poster advertising, radio or also the non-classic tools that we use. We were also not voted the best tournament in the ATP 500 series in 2021 for nothing. The tennis players themselves vote for that and I think we have already done a lot right for that. So, I think that these topics are very, very important and have to be implemented in the best possible way.

9. *Is it necessary or important to keep coming up with new measures or strategies in the field of marketing and communication, especially for already established events?*

I think there are certain tendencies and trends that you can follow. One is, of course, that ten years ago there was probably much less happening on social media than today. The fact that the players – and they are of course the biggest part of a tennis tournament – are now often influencers or messengers themselves, and if you use these people, you naturally have a larger space. So, you try to strengthen that, but you probably didn't do it that way ten years ago. Of course, there are also stories that you try to incorporate. Classic sponsoring, which worked years ago, will no longer work today. Activation in sponsorship has become much more difficult, you have to get much more creative and put a sophisticated story behind it to make it work. What also works well is when you do events within an event. With Red Bull, for example, we have something going on where the tournament is played throughout the year and not just in that one week in October. So, there has been a lot of development and a lot of action, in a positive sense.