

6.6. Developing tourism locally through a heavy metal music festival: an attempt to maximize resources and tourist services in Viana do Castelo, Portugal

Jorge Coelho¹

Abstract

Tourism is one of the main sectors of international trade. It is also noted that touristic development is usually associated with benefit for countries, regions or localities. Preferably, under the yearnings of sustainable tourism concept. To achieve sustainability through tourism it becomes imperative to reach a compromise which can only be possible when, from the process of planning, the community is seen as a partner and co-responsible. Cultural events, including festivals, can help achieve these goals, as events are an essential tool in the tourism process, since they allow an entire drive in the tourism production chain. Given the absence of a common or unique feature to the totality of events and festivals, because each has its own peculiarities, this study reflects some specific features of a specific heavy metal music festival, which, due to its size and socio-economic dynamics, enables the existing specific relationship with tourism, including involvement and partnerships. From data collection and analyzes, as well as from perceptions and concrete observations by this festival organization, a first attempt at designing tourist programs involving existing resources and tourist services in the city of Viana do Castelo, Portugal, was made. Once implemented, the goals are to maximize the tourist potential offered by the dynamics created by the festival, promote the region as a tourist destination and boost the local economy as much as possible. The adoption or reinforcement of this kind of procedures taken by organizations of festivals with identical characteristics, or not, in other Portuguese regions is desirable.

Keywords: tourism, local development, partnerships, festivals, heavy metal.

Tourism

By implying a complex network of economical activities involved in providing tourists accommodation, food and beverages, transport, entertainment and other services, tourism is a structuring element of the economy (UNWTO, 2013).

In Portugal, and according to the 2010 Sustainability Report elaborated by the entity Turismo de Portugal, the tourism sector concurs, in a significant way, to wealth generation for national - local and regional - economy, and, additionally, promotes the creation of direct and indirect jobs. On the 2011 Sustainability Report, also by Turismo de Portugal, tourism continued to consolidate its significance to the Portuguese economy, having developed in all activity indicators.

¹ Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo, Portugal.

It is a fact that there are multiple reasons for the tourism to be an economic development engine, and several authors mention that on one hand, tourism leads to capital and income movements of regions and causes the export of goods and services through the visitors' purchasing of products from the receiving region, as well as their own expenditure in the places - export that would not occur any other way. On the other hand, this activity implies investment which, in the beginning, focuses on the rehabilitation and construction of touristic infrastructures, and then widen to other equipments. These, namely infrastructures and social equipments, which would hardly be built under circumstances not involving the touristic development of the area (namely due to dimension issues), favor local population and enable the installation of other activities which extend to local production (Cunha, 1997; Vogeler, R. & Hernández, A., 1997; Gómez, B., 2001 *cit in* Vareiro, 2008).

Still, tourism is much more than an economic phenomenon; it has replications on the cultural basis (intercultural dialogues, social hospitality relationships), starts from a historical inheritance (architectural and historic heritage) and develops in a specific environment (ecological and environmental effects on the natural landscape). Hence, besides economic effects generated by tourism, one should consider socio-cultural and environmental effects (Milani, 2002 *apud* Vareiro, 2008).

Events

Following what has been mentioned in the previous paragraph, and according to Zottis (2006), events are a fundamental instrument in the touristic process, and their contribution does not confine to the increase of the number of visitors, generating income and business, but also enables a drive in the tourism productive chain. The author also indicates that it is necessary that they are planned, arranged, carried out and assessed under the same complex and multifaceted perspective conducted when approaching hospitality.

For an event to take place, it needs a great number of professionals and suitable infrastructures, thus bearing social and economic profits to the local community and, depending on its dimension, to the whole country. Suitable infrastructures are needed, such as basic (sanitation, treated water, sewage treatment and network), support (transport, hospitals, public security), or touristic (accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies). Holding events in a municipality can, therefore, stimulate the improvement of those urban services and, accordingly, bring improvement to the inhabitants' life quality (Oliveira & Januário, 2007).

Howsoever, local entities (both public and private), conscious of the impossibility to maintain artistic performances throughout the year, choose to concentrate those initiatives and performances in certain periods of the year, providing to citizens a cultural offer adequate to large metropolitan areas (Getz, 1991; Hernández, G. *et al.*, 2003; Gratton & Taylor, 1995 *apud* Pardellas de Blas, X., Fabeiro, C., Vareiro, L. & Ribeiro, J., 2005, p. 64).

Nevertheless, the effects of tourism seasonality can be reduced by holding events, as they stimulate flows of people in periods of the year when the demand is usually lower (Oliveira & Januário, 2007, p. 56).

Still, on the other hand and in order to monetize investments, it is important to incorporate events (often too concentrated in terms of time) in the global touristic offer in the municipality/region in question (Pardo, 2001 *cit in* Pardellas de Blas, X., Fabeiro, C., Vareiro, L. & Ribeiro, J., 2005, p. 66). Events can also encourage people to visit a place more than once (Richards & Wilson, 2004).

Therefore, so that events are crucial in terms of local development, it is necessary that residents have profit, but, above all, take an active part in the process (André *et al.*, 2003 *cit in* Pardellas de Blas, X., Fabeiro, C., Vareiro, L. & Ribeiro, J., 2005, p. 72). Indeed, on the basis of its success lies the participation of the local population, required to collaborate in event holding, supporting them by volunteering and considering them local happenings (Getz, 1991).

It becomes imperative to achieve a compromise which can only be possible when, since the process of planning the event, the community is seen as a partner and co-responsible (Zottis, 2006, p. 4). This direct intervention of residents, particularly when there is a special focus on visitors, is an unquestionably significant factor of touristic attraction, since it reinforces the authenticity and the identity of the place where the event is held (André *et al.*, 2003 *cit in* Pardellas de Blas, X., Fabeiro, C., Vareiro, L. & Ribeiro, J., 2005, p. 72).

On the other hand, tourists may have a significant role in the community development giving residents the possibility to obtain additional income (Richards, 2005 *cit in* Fernandes, 2011, p. 103).

Thus, a well-succeeded strategy of events is reflected in the creation of an institutional framework, involving businessmen, commerce, services sector and public power, emphasizing the promotion of associations and entrepreneurship (Melo Neto, 2001 *cit in* Zottis, 2006, p. 4).

The significance of events, therefore, is also reflected in the idea advocated by Hamam (2004 *cit in* Zottis, 2006, p. 4), considering that an event is a product and, from the premise that there being an activity designed to, directly or indirectly, generate profit to everyone involved, it is easy to conclude it is a product of high value and should be explored and offered to a public eager for information, knowledge, technological innovations, releases related to their area of operation, entertainment, and all that can be represented as new experiences and emotions.

Cultural events have lately shown a rather dynamic "touristic product", concerning both demand and offer. According to Getz (1991), cultural events, namely festivals, can help to achieve these goals, in that: they meet the local needs of local leisure, reducing the desire to seek other destinations; they keep traditions authentic, which might attract tourists more sensible to endogenous resources; they improve the relationships between residents and tourists, favoring understanding and a greater exchange of mutual benefits; contribute to the preservation of natural, historic and cultural heritage; and, lastly, they encourage local organizational development, leadership and cooperation between all involved agents, which is crucial if one intends a touristic development based on the community. This last role can be, perhaps, the most important one concerning this kind of events.

Festivals

In modern society, performing arts are a complex phenomenon of economic analysis, as they usually involve aspects related with hobbies, modes of personal expression, entertainment, social status and even public policy. However, in all these manifestations there is always a unifying theme: arts consume resources amenable to alternative uses, and therefore susceptible to economic analysis. As in any other economic activity, at market level, art production and consumption is reflected in offer and demand, regardless of the markets being more or less developed and/or competitive (CETRAD, 2004, p. 6).

The increasing dynamics tendency of live performances reflects socio-cultural changes which have occurred in our country over the past decades and have casted culture to the centre of political, social and even economic rings. In fact, the scope of public musical performance has been expanding, assuming an intensely diversified character, being organized at changeable scales, developing in spaces and formats more and more heterogeneous, and, although presentation and performance circuits are already organized at national or international levels, they always depend on time, space, operators and local or localized consumers in specific places (Abreu, 2004).

But there is not a common or unique characteristic to all the events and festivals, as each of them has its own peculiarities. There are festivals designed for profit and others for no profit at all, with local, regional, national or international approach, an entertaining or an educative goal, etc, but most of them share intangibility, convergence in time and place, as well as their frailty (Rivero, 2009, p. 13). Yet, one can say that the essence of a festival is its public orientation and the feeling of shared values it bears (Jafari, 2000 *cit in* Rivero, 2009, p. 13).

After having studied in depth the festivals theme, Bowen & Daniels (2005 *cit in* Rivero, 2009, p. 13) have defined music festivals as events which, contrary to other concerts, are manifestations in which music is part of culture. Moreover, music festivals often include other activities beyond music itself, usually deeply related to the theme adopted by the festival.

Heavy metal subculture

And music while universal art goes beyond geographic barriers, and any person, from any part of the world, can feel as a member of that community (Silva, H., 2010).

Heavy Metal, one of Rock subgenres with greater longevity, transcends the purely musical sphere, showing several aspects which characterize it as a subculture disseminated in several countries (Silva, J., 2007).

And it matters to be promptly aware of the subculture concept presented by Gelder (2005 *cit in* Silva, H., 2010): *"Subcultures are groups of people somehow represented as non-normative and/or marginal through their interests and particular practices, what they are, what they do and where they do it"*.

Nevertheless, Heavy Metal community and the music style which distinguishes it do not show as something against rules or as a radical counterculture directly contesting. While extreme and alternative in its origin, the fact is that, inserted in their mother-culture, which one consider to be the music industry, many music groups of this type have directly entered the top of charts worldwide. Heavy Metal, despite its contesting and rupture characteristics, is completely ingrained in music industry, in spite of being socially marginal (Silva, H., 2010).

This kind of subcultures intends to distinguish from mass cultures, seeking a more individual voice which tends to be set aside by global communities, more standardized, whose primary logics is of production and consume, deleting individuality in the process (Gelder, 2005 *cit in* Silva, H., 2010). This community, by its visual and sound aesthetics, moves in a world apart, in a more limited group of individuals, in search for individuality, apart from massification of cultural processes (Silva, H., 2010).

In spite of its style being aggressive, insurgent and somehow marginal, Heavy Metal has never been totally ostracized or even taken lightly. Mainstream media have never ceased to pay attention, one way or another, or even to bring to limelight news related to the style, even

at the beginning. Although this music style has never been truly globalized, *key players* have always considered it had something to say (Laaksonen, L. *et al.*, 2010, p. 6).

Thus, even briefly it is important to know the origins and essence of Heavy Metal. The expression *heavy metal* firstly emerged, as directly related to music, in the lyrics of *Born to be Wild*, by Steppenwolf (USA), in 1968, which state “*I like smoke and lightning, heavy metal thunder*”, and became the expression used to identify the music genre one could hear in Black Sabbath’s seminal albums, a band from the industrial suburbs of Birmingham (England) who gave start to Heavy Metal movement, together with Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple. The expression *heavy metal* is also a literary reference from the 1964 novel *Nova Express*, by William S. Burroughs, and recovered by Black Sabbath’s critic and defender Lester Bangs, in his music critics. Character *Uranium Willy*, literally *Heavy Metal Boy*, was the reference used to define Black Sabbath’s music. Together with Steppenwolf’s verse, the expression gave origin to the music genre (Christe, 2005 *cit in* Silva, H., 2010).

Distinguished by a strong sound of guitars and percussion, heavy Metal has been a controversial issue since its creation in the 1960s. As the popularity of the music genre raised, an increasing number of fans developed into a new youth subculture (Gross, 1990, p. 1).

The major differences between Heavy Metal and other music forms lie in four areas: music structure and elements of recording production, lyrics, public performances by the artists, and the subculture which has joined the genre (Gross, 1990, p. 2).

By the characteristics assumed by Heavy Metal one can identify this subculture as a market niche. According to Novelli (2005) we can speak of a market niche as a more limited group in which its individuals are identifiable by the same needs or specialized interests. The size of a market niche may vary considerably, but effectively needs to be balanced between being large enough to create business in a significant way and small enough to be forgotten by competitors.

Concerning the approaches previously described, the music festival dedicated to Heavy Metal genre, which takes place in Barrocelas (Viana do Castelo, Portugal), can be framed in Kottler’s idea (2003 *cit in* Machado, R., 2006) when he mentions a touristic product as “*something that might be offered in a market, to be appreciated, acquired or consumed, and includes physical objects, services, personalities, places, organizations or ideas, which contributes to meet a need or desire.*”

Barrocelas, locality and festival

Steel Warriors Rebellion (SWR) Barrocelas Metalfest, a very Do It Yourself (DIY) festival, took place for the first time in 1998 and in 2014 it was its 17th edition, always in Barrocelas. A small town from the municipality of Viana do Castelo, in the North of Portugal.

The main economic activities in the place are locksmiths, metalworking, wood processing, textile industry, civil construction, commerce and small farming (Câmara Municipal de Viana do Castelo). According to National Statistics Institute (INE) - Censuses 2011, the population consists of 3.927 individuals, but Barrocelas totally transfigures itself when population almost doubles during the festival.

According to the organization, the festival always takes place in April, to avoid competition and take advantage of the lower prices of some services and equipments prevailing at that time of year. The budget covering the structure and artists’ cachets needed to the 2014 edition was about €150.000 (one thousand and fifty euros). Concerning human resources, the

organization had specialized staff, such as sound and light technicians, stage managers, runners, security guards and electrician. Globally, the staff was composed by 100 people, hired and volunteers.

Adding to this, the 2014 SWR festival edition had around 50 bands from more than 20 countries, as it is happening in the last years.

In 2013, a study conducted by Coelho, J. & Brázio, M. (2014) assessed the economic impacts of the event. After using a specific model, suggested by Crompton, J.; Seokho, L. and Shuster, T. (2001) they reached significant and important numbers and information; In 4 days of festival the total direct impact of visitors' spending (the effective money spented, not including tickets) was €51.466,40; With the tourism multiplier coefficients the impact on sales was €87.492,84; The impact on the community's income was €3.087,96; The economic dynamics helps to maintain the employment on some local companies.

Partnerships in tourism as a natural step

From the factual event evolution and development, at many levels, and also from the assessment and analysis of perceptions, needs and evidence collected and observed, concerning both visitors (demand for accommodation, feeding and extra activities outside the festival area) and festival organizers (need to expand and improve supply, as well as the need to provide an integrated supply), the establishment of partnerships with local tourism and leisure businesses has become a natural step.

Tourism is widely regarded as a means to achieve development in destination areas (Sharpley e Telfer, 2002) and the success of tourism development is always the result of partnerships between various stakeholders (Ignarra, 2003). So, according to Rocha (2006) partnerships between sectors is very important for the proper development of tourism projects from any locality.

In that way, partnerships are increasingly used in the tourism sector, in order to achieve business goals (CTC, 2003). Thus, the success of touristic development is always the result of partnerships between various agents of tourism, from public and private sectors, who are able to meet consumer demands (Ignarra, 2003).

But, it is important to note that partnership opportunities are not only with or through organizations traditionally seen as being part of the tourism sector. Organizations are beginning to think in a creative way about partnership opportunities with non-traditional sectors (CTC, 2003). Partnership between sectors is rather important for the proper development of tourism projects of any location (Rocha, 2006).

The underlying impulse to partners, or the key-motive for cooperation, is that all partners, whether private or in the public sector, are benefited with the alignment of resources and aims. And partnerships are indeed created due to a variety of reasons. They can be formed in order to create new products or services, to achieve higher levels of efficiency or scale economies, to open markets previously inaccessible, or simply to gather financial and/or human resources (CTC, 2003).

The economic consequences of partnerships between public and private sectors will be considered, directly and indirectly, from the increase in touristic flow, and can be reversed in improvements concerning infrastructures, development of industries associated to the sector (feeding, transport, etc.) and increase in demand for local products, among others (Barreto, 1995 *cit in* Vernaglia e Goulart, 2003).

In Barroselas, and at this level, the existing partnerships between public and private sectors are between the festival organizations and Viana do Castelo City Council, União de Freguesias de Barroselas e Carvoeiro and the Instituto Português do Desporto e Juventude (Portuguese Sports and Youth Institute).

In order to face interests and needs previously mentioned, which come from visitors and event organizers, but also recognizing the importance of partnerships as a means of potentiating better and greater economic dynamics, partnerships have been established with small companies related to tourism, hospitality and leisure in the area surrounding the place where the festival is held, namely in Viana do Castelo.

From the contacts made, there were created partnerships with eleven accommodation units², three restaurants³, a touristic and leisure activities company⁴ and a travel agency⁵. The latter was carried out so that all offer that had been made, with special prices, around SWR Barroselas Metalfest could be marketed. That offer became integrated and more complete than the one previously provided by the event, what was in fact the objective. Promotion of the created offer was done locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

An important fact is that one could note interest from companies in keeping partnership agreements with the festival organization in the future. This is extremely positive, as it allows us to assess the openness in attitudes towards the dynamics created by a subculture such as Heavy Metal.

Conclusions

It is noted that touristic development is usually associated with benefit of countries or destination regions, also contributing to the creation of opportunities to develop rural areas, as is the case of Barroselas.

Holding a music festival, despite associated to a subculture, has proved an opportunity, recognizing the community's individual and collective efforts, which is in its essence music as universal art that goes beyond geographical barrier, thus creating enough motivation, giving place to multiculturalism, approaching generations and stirring local development.

Despite having some problems of acceptance by the local community in the early years, the festival organization has now the support of public and private entities. A fact that provides the continuity of the event.

The whole dynamics associated with the SWR Barroselas Metalfest, the Heavy Metal subculture and the Do It Yourself culture proves that with effort and dedication it is also possible the development of localities and regions, namely in the creation of opportunities to develop rural areas, as is the case of Barroselas.

Since considering that Barroselas is not a touristic destination, the truth is that the town is located at about 15kms from the municipality of Viana do Castelo - admittedly a prominent place and city in the national touristic panorama – and because of that, it is expected a raise in the tourists flow in both places.

² Hotel Viana Sol, Hotel Rali, Pensão O Laranjeira, Absoluto Design Hotel, Hotel Jardim, Hotel do Parque, Pensão Dolce Vianna, Hotel A Ponte, Hotel Calatrava, Pousada da Juventude, Hostel Ó Meu Amor

³ O Laranjeira, Casa Primavera, Dolce Vianna

⁴ Vivexperiência

⁵ Vipreception



In practice, partnerships have been established to carry on touristic programs with cultural and leisure elements, taking advantage of the interest perceived among all who have visited the event, benefiting from the attractiveness and source of natural, patrimonial, symbolic and creative resources that exist in Viana do Castelo.

Hereupon, one can remark the significance of this event, also with effects on the reduction of seasonality in the touristic area where it is inserted, as well as its relevance to touristic and thus economic, sustainability of the destination.

In a certain manner, the way that this event is planned, organized and developed can be an example for other organizations or localities.

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