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Conditions and Requirements of Success of a Festival: The Parthenopean Isolimpic Games Case

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Abstract:

This study aims to assess: the conditions and requirements of success of multi-thematic festivals (with the regard to our case study, a sport and culture festival), with regard to the new media, and more specifically social networks. The starting hypothesis was that the appropriate use of such media involves the consolidation of a dialog between festival and public reference in a perspective of a medium-long term loyalty. The research method used is the longitudinal analysis of our case study (Parthenopean Isolimpic Games) using data regarding the outcomes of the three editions held so far. The data collection and the initial processing took place through the implementation of direct interviews with both the organizers and the key figures responsible of the festivals' communication strategy, and the collection of documentary material. The information obtained were consequently used in a SWOT analysis in order to provide a description of the current festival' state. The analysis shows that a communication strategy based on social media is more suited to establish strong dialogic relationships between festival and the related stakeholders, promoting the success of the event. The main limit of this paper is that the festival framed as a case study is still in the process of implementation and consequently the proposal illustrated is based on an analysis made ex ante. The results of the study can be used as hypotheses to be verified in other research contributions as well as guidelines for operators to improve their social media strategy. As for the originality of the work, is inherent in the selected case, which do not yet appear in literature. Furthermore, it underlines the requirement of a social media expert in order to building a successful strategy.

Keywords: Festival, social network, social media strategy.

1. Introduction

The events that are intended to promote the development of a touristic destination or a region up to be identified with the spirit and culture of the place in which the event takes place (henceforth festival), constitute a category of considerable importance and interest for their economic effects not only on the various stakeholders but also, and especially, for the intangible benefits regarding the art, culture and society. The current trends in fact, reveal a growing demand of activities and attractions that satisfy the needs of entertainment, culture and learning at the same time. The development of this phenomenon, which has reached remarkable size, is to be found particularly in Europe, where the explosion of multipurpose art, culture and sport festivals is mainly attributable to their strong appeal and to their global and local attractiveness. Italy as well, has register a significant growth of such events and a steady increase in the number of both participants (artists, athletes, etc.) and spectators.

In view of the important function of the festival to disseminate the cultural identity of local communities and its ability to innovate and transform rapidly in time, it is evident the role of the festival in the increase of the cultural heritage value and the variety of traditions as well as in the creation of contacts and exchanges aimed to support social integration. The format of these events is in fact particularly suitable to contain and express the cultural projects in large relational scale and thus able to attract different public segments and at the same time express a strong identity.

The main characteristics festival concerns the high concentration of performances in a specific place and time, the amount of live performances, the ability to create strong relationships with the territory, the recall of the sense of belonging among the community and strengthen the cultural identity, the promotion of art through the encounter between culture and entertainment. In this regard it is particularly relevant what Goldblatt (2002) affirms: "special event recognizes a unique moment in time with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs".

The rapid development of festivals in the recent years imposes a broader reflection on the significant social, environmental and cultural impact that these events have on the local community, on the relations between the festival and its organizers, in particular the partnerships, on changes in the relationships between interest groups and the objectives of the community involved in the event. As for the reasons that caused this rapid development, in addition to the and the social benefits and motivations, they should be considered the management issues and the local promotion in perspective of a touristic development, valorization of the territory, urban renewal, identity strengthening, cultural comparison and opportunities to promote integration.

In summary, the festival event appears to be unquestionably a complex and multifaceted cultural product, strongly anchored to the specificity of the social, environmental and territorial context where it takes place; this calls the attention for the need of an approach focused on experience and specific knowledge of the phenomenon rather to rely on generic and accepted formats.

The term "festival" is increasingly used in different contexts and can be related to a plurality of type of events; this causes a difficulty for scholars to formulate a solid definition and to enclose such events in a category well defined. Therefore, the definition and classification problematics are mainly due to the composite nature of this study topic that overcomes the traditional boundaries that separate the different disciplinary fields.

A survey carried out by the Laboratory of Economics and Management of the institutions and of artistic and cultural initiatives (Montagnani & Morganti, 2011) of the Bocconi University on the Art Festival phenomenon, defines the festival as "...a manifestation taking place in a limited period of time, composed of a series of original and artistic events linked to the same topic or genre which take into account all the tradition and cultural heritage of a specific place in the presence of a participating audience with the goal of spreading education and culture, and which is funded, at least partially, with public funds".

The multiple characteristics recalled in this extremely broad and inclusive definition, are proof of the difficulty to establish a specific research field. Actually, detects the dual aspect of these events: On the one hand, they are characterized by a well-defined structure and recurring items; on the other hand, the specific features and the location of the event have a significant effect on the definition of the format to adopt. In fact, each festival has its own history and therefore each situation must be considered unique and interpreted as such, starting from the organization and management phases and concluding with the delicate post-event phase.

For what concerns the marketing of a festival, an increasingly important role is played by the use of on-line communication, especially through the social network: in fact, the current interactive platforms allow to consolidate the relationship between the festival and their public even after the conclusion of the event, fostering customer's loyalty in the medium-long term and the pursuit of satisfactory economic results. The progressive affirmation of digital communication defines innovative pathways for the festival that lead to the experimentation of new formats to which they are related the models of the Italian artistic and cultural festivals. Thus, the festival evolves toward innovative organizational models and program, sustainable over time and capable of producing a positive economic and socio-cultural impact on the related territories.

In regard to the present contribution, after having analysed the overall organization of the Parthenopean Isolimpic Games and having identified the distinguishing characteristics and the relative strengths and weaknesses, the objective of specific interest is to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the communication of this event, with particular reference to the capability to build marketing relationships with their current and potential public in the context of relational marketing (Grönroos 1994, Gummesson 1999, Grönroos 2004).

Therefore, the present research takes the cue from the need to assess the festivals' success opportunities, created through the new media, and mainly social networks, and how their appropriate use fosters the consolidation of a dialog between festivals and their public in a perspective of a medium-long term loyalty.

In the following pages will be firstly described the overall organization of the Isolimpia Festival, for then to deepen the theme of prevailing interest of this contribution, i.e. the current state of online communication of the event.

2. Literature Review

During the last decades a wide international literature has recognized in festivals an important topic of study (they are relevant Anglo-Saxon contributions, for all those of Getz (1991, 1997, 2010); as the author specifies, a festival is a "product" anything but defined and with uncertain outlines because of the enormous variety of typology of events that are linked to it. Likewise, the literature that has addressed this topic has assumed a very heterogeneous and composite character for both the variety of topics and multiple disciplinary fields in which the subject has been studied.

In the following is carried out a brief literature review regarding the topics of greatest interest for the present contribution: festivals as events of artistic and cultural interest can generate significant economic and social impact on the local communities; the visitors' motivations; the use of social networks, especially Facebook in order to enhance the participation to the festival; the event marketing and management.

Relatively to the economic aspects, the most common trend is to focus on the economic impact of the festival. In this line, "the festival event" is analysed particularly in relation to the specific interests that move the action of stakeholders involved in the organization, with reference to the cultural industry, tourism or, more generally, to the promotion of urban and territorial development.

In this regard, the national and international literature offers numerous theoretical and empirical contributions mainly focused on the analysis of the economic impact (Gartner & Holecek, 1983; Kim et al., 1998; Uysal & Gitelson, 1994; Walo, Bull & Breen, 1996) due to the predominance of benefits obtained by the organization of festivals and special events.

The offset of the studies that focus on the economic impact of the art and culture festivals, is to be found in the significant contribution that these events provide for economic and employment development of the territories on which they are held, in their ability to attract a great number of visitors, the creation of new tourist flows, their impact on different economic sectors, the reduction of intellectual migration and development of the local human capital, etc.

In this line of research are inserted the studies focused on the measurement of the economic and social impacts with particular reference to the big international festivals, which in the past years have reached a wide diffusion in Italy. On this regard, Guerzoni (2008) affirms that the Economic Impact Analysis does not include the profit, employment or fiscal aspects alone; in many cases, on the contrary, it highlights and quantifies the negative impacts (congestion, damage, deterioration of the quality of life, increase of petty crime, alterations of the real estate values, etc.) thus providing valid and impartial information of policy. Kesenne (2005), who questions on whether it would be more appropriate the application of cost-benefit analysis techniques, carries out a criticism on the use of the Economic Impact Analysis.

More in detail, the studies based on the Economic Impact Analysis examine the economic-financial aspects of festivals by exposing the numerous evaluation methodologies as evidence of the positive economic impact of these events. The most common approach in these studies is the analysis of the visitors' expenditure data in order to determine the direct, indirect and induced contribution of the event for the local or regional economy. From these studies, it also reached the importance of further research on the social impacts. On this regard, the Report on Manchester's Pillar Events by Jura Consultants (2006) detects a lack of studies aimed to address the issues related to the indirect impacts of major international festivals on host communities and underlines the difficulties related to the measurement of the intangible assets. Langen & Garcia (2009) suggest that such impacts are better studied through a multi-annual longitudinal approach.

In the European context, from the research promoted by the Scottish Tourist Board and carried out by SQW Limited and TNS Travel & Tourism (tourism, 2005) it is noticed the focus on major international festivals, [e.g. in Scotland (Edinburgh), Austria (Salzburg)], in terms of economic and employment impact generated by the high number of visitors and the large number of employees needed. Of significant interest are the studies dedicated to the economic impacts of events defined "of niche". A survey carried out in 2005 by Moore School of Business of the University of South Carolina on the U.S. edition of the Spoleto Festival USA, which takes place every year in Charleston and attracts a very sophisticated audience, has registered 39,000 participants causing an economic impact of approximately 35 million euros and creating 729 full-time jobs.

An additional strand of literature concerns the motivation to participate in the festival: the majority of studies showed a strong interest toward the motivations of the participants to attend the festival compared to those dedicated to the motivations of the organizers to hold a festival (Backman et al., 1995; Formica & Murrmann, 1998; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). Ralston & Crompton (1988) conducted the first studies on this topic with particular attention to the motivations of the participants, in view of the heterogeneity of the groups and the consequent necessity of segmentation. Many scholars have mainly attributed the motivational analysis to market segmentation and rarely to theoretical studies on cultural needs or social identification.

In this perspective, considered the active role of the participants during the event, there have been identified the following main motivations: the considerable emotional involvement; the live experience as an occasion to share their attitudes; living the culture (even by those who are not regular consumers of culture) and participate in a creative adventure; the freedom of expression; socialization and entertainment as part of a family; attractiveness of the event; Feelings of pride and spirit of community.

From a careful analysis of the studies that examine the motivations to attend the festival, the need of socialization/entertainment and the possibility to spend quality free time with the family were the most popular. (Backman et al., 1995; Formica & Murrmann, 1998; Formica & Uysal, 1996; Lee, 2000). More specifically, Formica & Uysal (1996) remarked the link between social groups and the motivations to attend the festival, detected that families see in the festival the opportunity to strengthen the family bond.

In this strand of research are also inserted the studies of Getz (1993), Janiskee (1994), Turko & Kelsey (1992) that are more keen to identify the critical success factors of these events by measuring the local community and the organizers enthusiasm rather than giving emphasis to the natural or artificial attractions, built exclusively for the event, alone. In addition, the studies conducted by Crompton and McKay (1997), provide an important reading key in the decision-making process of the participants, through the extensive study of the motivational aspects.

In the order to the multiplicity and consistency of the existing studies regarding the motivational aspects, there are however, different points of view: some authors tend to link the motivations to attend the festival to the specific context in which the event takes place (Nicholson & Pearce, 2000; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001); in other prospects, such differences appear irrelevant (Crompton & McKay, 1997). Therefore, there is not a universally accepted motivational scale yet.

For what concerns the use of social networks, and especially Facebook, in the organizational process of the festival, numerous studies aim to explore the ability of social network to become an effective marketing communication tool able to expand the opportunity of selecting actual and potential participants and influence their behaviour. Drury (2008) emphasizes the opportunity for the organizers of an event in general and a festival in particular, to create through Facebook, a personalized, reliable and direct communication. Mangold & Faulds (2009) observe the expansion and variability of the communication process empowered by social networks both in business-to-consumer and consumer-to-consumer relations. Other studies, examine the acceptance process of the event by evaluating the impact of the emotions that participants express on social network platforms (Bigné, Andreu & Gnoth, 2005; Dobelet et al., 2007). This issue is addressed by underlining the link between the positive experience of the consumer on Facebook and the consequent

favourable attitudes toward the event in terms of appreciation and approval, up to consider the impact on the intentions to attend the event. In this regard, Lee et al. (2012) propose "The Technology Acceptance Model" (TAM), a theoretical model which, when applied on event marketing, explores the prominent role that assume the emotions of the supporters through both the use of Facebook as an event marketing tool and the intention to attend the event itself. In particular, the Authors observe that the immediacy of access to the event's Facebook page, the ease of use and the perceived satisfaction, contribute to increase the willingness to attend the event. Carah (2009) highlight, the determinant role of the organizers and event manager of the festival, as they stimulate the interaction and sharing activity between the event Facebook page subscribers, their intention to attend the event and consequently the actual attendance.

According to a survey carried out in 2013 by the Tourism Study Centre of the University of Finland, the main reasons to include social networks in the festival's organization are the following: reach a bigger visibility; attract new participants; improve the efficiency towards their audience; increase the festival's communication; promote the festival's image.

3. Methodology

The research approach used is the single case study, following the Mintzberg & McHugh (1985) method. The selected case, analysed in longitudinal prospective (Leonard-Barton, 1990) is the Parthenopean Isolimpic Games; a composite art, culture and sport event recently rediscovered (just reaching its third edition) and keen to propose in a more contemporary version the original Isolimpic Games, held in the I century A.D. in Neapolis in honour of the emperor Augustus. The choice of this event is related to the opportunities that it offers to observe directly the experience of both the organizers and participants of the three editions already carried out. Furthermore, considering the fact that the Isolimpia Festival is currently in a start-up phase and with the overall results being far away from satisfactory, lends itself to critical comments and to a general redesign that can bring it back to its original glory least for the local community in its widest meaning (athletes, artists, spectators etc.).

The research aims to define a social media able to establish conditions of success for the future editions strategy, based on a critical evaluation of the communication model used in the previous three editions.

The source of data, as recommended from consolidated literature on the topic (Eisenhardt, 1989), were extrapolated from interviews and reports. The data collection and analysis was preceded from a structured planning for their gather (interviews, documents, photographic material etc.). The Authors and PhD students of the Department composed the research team conducting the data analysis. The result consists in providing a social media strategy guideline to be used in the future editions of the event.

The formulation of rigid hypotheses has been avoided, as it was preferable to observe the characteristics of the three editions along with the single events composing them in terms of duration, type, mode of execution, collaboration between stakeholders and communication activities.

The data and information collection was realized by fruition of documentary material, the realization of direct interviews with both the organizers of the event and key figures responsible for the communication, as well as through call and e-mail exchange.

The interview contained the following topics: the festival's characteristics, the organization and management aspects of the three editions, the efforts for an efficient communication system for the event and the perception of the overall opinion on the results of the three editions. This last part of the interview was carried out with reference to the aspects generally studied in literature, widely described in the previous paragraph, i.e. the socioeconomic impact, the motivations of the participants and spectators to attend the festival and the effectiveness of the online communications.

4. The Isolimpia Festival

As already mentioned, the first editions of the Parthenopean Isolimpic Games were held in the I century A.D. in Neapolis in honour of the emperor Augustus; forgotten for centuries, it has been recently recovered from the Amartea association¹ that aims to bring it back to life in a more contemporary version in order to retrieve to Naples pieces of its glorious past through a prodigious international event, which can become in time, an important cultural and touristic attraction. Reaching its third edition, (first edition was held in 2013), the Isolimpia Festival, organized by the Amartea cultural association, has seen many organizations, operating in the artistic and sociocultural field, joining as partners sharing the ultimate target, that is no other than the retrieval of the Parthenopean cultural origins, with the intention to establish an economic and touristic growth based on the respect of the cultural, archeologic and artistic heritage and the appreciation of the distinctive landscape and environmental features that make the Neapolitan territory inimitable². The realization of the project required a complete and active involvement of all the local institutions and, for what concerns the sporting competitions, the Regional Olympic Committee and, in perspective, the national CONI (Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano- Italian National Olympic Committee) committee, as well as spokespersons of the academic, cultural and artistic world. What the organizers of the festival want to diffuse is the concept of an event focused on entertainment and mainly addressed to youth.

¹ Amartea is a cultural no-profit association founded in 2013 which operates in various fields of activity for the promotion and exploitation of the vast and diverse development potential of the Parthenopean territory and its immense cultural heritage. Its first vocation is the creation and realization of cultural events such as exhibitions, congresses, conferences, exhibitions, awards, presentations, etc. Among the more qualifying and certainly demanding proposals we find the fundraising activities, while a strategic effort is made through books and journal publications, products, multimedia and graphics concerning the productive development of the artistic, archaeological and monumental heritage, environmental resources and economics of the Campania region

² http://www.isolimpia.org/?page_id=87

The following, considering the overall organization of the Isolimpia Festival and the involved events, analyses the dimensional aspects among with the relative criticalities and opportunities that characterize the festival, in order to highlight the effectiveness of online communication and its part in the successful outcome of the festival.

4.1. The Organization

The cultural association "Amartea" besides promoting and organizing the Isolimpia festival, is also in charge of almost the totality of the organizational and managerial decisions that determine the conduct of the event³.

In the three editions held so far, Amartea, in its attempt to reproduce in a more contemporary version the Isolimpic Parthenopean games, and preserve the original context of the games, that is the simultaneous presence of sporting and artistic activities, has put together a cultural and sporting festival, unique in his kind and therefore able to create and spread great interest. As it results from the 2015 edition, among the objectives of the event we find the appreciation of the Parthenopean territory, the desire to promote young athletes and artists, the reinforcement of the relationships with the political, social, educational, cultural and sporting institutions of the city of Naples.

It is apparent that apart from Amartea, that is directly associated with festival, there are also many other actors involved with it, making the Isolimpia festival a multi-Stakeholder event. We can identify two categories of stakeholders: Primary and Secondary Stakeholders⁴. In our case study, the first category includes the institutions and authorities that have a strong influence in the city's perception of culture and education, and also all the actors associated, by any mean, with the event management, such as partners and sponsors, that cooperate in the implementation of Isolimpia providing tangible, intangible and economic resources, products and services suppliers, and last but not least, the participants of the event, the artists and athletes. Among secondary Stakeholders, however, we find the host community, composed by not only the residents but also by traders, the restaurateurs, the guesting facilities and public and emergency services; in other words, secondary Stakeholders include all the actors involved in the economic and productive structure of the Neapolitan territory. It is appropriate at this point, to put emphasis on another Stakeholder, the media that in our case study are classified as secondary Stakeholders, as their development and management has been partially outsourced to a partner company.

The three editions have been characterized by different lengths, the 2013 edition is the shortest, counting three days, continuing with the 2014 edition which was the longest, counting nine days, and the medium length 2015 edition counting five days. Differences have also been found in the locations where the festival activities were held, as they were distributed among the Parco Virgiliano, Mostra d'Oltremare and the Terme di Agnano. To conclude, all three editions shared the same core targets.

The following table gives a more schematic overview of what has been said above.

	Duration	Location	Objectives	Stakeholder		Events		
				Primary	Secondary	Sporting	Artistic and Cultural Events	Collateral
Edition 2013	3 days (20-22 September 2013)	Parco Virgiliano (Remembrance Park), Posillipo, Naples.	Propose in a contemporary version the Parthenopean isolimpic games; promote young athletes and artists; promote the Parthenopean territory.	<u>Promoter/Organizer:</u> AMARTEA cultural association. <u>Partner:</u> Greek Embassy in Rome, Honorary consulate of Greece in Naples, Campania region, Metropolitan city of Naples, Municipality of Naples, MIUR. <u>Main Partner:</u> TRANI Group srl, A.D.A.M.S. association, D. Scarlatti association, Neapolis Lab association, ICRA. <u>Participants:</u> 12 regional sports federations, 1200 athletes, 10 theater companies, 10 musical groups, 150	<u>Host community:</u> province of Naples; municipality of Naples. <u>Media:</u> Radio Club 91, Julie Italia TV, il Mezzogiorno, and Napoli-daily information online.	Boxing (under and over 18); shooting competitions with the bow; Greek roman wrestling contests, judo, karate (agonists, non-competitive, master); historically fencing-sword (under 20); weight lifting; iron arm; Athletics: speed, middle-distance race, throws, jumps (regional championships for individual students).	School companies: Performance of theater, music, dance, exposure of graphs, video, photos. Professionals companies: Performance of theater, music and dance.	Press Conference; inaugural performance; concert; "urban music" concert; dance and poetry; the final concert of Mediterranean music; editorial presentation; two photographic exhibitions; guided tours of archeology; the final awards ceremony.

³ For a detailed description of the profile and objectives of the promoters and organizers of sports events see (SORRENTINI, 2010).

⁴ Literature refers to Primary stakeholders of an event as those actors that without their support the event could not be realized; while Secondary stakeholders are defined that actors that, although not directly involved, can seriously affect or even prevent the successful outcome of the event (SORRENTINI, 2010)

				<p>artists, 12 schools, 150 students; university. <u>Sponsor and suppliers:</u> Eccellenze campane, Regalsport-Macron Store Napoli, Decathlon Casoria, Agar Sport Management, Federazione Italiana Sport ed Ambiente, L'Europa Traslochi, INOX Marine Service S.r.l. <u>Audience:</u> 3000 people.</p>				
<p>Edition 2014</p>	<p>9 days (20-28 September 2014)</p>	<p>Parco Virgiliano (Remembrance Park), Posillipo, Naples; Mostra D'oltremare, Fuorigrotta, Naples.</p>	<p>Celebrate the anniversary of the Two Thousandth Anniversary of the birth of Augustus (Special Edition), to lay the foundations for a process of internationalization of the event; promote young athletes and artists; promote the Parthenopean territory.</p>	<p><u>Promoter/Organizer:</u> AMARTEA cultural association. <u>Partner:</u> Greek Embassy in Rome, Honorary consulate of Greece in Naples, Consulate General of France in Naples, Honorary Consulate of Germany; International Olympic Academy (IOA) e Accademia Olimpica Nazionale Italiana (AONI), MIUR. <u>Main Partner:</u> TRANI Group srl, Ass. A.D.A.M.S., Ass. D. Scarlatti, Ass Neapolis Lab, ICRA. <u>Participants:</u> 16 regional sports federations, 1600 athletes, 10 theater companies, 10 musical groups, 150 artists, 20 schools, 300 students; university. <u>Sponsor and suppliers:</u> Eccellenze campane, Regalsport-Macron store Napoli, Decathlon Casoria, Agar Sport Management, Federazione Italiana Sport ed Ambiente, L'Europa Traslochi, INOX Marine Service S.r.l. <u>Audience:</u> 5600 people.</p>	<p><u>Host community:</u> province of Naples; municipality of Naples. <u>Media:</u> Radio Club 91, Julie Italia TV, il Mezzogiorno, Napoli - daily information online, RTL 102.5</p>	<p>Athletics: speed, middle-distance race, throws, jumps (regional championships for individual students); Figure skating, hockey; free style; figure skating skates; rhythmic; aerobics; gymnastics for all; acrogym; judo; table tennis; demonstration and ludic activities sports-approach to athletics; laboratories and internships free fitness and sport dance.</p>	<p>Photographic exhibition documentary; photographic exhibition; exhibitions of embodiments of the figurative arts and multimedia.</p>	<p>Press conference; inaugural performance; dialogs (international conference, national conference, literary meetings, seminars scientific-informative); exposures (vernissage, photographic exhibitions); theatrical representation; evening concerts; classical concert of charity; guided tours of archeology isolimpia tours; the final awards ceremony of the competition of school.</p>

<p>Edition 2015</p>	<p>5 days (23-27 September 2015)</p>	<p>Parco Virgiliano (Remembrance Park), Posillipo, Naples; Terme di Agnano (thermal complex of Agnano), Agnano, Naples, Mostra D'oltremare, Fuorigrotta, Naples.</p>	<p>Strengthen the "image of the event"; institutionalize the event; promote young athletes and artists; promote the Parthenopean territory.</p>	<p><u>Promoter/Organizer:</u> AMARTEA cultural association. <u>Partner:</u> Greek Embassy in Rome, Honorary consulate of Greece in Naples, Campania region, Metropolitan city of Naples, Municipality of Naples, MIUR, #BeActive, EXPO Milano 2015. <u>Main Partner:</u> TRANI Group srl, A.D.A.M.S. association, D. Scarlatti association, Neapolis Lab association, ICRA. <u>Partecipanti:</u> 16 regional sports federations, 2000 athletes, 10 theater companies, 10 musical groups, 300 artists, 12 school, 150 students. <u>Sponsor and suppliers:</u> Eccellenze campane, Regalsport-Macron Store Napoli, Decathlon Casoria, Agar Sport Management, Federazione Italiana Sport ed Ambiente, L'Europa Traslochi, INOX Marine Service S.r.l. <u>Audience:</u> 3000 people.</p>	<p><u>Host community:</u> province of Naples; municipality of Naples. <u>Media:</u> Radio Club 91, Julie Italia TV, il Mezzogiorno, and Napoli - daily information online.</p>	<p>Table tennis; tennis; subbuteo; educational boxing; personal defense; sport for all; individual sports; team sports; chess; athletics; Paralympic tournament.</p>	<p>Performances of theater, music, dance, creative writing.</p>	<p>Inaugural ceremony; conferences; exhibitions; guided tours; university conferences; workshops; stage; seminars exhibitions editorials; traveling exhibition of sport Neapolitan; exhibition of artistic works on the theme of the edition "from Parthenope to Isolimpia".</p>
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Table 1: Profile of the three editions
 Source: Our Elaboration from data provided from Amartea

4.2. The Unsatisfactory Results of the Previous Editions

In order to identify and evaluate the results of the three editions we took into account in this paper a number of quantitative parameters: the number of participants (athletes and artists), number of Federations involved, number of newspaper articles (both on-line and on paper), hours of television coverage, sponsorships revenues, partnership and institutional revenues, ticket incomes, other revenues, days of competition, number of volunteers, number of spectators, number of accredited personnel, number of "like" on the official Facebook page, number of Twitter followers, number of Instagram followers and number of subscription on official YouTube channel.

Most of the parameters listed above are also indicated in SENTEDALPS⁵, to which we considered some additional parameters that are able to determine the presence of this festival on the main social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube). This consideration appears necessary given the increasing importance that social media have acquired in recent years in the organization and management of an event (Collesei, Checchinato & Dalle Carbonare, 2014).

The data regarding the number of "like" on the Facebook page, of Twitter and Instagram followers etc. provide important information both on the effective size of the event and on the estimation of users'/spectators' experience (Higham et al., 2014.). These parameters, along with the number of newspaper articles and hours of television coverage are an expression of communication activities, while the others show the overall communication proposal of the event.

⁵ SENTENDALPS (Sport Event Network for Tourism and Economic Development of the Alpine Space), is a three-year project (2003-2006), financed by the European committee whose aim was to promote the economic and touristic development of the Alpine Arc through the organization of sporting events. It involves sixteen partners from Austria, France, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland. The project provides for the elaboration of manuals needed for the proper planning and organization of such events. These manuals concern the bidding process for an event, the overall organization of the event and to the volunteers training. (SENTENDALPS, 2005).

Even though each one of the considered parameters gives an index of the festival's size, in order to quantify the total size of the festival we must reflect on all the parameters together (Sorrentini, 2010). In addition, if the focus of the attention on a joint analysis of the parameters, we can measure the attractiveness of the festival.

The following figure shows the profiles of the three editions (2013, 2014, and 2015) of the Isolimpia festival. The areas of the polygons represent the relative sizes of the three editions, while the perimeters of the polygons highlight the different profile of each year; both measurements imply certain critical organizational and management issues as well as possible opportunities to exploit.

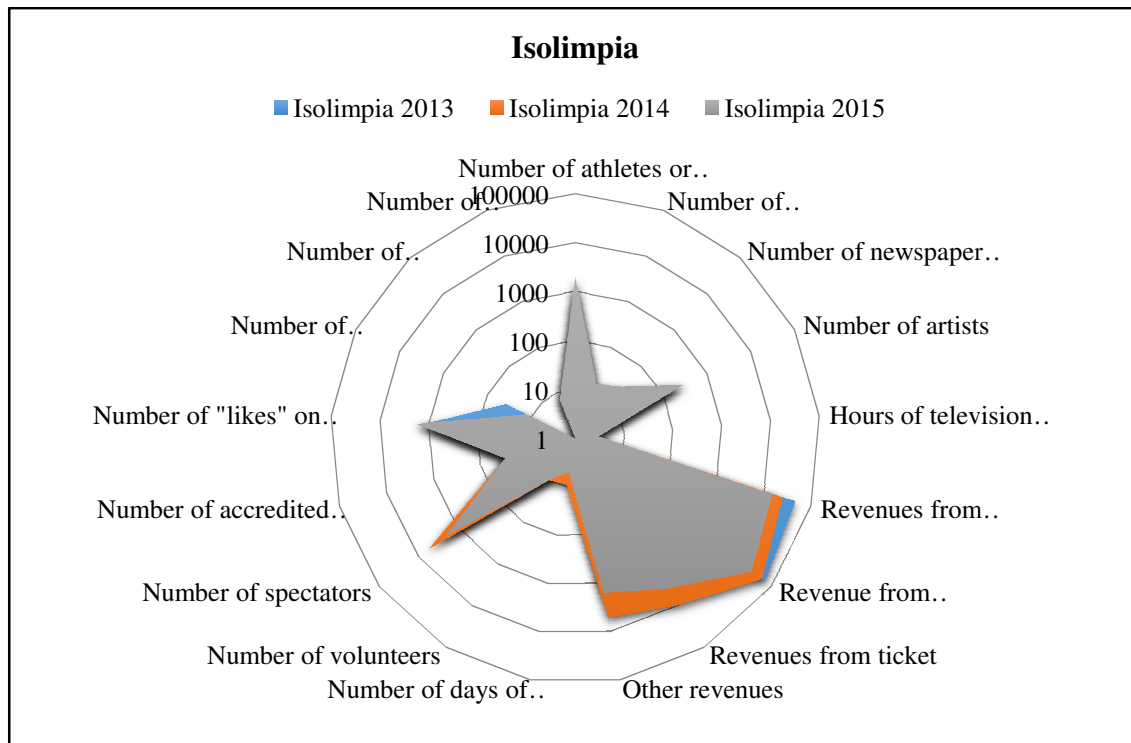


Figure 1

Source: Our elaboration from SENTEDALPS (2005)

The data used for the elaboration of the figure above are reported in Table 2.

Parameters	Isolimpia 2013	Isolimpia 2014	Isolimpia 2015
Number of athletes or participants	1200	1600	2000
Number of participating federations	12	16	16
Number of newspaper articles	24	24	27
Number of artists	200	300	300
Hours of television coverage	2	2	3
Revenues from private sponsorship	46.200	25000	14900
Revenue from partnerships and institutions	68.500	58.000	32.000
Revenues from ticket	0	10.000	4.000
Other revenues	7.000	5.200	1.600
Number of days of competition	3	9	5
Number of volunteers	10	10	10
Number of spectators	3.000	5.500	2.000
Number of accredited persons	30	30	30
Number of "likes" on Facebook official page	1321	1713	1782
Number of "followers" on Twitter Official page	38	0 (no account)	13
Number of "followers" of the official Instagram page	0 (no account)	0 (no account)	0 (no account)
Number of subscribers to YouTube channel	7	7	7

Table 2

Source: Our elaboration from Amartea official data

The data in Table 2 allow us to appreciate that in the three editions there has been a growth in the number of participants (athletes, artists or the federations themselves), that confirms the strong appeal of the festival. Probably, this confirmation reflects one of the

main objectives of the Amartea Association described above, which is to pursue, or create an opportunity for the young not professional athletes and artists to emerge and be known in the respective professional audiences.

On the other hand, the revenues denote a steady decrease in time. Apart from revenue created by the tickets sales, the remaining revenue items show a decrease of more than 50% of the total amount compared to the first edition in 2013. A further consideration in this regard is definitely the strong dependence from both sponsors and partners, whose revenues still constitute well over the 80% of total revenues, with a peak of a 92% in the first edition, which was probably caused by the absence of an entry ticket. Moreover, it is interesting to underline that the “Sponsorships revenues” and the “partnerships and institutions revenues” voices largely consist on the grant of products and/or services and only partially of actual monetary flow (Official Isolimpia Budget 2013, 2014, 2015).

The considerations above are supported by the analysis of the number of spectators that have been decreasing through the editions. More specifically, we estimated an average turnout of 1000 spectators per day in the 2013 edition, 610 in the 2014 edition, reaching its minimum during the 2015 edition that counted an average turnout of 400 spectators per day. During a direct interview, the President of the Amartea Association mentioned that the majority of the spectators attending the festival were people directly or indirectly related with the young athletes.

It is clear that despite the increase of participants, the considerable decrease of the spectators has certainly reduced the sponsors’, partners’ and institutions’ willingness to invest on the festival. The data regarding the communication strategy adopted in the three editions confirm the above situation. Even though the festival is considered as exclusive in its kind, the television coverage is not only limited but also assured by local television and web channels with a limited audience.

Much the same situation stands for the large number of newspaper articles that, although a slight increase in the 2015 edition, are not in line with the dimensional ambitions of the event; over more it needs to be highlighted the absence of a press report for the 2014 edition.

Last but not least, the entries concerning the web communication, and more specifically the social media communication, show that the social platform mainly followed is Facebook, while the others, not only indicate a limited users’ participation but also show some important criticalities. The Twitter account was active only for 2013 and 2015 edition and has registered a reduction of followers of about 65%; yet, there is no active Instagram account and the YouTube channel subscriptions have not varied since the 2013 edition. Even though there are other social platforms widely used, such as Flickr, Google+, Pinterest, Foursquare and Vimeo, they have not been included in the Table 2, as the organizers of the event have not attempted to create an account yet.

The analysis of the dimensional data of the three editions and meticulous study of the respective budgets, along with the information gathered from a direct interview with the Amartea association president, have determined the development of a SWOT analysis of the Isolimpia Festival in its whole.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historicity of the event • Artistic, cultural and sporting interest of the festival • Number of participants growing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication recently developed and managed • Absence of a social media strategy • Reduced number of associates and volunteers to Amartea • Absence of collateral events between an edition and the other
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibilities of collaboration with the institutions/ creating a network • Facilitating logistics guaranteed by the presence of numerous structures of accommodation, hospitality and hotel • independent tourist flows from the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of a very efficient network of public transport • Strong dependence on sponsors and partners • Plant ill-suited to the festival • Obstacles for sustainable growth (contraction of revenues)

*Table 3: SWOT Analysis
Source: Our elaboration*

The strongest aspect of the festival is its historic relevance. In fact, the ancient games that the organization aim to revive, were held back in the time of the Roman Empire in Neàpolis (Naples) and were able to gather participants from all around the then known world. Another point of strength is the festival’s type. The festival is a result of the combination of sporting and artistic/ cultural events, making the offer by far more unique compared to what similar events in the territory have to offer. As stated so far is in close correlation with the high willingness of athletes and emerging athletes to participate.

Moreover, promoting the festival in prospective of an economic, touristic and territorial development creates a fertile ground in order to institutionalize it. In fact, the Amartea association intend to involve fully and actively all the local and regional institutions, currently involved only partially. In addition, for what concerns the sporting competitions, the support of the Regional Olympic Committee and CONI (Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano- Italian National Olympic Committee) is determinant. This involvement gives the opportunity to use public and federation facilities at zero cost, causing an increase in monetary revenue. Furthermore, the combined action of all this institutional agent enables a more efficient management of the touristic flows arriving in Naples regardless of the festival, but creating at the same time an indirect benefit for the event by increasing the number of people that

would be willing to attend the festival. If what suggested occurs, all the hotel and reception facilities situated nearby the venues of the festival would also profit.

However, an inefficient public transportation network, the lack of appropriate sporting facilities and most importantly the strong influence of sponsors and partners in the organizational and managerial process of the festival, hindering a sustainable growth of the same threaten the flourish of the above opportunities. The inefficient public transportation network influences both the choice of the location that the festivals' activities are going to take place and the time management. The location choice has to be made not considering the actual kilometric distance but time need to reach the location via public transportation. For what concerns the sporting facilities, most of the venues available do not meet the festivals criteria and the organization does not have the financial opportunity to invest in their renewal or reconstruction. This lack of financial availability is directly related to the festivals strong dependency from its sponsors and partners. The situation described above entails a limitation on the managerial autonomy of promoters/organizers, which appears to be subject to the availability and willingness of the stakeholders to participate in the event as such. In fact, a decrease on the resources made available by the latter triggered an increase of the management criticalities and a drop of the number of spectators.

Finally, yet importantly, the lack of a well-structured communication strategy and mainly of a social media strategy, the sparse number of Amartea associates and volunteers and the absence of related events in between the official editions furtherly compromise the outcome of the festival. For its many managerial, organizational and logistical aspects, the festival Isolimpia would require additional qualified members and volunteers in order to enforce its human resources, as currently the overall operative activities are carried out by a limited number of people, for the most with generic skills. Furthermore, there has never been realized an official affiliation campaign that would allow creating a budget addressed specifically to the volunteer's human resources department. In this regard, the organization of collateral events, like fundraising dinners, in between the official editions are determinant for the promotion of the festival and the Amartea's association mission in general. At this time, all the activities regarding both the communication and promotion of the event are realized strictly during the festival. Such criticality is the result of the poorly structured communication strategy and the complete absence of a social media strategy. This communication deficiency not only compromises the pursuit of the financial and social goals but also creates further obstacles. Today, the use and knowledge of web 2.0 potentials is determinant in the management and organization of a successful event. More specifically, the opportunity to post multimedia material such as photos and videos, on the web has represented a turning point for the festivals evolution. In past years, recordings and photographic services were mainly made for archival and/or documentary purposes, starting from 2011 were used specifically as a communication tool to be used on social networks. In addition, the effective presence of an active social network account strengthens the relationship between the festival and its audience even after the conclusion of the event, enhancing the customer loyalty in the medium-long period (Guerzoni et al., 2015).

It is evident that if this issue were not addressed in the short-term, the revenues will continue to decrease compromising both the sustainable event management and its attractiveness, despite its strong potential.

In this regard, the analysis proceeds with the detailed study of the current communication strategy, for then propose a social media strategy model aimed to exploit the festivals full potential.

4.3. The Communication Phase: Prospects of Development

The current communications strategy is developed using two distinctive approaches: on the one hand the "traditional" communication, that includes all "classic" media such as television, radio, daily and periodic newspapers, posters, etc., which has been outsourced to a company, partner of the festival; and on the other hand, the "on-line" communication, determined by the evolution and diffusion of internet and especially from the rapid development of social network, that has been managed internally by the promoters/organizers.

At first sight, the direct management of the on-line communication may seem appropriate as it facilitates the pursuit of a competitive advantage by exploiting the concept of interactivity⁶, but it undergoes the negativity effects of the lack on human resources with specific expertise in the management and development of this communication tool.

The analysis of the allocation of the financial resources destined to support the communicative area (Table 4) reflect what stated; in fact, aside the evident decrease in the interest and willingness to invest in communication, there is no budget destined to innovative communication activities.

	ISOLIMPIA 2013	ISOLIMPIA 2014	ISOLIMPIA 2015
COMUNICACION	FUND AMOUNT	FUND AMOUNT	FUND AMOUNT
Video, report e presentations	8000	6900	4000
Television and radio advertising	4000	3500	2000
Press Office	2000	1700	1000
Bill Posting	6000	5100	3000
Poster, brochures, flyers	1200	1000	1000

*Table 4: Communication funds
Source: isolimpia official balances*

⁶ Consult in this regard (Sorrentini, 2015).

The current situation is in contrast with the strategic and managerial behaviour that determined the development and success of the festivals in general in the past years, where the use of the web and social media is growing rapidly and many organizations tend to engage more resources and time in the realization of social media channels in order to strengthen the interaction with their stakeholders (Gorry & Westbrook, 2009; Siano, 2012; Tiu Wright et al, 2006). In addition, a study published by Guerzoni et al. (2015) regarding an inquiry on the main international cultural festivals shows that since 2011-12, 95% of the analysed festival already communicating via internet, were present on the web with their official site and had an active account on social networks. Facebook results to be the most popular among social networks: in fact, the totality of festivals present on the web have an active Facebook account, followed by Twitter with used by 71% of the analysed festivals, YouTube 66% and Flickr 15%. This strong presence of festival on a variety of social platforms demonstrates how the organizers of this type of events have well understood the enormous potential and possibilities of an intelligent and careful use of these platforms. Their efficient management and appropriate use determined the success of countless festivals. The South by Southwest Austin Texas⁷, for example, owes its popularity to Twitter, or the Glasgow International⁸ which, through the continuous updating of their Facebook page with photographic and multimedia material, getting the attention not only of the spectators, but also of artists, specialists and contemporary art lovers, reaching in the last edition (2014), 52 exhibitions and 90 events distributed in 50 different locations. Still, an additional example of considerable importance is represented by the Manchester International⁹, which gave the possibility to follow in real time a part of the festivals events, via a link available to the audience registered on the festivals official pages on social network platforms, drawing the attention of numerous sponsors.

As previously analysed, the data regarding the festival’s social media are not in line with the festivals industry standards, which represent the primary issue to be addressed in order to allow the festival’s growth over time. In this regard, it is proposed an appropriate social media strategy model.

In line to what express ed in literature, a successful social media strategy, cannot present from the identification of the objective to pursue, from the identification of target audience and of course the choice of the more suitable social platform (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Mahan et al., 2015; Solima, 2010; Waters et al., 2009).

More specifically, with regard to the analysed characteristics, the social media strategy could be developed as follows in Figure 2.

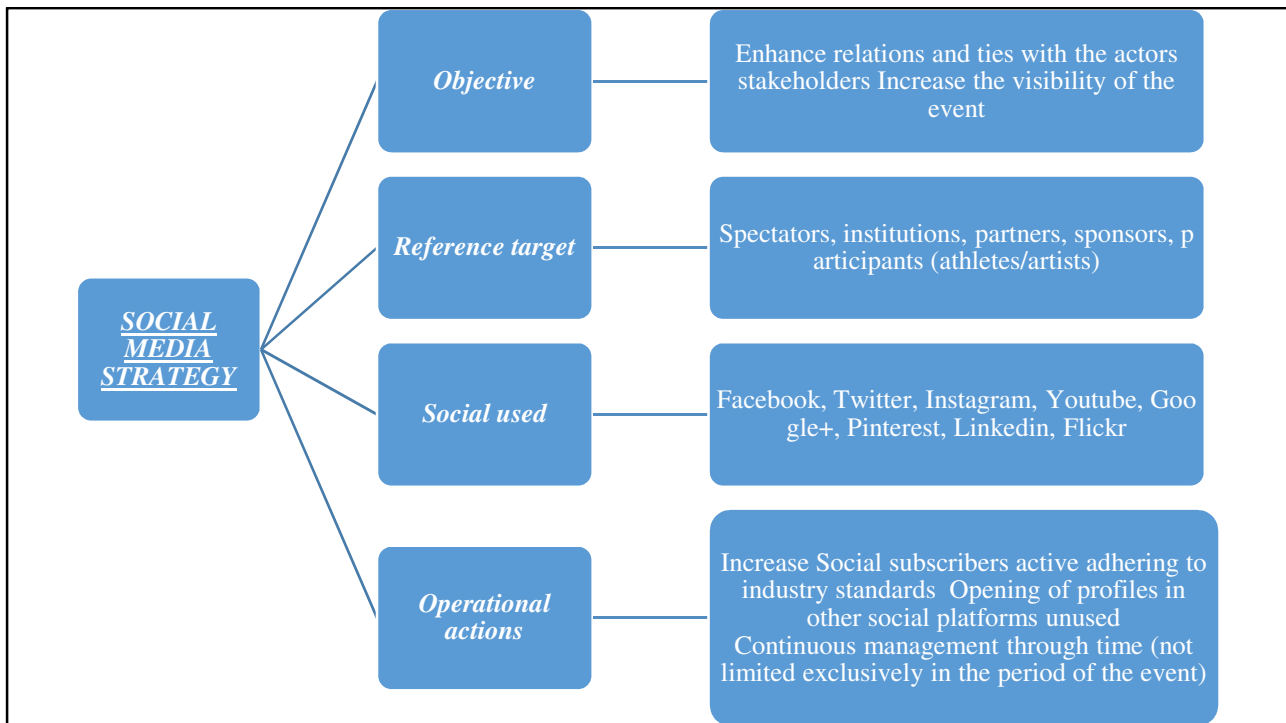


Figure 1: Social Media Strategy

Source: Our elaboration

⁷ The South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conferences & Festivals Austin Texas is a festival of mixed nature that includes musical events, film of independent production and exhibitions of emerging technologies.

⁸ Glasgow International, born in 2005 in Glasgow, Scotland, is a biennial exhibition dedicated to contemporary art.

⁹ Manchester International, born in 2007, is defined as the most radical and important artistic festival today, and is the first festival in the world who commissioned works created especially for the event.

The pursuit of the objectives assumed, would allow the organisers/promoters to fully seize the opportunities highlighted in the SWOT Analysis. Firstly, the creation of network involving both private and public institutions, ensuring a change of the negative trend both in terms of spectator's number and revenues. The increase in the Isolimpia Festival notoriety and the consequent increase of the economic potential would limit the dependency of the management activities from partners and sponsors exploiting the festival's strengths. Thus, creating a virtuous circle, that starting from the strengthening relationship with the stakeholders will read to a managerial autonomy, allowing the promoters/organizers to rely on more financial resources; at this point, such resources could be invested in promotional and development activities (Figure 3)

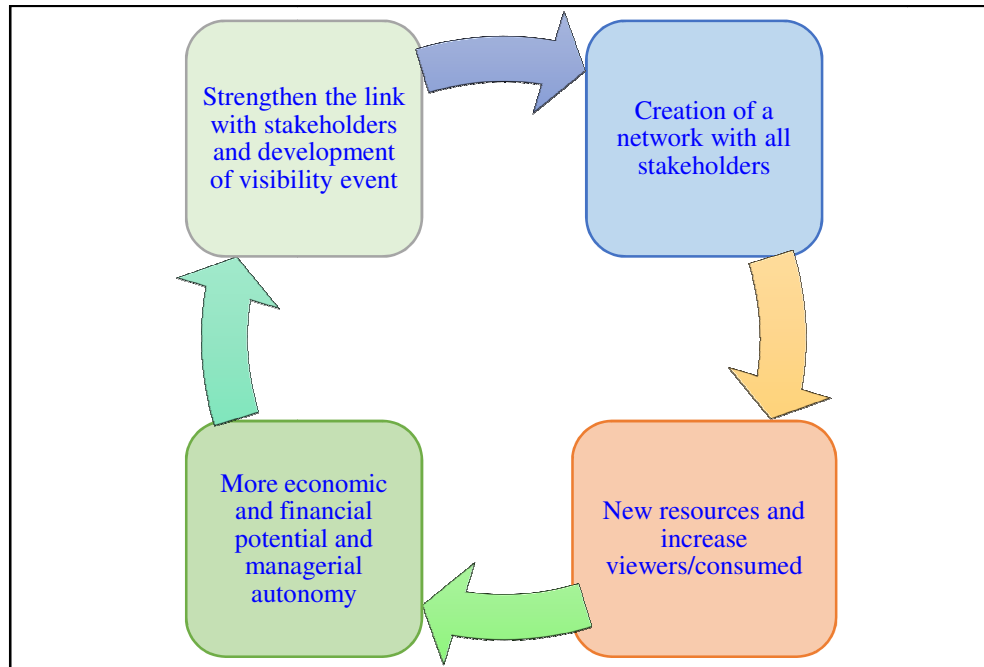


Figure 3: Virtuous Circle
Source: Our Elaboration

In order to pursue such objectives, the information provided through the available communication channels, must be addressed not only to the participants or the potential spectators, as it currently is, but also to all the private and public institutions, partners and sponsors able to create both interest for the event and increase of financial resources.

The overall communication strategy requires the combination of the available social network platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube and Flickr. For what concerns our case study, there must be created accounts on the platforms not yet used and increase the number of the subscribers on the already active ones, in order to meet the festival's industry criteria.

To implement the theory set, it is necessary to overcome the main managerial and organizational deficiencies through the enrolment of personnel qualified in online communication and most important, by keeping the account, official pages and channels updated and interactive throughout the year and not limited to the days of the festival. In this way, thanks to an efficiency of the communication process, it is likely to restrain the decline that characterized the first three editions of the festival Isolimpia, exploiting its huge potential.

5. Conclusions

From the case examined, it is possible to draw some conclusions about festivals in general and some specific for the Isolimpia Festival. Currently the organization and management of a festival, like in other types of events, cannot lack an efficient use of communication and most important, of on-line communication. In fact, the main causes for the unsatisfactory results of the Isolimpia Festival editions held so far (considering the goals set regarding the growth of the Parthenopean territory, the willingness to promote young artists and athletes, the reinforcement of the relationships between political, social, scholastic, cultural and sport authorities on the city of Naples) appear to reside in the inadequacy of the overall communication activities. For what concerns the Isolimpia Festival, it must be said that before engaging to define an appropriate social media strategy for the editions to come, the promoters/organizers of the festival must include in the communication activities qualified personnel, capable to provide professional guidance both in the construction of the forthcoming events and in the operative activities ex-ante (communication, sponsor research, partnerships involvement, etc.). The adjustment of the assembly of the organizers along with an appropriate social media strategy lead to the creation of a network including all the private and public institutions currently interested in the event. As a result, this network could guarantee a change in the negative picture of the past editions in terms of both number of spectators and revenues. The increase in the Isolimpia Festival notoriety and the consequent increase of economic potential would limit the dependency of the management activities from partners and sponsors giving a greater management and financial autonomy to the promoter/organizers. At this point, the promoter/organizers of the festival could invest this money in activities aimed to grow the festival in all its aspects. In conclusion,

indication for further could be an ex-post evaluation of the results achieved through the extension of the set of the organizers and the social media strategy proposal and the comparison with what previously assumed.

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