

Title: Special Events for Brand Communication of Business Corporations in Thailand

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Abstract*

Previously, the research in special events focused on the study of strategies or efficiency of individual events. However, this research tried to understand the management of special events for brand communication in a holistic manner in order to seek out the pattern and conduct of special events for brand communication in Thailand.

The research objectives were to explore the meaning of special events for brand communication and the factors the event practitioners using as guidelines to create special events, the format of special events and the procedure of special events management, the relationship between creativity and special events for brand communication, and the important skills of Thai practitioners in special event management. The Grounded Theory was applied as a main research methodology. Data was derived from the observation in 11 created special events of business corporations and the observation as participant in an event organiser, as well as in-depth interviews with 6 practitioners. Data from three methods was triangulated to answer five research questions. Results were as follows.

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1) Special events for brand communication were one of the two-way communication methods. With the unique characteristic, they created first-hand experience to target audience through five senses - form, taste, smell, sound and touch - in order to provide interaction between target audience and the brand. To create special events, the practitioners commonly considered three important factors: communication objectives, target audience and key messages.

2) The formats of special events found in this study included Product Launch, Press Launch, Thank-you Party, CSR Events, Media Events, Dealer Conferences, Concerts, Exhibitions, Internal Conferences and Road Shows.

3) The procedure of special event management fell into four stages, starting from research, detailed planning, execution and evaluation.

4) Creativity was the significant element in the special event management and played the major role in proposal design process. However, the creativity must serve organisation's marketing strategies as well. Therefore, special events not only communicated brand creatively, but also reflected brand identity.

5) The important skills for Thai practitioners in special event management included 7 skills, namely knowledge, management, problem-solving, teamwork, communication, computer, and personal qualification such as hard-working, fast learning, or attention to details.