

SECTION 1

Understand the event, conference and exhibitions environment in the UK



Icebreaker

This unit investigates the events, conferences and exhibitions industry – from music festivals and corporate hospitality to wedding fairs and business conferences. Working by yourself, or in small groups under the direction of your tutor, see how you get on with the following tasks to help you make a start on this unit:

- Name three types of venues used for events, conferences and exhibitions;
- What is a 'product launch'?
- Give examples of two other travel and tourism industries that the events, conferences and exhibitions industry works with;
- What health and safety factors would the management of a hotel need to consider when staging a wedding fair?
- Name two purpose-built exhibition centres in the UK;
- Make a list of the facilities that a hotel which is considering hosting business meetings and mini-conferences would need to offer its corporate customers;
- What impact are developments in technology having on the event, conference and exhibitions industry?

When you've finished, show your answers to your tutor and compare your answers with what other students in your class have written.

The events, conferences and exhibitions industry is an important part of the UK travel and tourism scene, not least because it is a year-round industry that creates jobs and contributes to economic development in all parts of the UK. This section of the unit focuses on the events, conferences and exhibitions industry in detail, starting with an investigation of different types of events.

Types of event

Events take place for a wide variety of reasons. Including:

- Corporate hospitality;
- Team-building events;
- Incentives;
- Fundraising;

- Product launches;
- Music events and festivals;
- Wedding fairs;
- Reunions.



Sponsored walks are a popular way to raise funds

Corporate hospitality

Corporate hospitality is a specialist industry within travel and tourism that focuses on providing events, hospitality and entertainment to business clients. It may be offered as a reward to a customer for placing business with a company or to encourage businesses that are not yet customers to deal with the company. It is also seen as a good way for a company to network and make new business contacts. Corporate events take many forms – from lavish events at Wimbledon or the Henley Regatta to the owner of a business inviting his or her bank manager for a meal in a local restaurant. Many corporate hospitality functions are centred around sports events, such as golf championships, cricket, tennis, rugby and football matches. There are many specialist companies that handle all the arrangements for corporate events, from sending out invitations and ‘meet and greet’ services to providing catering and entertainment.

Team-building events

Team-building events are used by companies to help staff bond and work together, thereby helping to improve productivity in the workplace. They often involve team challenges in the countryside, for example raft-building, orienteering and quad biking. Some team-building events are held on company premises or in nearby hotels, e.g. cooking challenges and drumming workshops.

Incentives

Incentives are offered to employees as a reward for meeting a specific work target or goal. The incentive may be a luxury holiday, short break or day out at a sporting event, e.g. Ascot races or Wimbledon. Companies implement incentive programmes to drive sales, increase profits, improve service, enhance staff morale, retain staff or provide high-profile recognition to individuals. Being a recipient of an incentive travel award conveys status and prestige on the winner. More and more businesses now recognise the value of incentives and design performance plans for employees, with specific objectives and measures of success related to incentive rewards. There is a sizeable industry that has grown to serve the needs



FOCUS ON INDUSTRY

TEAM-BUILDING EVENTS

With more than 20 years of experience, Progressive Resources is one of the leading corporate team-building and event management companies in the UK. The company delivers corporate team-building events and related activities such as conferences, motivational days, themed training events, corporate entertainment and corporate hospitality. Its activities are designed to promote teamwork, team bonding, leadership skills and team performance. They address the needs of groups of people ranging from 5 to 500 delegates.

Progressive Resources work in partnership with a variety of UK team-building venues and hotels to deliver bespoke team development activities, ranging from ice breakers to full-blown indoor team-building events and outdoor activities.

The company's offices are located close to both the New Forest National Park and also the Solent sailing area, allowing the company to offer treasure hunts in the forest and corporate sailing days, RIB (rigid inflatable boat) treasure hunts and luxury powerboat days around the Isle of Wight. Many of the venues used by Progressive Resources are within easy travelling distance from most southern UK locations and an hour and a half from London. The company also provides London team-building activities and away days, for example a London treasure hunt, which can be undertaken on foot or by public transport, and a River Thames RIB trip.

Weblink Check out this website for more information on team-building events at Progressive Resources.
 www.teambuilding.co.uk

of companies looking to offer incentives to staff, for example incentive travel companies and agencies. Customers are also offered incentives to buy particular products or to remain loyal to a specific company, e.g. free upgrades on flights and cruises.



Activity 17.1

Carry out some research into a company that specialises in incentives. Produce an illustrated leaflet that describes the company and the types of products it offers.

This activity is designed to provide evidence for P1.

Weblink Check out these websites for examples of companies listing music (and other) events.



www.gigsandtours.com;
www.seetickets.com;
www.ticketmaster.co.uk

Fundraising

Organisations and private individuals hold fundraising events to generate extra revenue for charities and good causes, e.g. cancer charities, the refurbishment of a local church, etc. These vary from charity auctions to adventure trips organised by major charities, such as cycle trips around South America and sky diving in the UK.

Product launches

Companies sometimes organise events to launch new products and services, e.g. a local council running a series of events in shopping centres to publicise new recycling services or a car company showcasing its latest model. These may be trade or consumer events, i.e. restricted to business only or open to the public generally.

Music events and festivals

Music festivals and events appeal to a wide variety of people. Events such as the Glastonbury Festival and V Festival tend to be most popular with young people, while classical music concerts generally attract an older customer profile, e.g. opera at Glyndebourne and the BBC Proms in the Albert Hall, London. Details of forthcoming music events and festivals can be found in music magazines such as the NME and BBC Music Magazine, as well as on ticket agents' websites. Working as a paid member of staff or a volunteer at a music event or festival is a good way of finding out how they are run.

Wedding fairs

Wedding fairs tend to be local events that give prospective brides and grooms the chance to see a range of services in one location, usually a hotel that itself hosts weddings. Companies that offer wedding photography, printed invitations, flowers, catering, honeymoon ideas, wedding cars, etc. pay to exhibit at the fair in the expectation of selling their products and services.

Reunions

The growth of websites such as Friends Reunited has boosted the popularity of reunions of school friends, former work colleagues, etc. They often bring together people from a wide geographical area who need accommodation and hospitality services during their stay.

Types of conference

Conferences give the people attending (delegates) the opportunity of learning more about products and subjects, while providing an excellent opportunity to network with colleagues and business contacts.

Political conferences

Every autumn in the UK the main political parties hold their annual conferences to set out their priorities for the coming year. These have traditionally been held in seaside resorts such as Brighton, Bournemouth and Blackpool, bringing extra revenue for conference companies and hotels out of the peak holiday season. More recently cities such as Manchester and Liverpool have played hosts to the main parties. The 2010 Labour Party conference was held in the heart of Manchester