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# **Developing Festival Management Studies: How a framework will further assert this field as an emancipated management discipline**



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## **ABSTRACT**

Event management is a field within project management studies that applies its principles and theories to events. These events include sports championships, conferences, fairs, and festivals. Nevertheless, a recent interest has described festivals as a particular type of event that should be studied separately from everything else. In order to further contribute to this idea, a festival management framework was developed, and tested within MOTELX – Lisbon International Horror Film Festival. This paper aims to further assert festival management as an emancipated study field deriving from project management and to provide festival organizers with a robust tool to use in the future.

Keywords: festival, framework, management, project

## **INTRODUCTION**

Project management is a field within management studies that analyzes the application of methods to achieve project objectives and has quickly become a business process affecting every functional unit of an organization, increasingly seen as mandatory for the survival of any organization (Kerzner, 2009). As stated in the Project Management Book of Knowledge (PMBOK), a project is a “series of activities and tasks that have a specific objective to be completed within certain specifications; have defined start and end dates; have funding limits (if applicable); consume human and nonhuman resources (i.e., money, people, equipment); are multifunctional (i.e., cut across several functional lines)” (Kerzner, 2009).

Given these definitions, events have always been qualified as being some type of project. Nevertheless, given their very specific nature, event management quickly emerged as a discipline

on its own with an attempt to develop a separate body of knowledge. But even within the more condensed area of event management, festivals have more recently been discussed as also requiring a more specific structure and theoretical approach. Few authors have yet begun to tackle this issue and attempted to provide a developed and robust festival management framework.

The purpose of this research is to contribute to these efforts and further establish a proved and tried festival management framework by using the Design Science Research Methodology (DSRM). Due to the lack of possibility to implement the framework in a variety of festivals, this method applies a specific problem-solving sequence of activities that allows to evaluate the developed work. The framework was tested within MOTELX – Lisbon International Horror Film Festival to complement the research with a practical analysis. Working directly with the organization and production teams, the framework was analyzed during the preparation months and the days of the festival (see Appendix 1 for a timeline of the work developed). This execution will lead to the concluding observations of the final chapter on how to further enhance the framework for future implementations.

This paper is structured following the DSRM, starting with a chapter on the “Related Work”, which covers the problem’s state of the art, providing a literature review of published works to acknowledge the previous research on the subject. Then, the “Research Problem” chapter clearly identifies the problem that will be addressed, giving a first glimpse of the research questions to which the paper will try to answer. After this, the “Proposal” chapter presents an attempt to solve the problem previously established. Next, the “Demonstration” chapter will show how the proposal will be implemented. Finally, the “Evaluation” chapter compares the results with the initial research questions to conclude the paper with an assessment of the proposal.

## RELATED WORK

As defined by Kerzner (2009), projects are deemed multifunctional, since their purpose entails a cross-function common effort within the organization. With this in mind, it is assumed that project management can be applied to a vast variety of fields and industries that set out to implement a novelty within their normal line of work. Common examples are the implementation of new software in the IT industry, building an apartment complex in the construction industry, organizing a conference in the corporate industry, but less common examples include organizing a festival in the cultural industry or an international championship in the sports industry.

The latter examples were more commonly found within the literature relating specifically to events, where project management methodology is also applied. Nevertheless, event management has only been more recently evolving as a recognized field of management and for this reason sources are less abundant. Event management is described as “[...] the planning and production of all types of events, including meetings and conventions, exhibitions, festivals and other cultural celebrations, sport competitions, entertainment spectaculars, private functions, and numerous other special events” (Getz, 2005). This particular industry has been increasingly professionalized, as can be attested by the growing number of event related courses seen in all levels of education, and has continuously searched to become an emancipated study field, a separate area to be considered individually with its own specifications and objectives.

William J. O’Toole expressed the need for an Event Management Book of Knowledge (EMBOK) in his Master Thesis already in 1999 and was soon joined by Julia Rutherford Silvers, who had been researching the core competencies of event management, to create the EMBOK Project in 2003. In 2004, a first EMBOK Imbizo gathered academic and practitioner experts to develop “a conceptual framework for a common international event management body of knowledge that

may be customized to meet the needs of various cultures, governments, education programs, and organizations” (Rutherford Silvers, 2004). An EMBOK Model was developed as a framework with three dimensions (Domains, Phases, and Processes) and core values that work as principles permeating all aspects of the process and that must be infused throughout all decisions (Rutherford Silvers, 2007).

Unfortunately, this initiative has not been much developed since, giving way to yet another issue within event management literature. The few sources available, and the EMBOK itself, tend to focus on more corporate-oriented events and when these do gravitate towards the cultural side of business, they usually focus on sports events or tourism (Connell, 2012; Jago, Dwyer, Lipman, van Lill & Vorster, 2010; Leonardsen, 2007; O’Toole, 2000; Rutherford Silvers, 2007; Sport Assist). The few articles that tackle other cultural events, however, relate specifically to festival management and these will be the focus of this paper: Andersson & Getz, 2008; Carlsen & Andersson, 2011; Carlsen, Andersson, Ali-Knight, Jarger & Taylor, 2010; Getz, Andersson & Carlsen, 2010; Litvin, Pan & Smith, 2013; Mosely & Mowatt, 2011; Smith, Litvin, Canberg & Tomas, 2010.

Donald Getz, Tommy Andersson, and Jack Carlsen (2010) argue that festival management is only similar to event management when it comes to general concepts and methods. Truly, festivals must be viewed differently due to their focus on celebration and gathering, while other events relate more to the marketing, business and politics departments (Getz, Andersson & Carlsen, 2010). For this reason, any type of event that falls into this category should have its own structure that corresponds to its complexity and individual needs. Carlsen and Andersson (2011) further state that festivals have rarely been managed strategically and that the field of festival studies is largely devoid of any literature with reference to management strategies or a detailed

analysis of the management challenges that festivals face. Even more problematic is the lack of research concerning the variation in the types of festivals, which ultimately leads to variations in management processes (Carlsen and Andersson, 2011). Indeed, while all festivals may be developed in similar fashion, each one will have its own attributes, market conditions, and structural characteristics that will impact management and strategic choices.

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Based mainly on Andersson, Carlsen, and Getz's studies (2010 & 2011), this paper aims to contribute to event management theory and further develop the field of festival management by providing an answer to the following problem: How to contribute to the study of festivals and further assert this field as an emancipated management discipline?

To solve this issue, it was necessary to develop a tool that would not only be useful when applied within festivals, but would also give the study field the necessary legitimacy to be considered as a management discipline. Based on the literature review, it seemed that the development of a framework specifically designed for festival organization would fully serve the purpose. Ultimately, the goal of this research is to provide all festival organizers with a more robust strategic plan for their event, as a festival management framework has yet to be established.

Just as the EMBOK incorporated aspects of project management into event management by adapting and diversifying wherever necessary, this festival management framework was also built upon existing theories and strategies, but adjusting to fit the more specific world of festivals. The framework will then be applied and tested, receiving feedback and perfecting the proposed structure before it can formally be introduced into the existing body of knowledge as a consistent and valid proposal.

# PROPOSAL

The proposed festival management framework will use the five phases developed by the EMBOK based on the project management simplified framework: Initiation – Planning – Implementation – The Event – Closure. These were adapted and complemented by aspects portraying more specifically to the case of festivals, when necessary.

These phases, derived from traditional project management methodology, show a sequence of activities that need to be applied in a determined order to properly carry out the event (Rutherford Silvers, 2007). Firstly, the overall festival needs to be defined during the initiation phase. This is a development phase where goals and objectives will be determined to set the theme for the following phases. Then, planning of the festival can begin, where all the necessary steps and tasks will be defined to ensure a well-organized event. The implementation phase subsequently puts the previously established plan into motion and gathers all necessary resources to achieve the final output. After, comes what the author designates as the event phase but what will be called the festival phase for the purpose of establishing a framework specifically for festival management. This is the phase where the event will actually take place and where the results will be evaluated. Finally, the closure phase will wrap up everything and see the festival come to an end.

While developing these phases, it quickly became clear that several activities are actually transversal and relevant to several different stages of the management process. For this reason, the framework is actually built as a matrix, with five streams of activities to be developed in each according phase. These streams are the meetings, the execution of the planning, controlling and monitoring, and finally risk management. These can be seen as the major aspects to be taken into

consideration while carrying out each phase of the framework that will generate all tasks to be developed during the management process.

Figure 1 illustrates how the framework is to be applied. The five phases should ideally follow a waterfall model, where each phase immediately follows another in a sequence. However, in practice, the planning and the implementation phase tend to overlap during the process. This means that, very often, some activities will already be put into motion while others are still being developed. When everything is thought-out and prioritized, this poses no difficulty to the organization process.

Figure 1: Festival management framework

	<b>Initiation</b>	<b>Planning</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>The Festival</b>	<b>Closure</b>
<b>Meetings</b>					
<b>Execution</b>					
<b>Monitor &amp; Control</b>					
<b>Risk management</b>					

Meetings have to be carried out all along the framework, as they are crucial to assess the festival’s evolution every step of the way. Each phase, however, requires different types of meetings – in the beginning they will be more of a brainstorming kind, while in the later phases they will be useful for managing and overseeing everything. Monitoring and controlling is also essential as the management team should always be aware of constraints and possible problems until the very last day of the festival, in order to remediate if necessary. Risk management goes hand in hand with monitoring and controlling, as it is what allows the management team to be prepared to take corrective actions when problems occur. This is a fundamental activity in festival management that differs from the general project management dynamic. Projects

generally have the possibility to be cancelled or postponed when something goes completely wrong, even though this situation is never ideal; but this is extremely difficult to put into motion for festivals, especially once it has already begun. There are too many things at stake and too many people involved; such extreme situations should only occur under extreme and unavoidable conditions. If something goes wrong, “the show must go on”, as is said, and having a robust risk management plan can avoid big catastrophes.

Table 1 details the framework with the different actions that take place within each set of activities. It serves as a guideline that festival organizers can follow to ensure they have thought of all preparatory acts and all possible outcomes. The detailed description of these streams of activities explicitly states what is expected in each phase (see Appendix 2). However, not all festivals are required to follow through every single activity to its full potential. Within each phase, each one will acknowledge and determine what best suits the event and what makes sense to the organization process.

Table 1: Detailed festival management framework

	Initiation	Planning	Implementation	The Festival	Closure
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Profile of the festival               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goals and expectations</li> <li>• General scope</li> <li>• Identify stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Brainstorming meetings</li> <li>- Build festival management team and assign roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kick-off meeting</li> <li>- Team meetings               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule tasks and activities</li> <li>• Develop program</li> <li>• Marketing and communications plan</li> <li>• Budget plan</li> <li>• Operations plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Stakeholder meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow-up team meetings to monitor progress</li> <li>- Informative stakeholder meetings to discuss possible deviations and negotiate necessary adaptations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team and stakeholder meetings to monitor festival and discuss potential issues</li> <li>- Emergency meetings when necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Team meetings to validate completed tasks and prepare final report</li> <li>- Stakeholder meeting to close-up and ensure all went according to plan</li> </ul>
Execution			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launch marketing and communications</li> <li>- Secure resources               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monetary funds</li> <li>• Human resources</li> <li>• Material equipment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set up infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Release resources</li> <li>- Write final report</li> </ul>

<b>Monitor &amp; Control</b>	Barriers and Constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The market</li> <li>• Supply and demand</li> <li>• Policies and regulations</li> </ul>	Barriers and Constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The market</li> <li>• Supply and demand</li> <li>• Policies and regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schedule deviations</li> <li>- Budget deviations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor festival progress             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget deviations</li> <li>• Schedule deviations</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Measure impact             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Festival evaluation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Risk management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultural and community influences             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associations</li> <li>• Government institutions</li> <li>• Neighborhood</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Conflict management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal conflicts</li> <li>• External conflicts</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Risk management plan             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential risks and threats</li> <li>• Contingency plan</li> <li>• Uncertainty management</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Emergency communication plan</li> <li>- Conflict management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compliance and insurance management</li> <li>- Uncertainty management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingency plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Change management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update festival documentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Conflict management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and safety management</li> <li>- Uncertainty management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contingency plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Change management             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update festival documentation</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Conflict management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and safety management</li> </ul>

## DEMONSTRATION

The framework was tested within MOTELX that celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016. Even though most types of festivals have a similar set up process and make use of similar principals, it should be noted that the following interpretation has to be read carefully, as each festival must be aware of its individual needs, which may vary.

MOTELX aims to stimulate the production of genre films in Portugal, while also screening the best of Horror produced all around the world. It also provides its audience with educational workshops and masterclasses on subjects related to cinema and moviemaking, for both the younger crowd, namely in the Big Bad Wolf section, and the adult audience. The festival's program is further complemented by the Warm-Up days in anticipation of the event, where concerts, open-air screenings and exhibitions take place, and by all other parallel events that occur during the days of the festival, such as special screenings and parties.

Because MOTELX has already become a household name in the local festival scene, it is safe to say that it already applies some sort of structure to each new edition but doesn't yet have a defined framework to follow. It is, therefore, important to notice that many steps of this framework are just naturally already implemented within MOTELX because of the obvious need to apply them to run any type of festival. Hence, the production team can easily retain its current practices and simply add what is lacking to have a more robust structure to follow in the future. The first two preparatory phases, consequently, are relatively short, as the festival is built on the same objectives year after year. The team has by now established a way of developing their festival that works for them, allowing them to implement previously established plans and just making necessary adjustments wherever needed.

This chapter will then focus on the framework's main activities to draw the main conclusions and, more specifically, on aspects that were new to the organization and had never been implemented before (see Appendix 3 for a detailed execution of the framework, phase by phase).

### Work-breakdown structure

Firstly, during the planning phase, a work-breakdown structure (WBS) was developed for the festival, to provide the team with a more structured view of the tasks and activities to be accomplished (see Appendix 4). This also helps to visualize what has already been done and what is missing, tracking progress, which in turn helps to manage schedule deviations and possible delays. A WBS requires predicting the amount of time each goal requires to be achieved, which is not always easy and realistic to do. Without a certain margin to allow for delays it is almost certain that some steps will fall behind schedule, but this structure serves nonetheless as a guide to track the festival's development.

### *Risk management plan*

A risk management plan was very challenging to implement within MOTELX. No detailed plan had ever existed or been established throughout the years. As is common in most events, problems that can be anticipated may have back up plans prepared during the planning phase, but often the production team will improvise solutions based on past experiences, particularly when problems occur while the festival is already taking place and nothing has been pre-determined.

Nevertheless, a risk management plan was still made with a list of all potential threats, rated according to the probability of occurring, and their consequences to the festival (see Appendix 5). This risk assessment considered the existing risks inherent to the festival site, the risks created by the event itself, and the external risks that still need to be managed despite the festival organizer's lack of control over it. The steps suggested to reduce or mitigate the identified risks are not exhaustive; it should be noted that they were specifically developed for MOTELX and can, therefore, vary according to the different types of festivals. Finally, the plan clearly defines the required functions and resources to be able to implement it. Whoever is considered responsible for coordinating the risk management plan has to make sure all resources are at hand and that everyone knows what to do.

To complement this, an emergency communications plan was also designed to indicate how the organization should communicate according to each emergency situation (see Appendix 6). Once again, the situations depicted are not exhaustive and each festival has to consider which types of circumstances and conditions it relates to.

### *Festival monitoring*

Monitoring the festival is a two-part activity. First, there is the control of the team and all tasks that need to be undertaken. The festival's directors supervise this through project management

office (PMO) meetings and by requesting regular updates on the event production process. Then, there is the festival evaluation managed with a survey that MOTELX hands out every year to its audience in order to get feedback and appraise the experience through its attendants' eyes (see Appendix 7).

The survey measures personal impacts and assesses the type of audience the festival has, by trying to understand the amount of new public it acquires with each edition in comparison with the audience that returns each year, but also by gathering people's opinion concerning the program and general organization of the festival (see Appendix 8 for an audience satisfaction chart comparison). With this, the festival is able to know the demographics of their target audience and how they are reacting to the event. The survey also provides a place for spectators to write down their opinions and complaints regarding any aspect of the festival. It also assesses the visibility of the festival, regarding its sponsors and communications, which helps them to evaluate their marketing strategy and measure its strong and weak points. Complementing this review, people's reactions are also observed through social media by monitoring the number of visits to the festival's website and social media pages and the interaction within them.

### *Key performance indicators*

Implementing the framework meant that the festival's commitment and readiness for change had to be determined. It was necessary to "identify a high-level view of the future state of the organization and how competitive advantage can be created and sustained" (Project Management Institute, 2014) in order to convince them of the need to follow this framework. It was crucial to identify the elements that would enhance the festival's performance by defining key performance indicators (KPIs) for progress tracking.

In the event sector, the KPIs are usually reflected by measuring demand and economic impacts, and by analyzing customer satisfaction and its link to brand loyalty (Brown, Getz, Pettersson, & Wallstam, 2015). MOTELX naturally acknowledged ticket sales, but most importantly audience satisfaction to be tracked through the surveys mentioned above. However, these assessments could benefit from additionally measuring the public's approval by asking if they liked the new edition of the festival, if they are considering coming back the following year, and if they would recommend it to family and friends. Surveys should also be a means to evaluate whether a new edition met the audience's expectations or, even better, if it exceeded them for the festival to build on brand loyalty.

Another KPI, greatly correlated to the audience's satisfaction level, is the return on investment (ROI). It is almost a consequence of it, as the more people are satisfied with the festival, the more they will come and incite others to come, and therefore, the more tickets will be sold and the more revenues will be made. Nevertheless, MOTELX is a festival that has only managed to breakeven throughout its existence and therefore puts a greater emphasis on ticket sales rather than ROI.

Finally, it would also be interesting to look at the dropout rate, the number of attendees compared to the number of people who had initially marked attendance through social media. Sometimes the two numbers are very different and it can be really helpful to understand why there are so many enthusiasts online that don't translate into actual ticket sales afterwards.

### *Tracking the execution*

Checklists were used to track the execution of the framework in an attempt to assess which activities were followed through, and which ones were not. They serve as a guide, to be used repeatedly rather than starting every evaluation from scratch, to ensure the outcomes match the

expectations (Brown, Getz, Pettersson, & Wallstam, 2015). The following tables showcase the various enumerating lists of things to do that were used during the festival, starting with a general framework checklist built according to the WBS, giving an overview of what was accurately performed, what needed to be revised, but also what wasn't applied in this particular festival.

Table 2: Framework checklist

<b>Task</b>	<b>Completion</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Determine festival profile</b>	✓	
<b>Identify stakeholders</b>	✓	
<b>Plan schedule of tasks and activities</b>	✗	The schedule was not respected, causing many delays and, most importantly, budget deviations
<b>Control barriers and constraints</b>	✓	
<b>Manage cultural and community influences</b>	✓	
<b>Develop program</b>	✓	
<b>Define budget plan</b>	✓	
<b>Define marketing and communications plan</b>	✓	
<b>Define risk management plan (health and safety, compliance and insurance management, uncertainty management, and change management)</b>	✗	Established plans were not applied during the festival, leaving risk management to chance
<b>Establish an emergency communications plan</b>	✗	
<b>Manage conflicts</b>	✓	
<b>Secure resources</b>	✓	
<b>Hold a press conference</b>	✓	
<b>Launch publicity</b>	✓	
<b>Prepare site and venues</b>	✓	
<b>Monitor and control all phases of the framework</b>	✗	Team meetings should've been held more regularly to better monitor each phase of the framework and evaluate stage-gates
<b>Have regular team meetings</b>	✗	
<b>Hold stakeholder meetings</b>	✓	
<b>Evaluate festival</b>	✓	
<b>Measure festival impact</b>	✓	
<b>Release resources</b>	✓	
<b>Write the festival's final report</b>	✓	

A GANTT chart was also continuously updated to better visualize task completion (see Appendix 9). The chart is built as a stage-gate process, where each stage represents the five phases of the

framework. Five gates were identified in the process, where reflective PMO meetings were held to establish best practices and decide how to move forward with the festival (Kerzner, 2009).

*First stage-gate: Kick-off meeting*

The kick-off meeting reviewed the whole initiation process in order to establish around which principles and characteristics to start the event. This is the first milestone that will determine whether or not the project should move on to the planning phase with the help of the following checklist.

Table 3: Kick-off meeting checklist

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Achievement of objectives</b>
<b>Is the profile of the festival determined?</b>	✓
<b>Have the stakeholders been identified?</b>	✓
<b>Is there a management team with defined roles and functions?</b>	✓
<b>Have market characteristics been looked into to build the festival?</b>	✓
<b>Is the production team aware of policies, regulations, and the general law that apply to such an event?</b>	✓
<b>Have government institutions been dealt with?</b>	✓
<b>Does the festival take into consideration the local neighborhood?</b>	✓
<b>Is the festival free of conflicts?</b>	✓

Skipping one of these steps may result in future problems or drawbacks for the production team and possibly lead to the cancellation of the event before it even begins. Note, however, that conflicts mentioned here relate to this phase only, as future struggles will certainly still arise in the following phases of the framework.

*Second stage-gate: Budget plan*

The next important milestone was the determination of a budget plan. The planning phase is the time to develop the festival in its entirety, and it therefore involves a great number of different plans (cf. the framework’s planning phase). Among these, the budget plan is the most important one to consider, as it is when the production team assesses the festival’s feasibility. Another PMO meeting took place at this point to consider a few important details before moving forward.

Table 4: Budget plan checklist

Objectives	Achievement of objectives
Can the festival cover all possible costs?	✓
Are there enough sources of revenue?	✓
Can the festival breakeven?	✓
Can the festival turn a profit?	✗

These are very straightforward and common questions, but carefully revising all costs and sources of revenue will help to see the bigger picture of the financial impact of the festival. The last question can either be answered in the positive or the negative, depending on the festival's final objective, but it should always breakeven to avoid having costs turn out greater than any possible expected revenue.

*Third stage-gate: Securing all resources*

Just like the budget plan, the ability to secure all necessary resources is a vital moment in the production of a festival. At this next stage-gate, the PMO looked into what had actually been achieved and if there were going to be any complications.

Table 5: Resources checklist

Objectives	Achievement of objectives
Does the festival have all the necessary funds?	✓
Is all the equipment rented/bought?	✗
Are all venues/festival sites ready?	✓
Is the festival staff complete?	✓
Are all artists, guests, and exhibitors confirmed?	✗
Have contingency plans been put into motion?	✗

The ideal situation would be if all resources were confirmed by this point and no more thought would be given to it. This will not always be the case, but the eventuality of a cancellation or minor change in plans should not stop the festival from happening altogether and this is where the previously established contingency plans are useful. The PMO's role is to evaluate whether the festival can still come through in time and whether the execution of a backup plan is enough to avert disaster, or if the risk is too high. Despite not planning to put a contingency plan into

motion, MOTELX decided it could still gather all necessary resources in time and would only deal with possible consequences in the moment using knowledge from past experiences.

*Fourth stage-gate: Overview before initiating the festival phase*

Before starting the event, one more PMO meeting went through all tasks and activities and determined if something crucial was still missing.

Table 6: Festival checklist

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Achievement of objectives</b>
<b>Barriers and constraints controlled</b>	✓
<b>Cultural and community influences managed</b>	✓
<b>Program completed</b>	✓
<b>Budget plan achieved</b>	✓
<b>Marketing and communications plan launched</b>	✓
<b>Risk management</b>	✗
<b>Emergency communications plan ready for use</b>	✗
<b>Resources secured</b>	✓
<b>Site and venues prepared</b>	✓

On the one hand, certain tasks are essential to increase the chances of the festival’s success and have to be completed by the time this overview takes place. For instance, holding a press conference is crucial to launch the event’s publicity and have the media relay all necessary information to avoid an empty house on opening day. On the other hand, certain tasks may be overlooked, as a risk management plan often is in events.

*Fifth stage-gate: Festival closure*

The last PMO meeting was held at the end of the festival, after all resources had been released. This was the basis for an overview of the event to be written as the festival’s final report. The framework checklist (cf. Table 2) was again used as a guideline to review all tasks and determine what could be improved. This reflective meeting allowed the management team to look back at everything that was done and determine lessons learned for future editions. More than developing

the festival’s final report, a list of the difficulties encountered was also made with some ideas on how to handle these situations better next time.

Table 7: List of difficulties

Difficulties	Notes
<b>Securing funds from government institutions and associations</b>	First contacts and applications have to be prepared nearly a year beforehand
<b>Tracking all tasks and activities</b>	Ensure the team has enough personnel and/or make sure to stick to precise roles and functions to keep track of what is done and by who
<b>Avoiding schedule deviations</b>	A structured document, such as a WBS, has to be consistently looked at and discussed during meetings that must take place in addition to the essential five stage-gate meetings

## EVALUATION

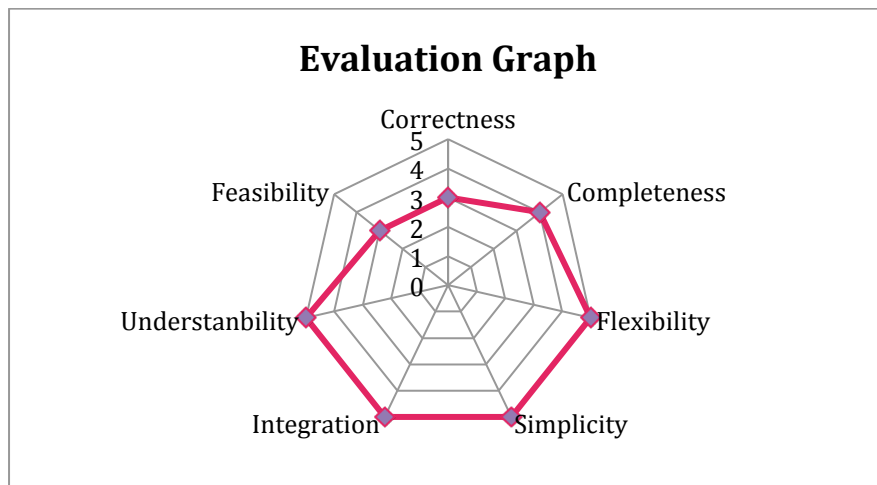
The framework will now be evaluated based on action research theory developed by Moody & Shanks (2003). The action research process consists of four steps: plan, act, observe, and reflect. First, a plan of action was developed to improve current practices in a flexible manner to allow for unpredictable events, culminating in the developed framework proposed above (cf. Proposal). Then, this plan was acted upon, executed, in this case, within MOTELX. After, the evaluation begins with an observation step to collect feedback and assess outcomes. Finally, based on the observations, the framework will be reflected upon in order to weigh in on what went wrong and what went right, and how to improve the proposal.

The following observations were made according to a quality review also developed by Moody & Shanks (2003), which includes seven quality factors rated on a scale of 1 to 5. The factors that come into play are correctness, completeness, flexibility, simplicity, integration, understandability, and feasibility. In other words, the framework has to be appropriate for the problem at hand in order to be considered valid, it has to cover all possible aspects, allow for

adaptation, be clear of overlaps of definitions, inclusive of all types of systems – in this case, all types of festivals –, and serve as a model to be implemented in the real world.

Overall, as shown in the following figure, the framework satisfies all of Moody & Shanks' quality factors, with some adjustments necessary within, in particular, correctness and feasibility, but also completeness.

Figure 2: Scale evaluation graph



The correctness of the framework is not necessarily being questioned here, but rather it needs to be reviewed. With a festival such as MOTELX, it is hard to implement such a change given the history that they have. The implementation should have been adapted to such a situation where the festival already follows its own established structure. The fact that it wasn't, made it all the more challenging to evaluate the true effectiveness of the framework.

The most prominent example is the implementation of a risk management plan, which, as already mentioned, is often neglected. Many risks can be anticipated and prepared for, but others, maybe the most important ones, cannot. Take, for instance, the situation concerning the screening of movies during the festival – a lot of preparation goes into negotiating deals with the distributors to ensure a copy makes its way to Lisbon. Despite all this anticipatory planning, many things can

still go wrong at the last minute: the copies may never arrive, they may be faulty, the distributors may cancel the authorization to screen the movie, and many other issues may occur. Having a backup plan in case a movie cannot be screened would require the acquisition of backup movies and/or to have a technician on hand at all times, hoping he or she can solve whatever issue arises in due time, which is not always plausible, logistically but above all, financially.

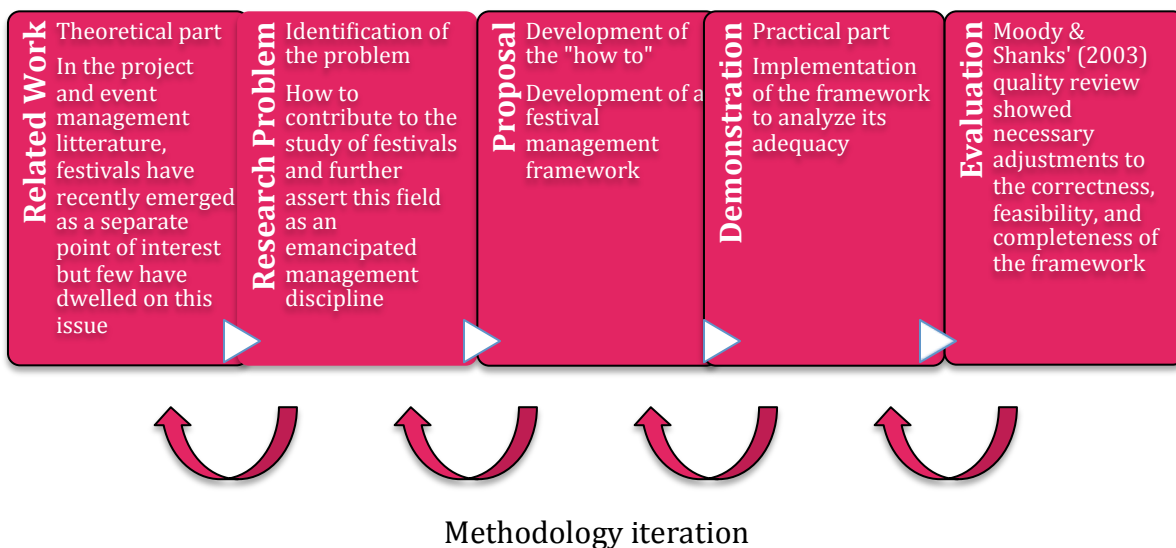
As explained by William J. O'Toole (2000), while risk management is typically in project management a "systematic methodology" that is continuously tested until it has reached its optimal form, it is more of a varied process and event dependent when it comes to events. Keeping in mind that costs and expenses are at the top of MOTELX's concerns, the risk management plan should have been developed so as to propose contingency tactics that took the financial aspect into consideration and, in this way, be more in sync with the festival's goals and objectives.

In terms of feasibility, some aspects were not fully planned specifically for festivals. For instance, another issue inherent to events is the difficulty to follow through a planned schedule. Predicting dates is sometimes unrealistic, once again due to the unpredictable characteristic of the field, and this can be even more relevant when it comes to festivals. The conclusion drawn from this experience is that a festival's organization team is highly dependent on external partners and services that may not always cooperate the initially intended way. For example, when asking a print shop to cover all the needed graphic material they may encounter their own difficulties and delays that will pass on to the festival. The framework would have had to account for the hectic nature of such events so that activities like schedule and budget monitoring could be more easily applicable by removing the more regulated and constrained characteristics of its structure.

Finally, the quality factor of completeness would need to be reviewed to include factors that were overlooked and give more importance to others that were underestimated. The most prominent example of such a situation is related to communication and integration within the festival. It was ingenuously assumed that the different teams involved in the project would be in constant contact with each other. However, it became clear that more interaction between everyone was necessary, in the form of PMO meetings or even informally. Although meetings were scheduled and messages regularly exchanged, there were still some gaps and miscommunication issues that could have been easily avoided. More than once, the organization and the production team were not in sync concerning certain activities and the lack of more regular PMO meetings resulted in several aspects of the event production being forgotten and having to be dealt with in extreme urgency and stress at the last minute.

Going back to the DSRM methodology, special attention will have to be given in the proposal and demonstration areas in order to perfect the framework for a future execution, as is outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Design Science Research Methodology



Change has to begin in the theoretical part, where the framework will be reviewed following this first implementation experience. The activities included in the different phases have to be revised to improve the feasibility and correctness quality factors, so that the framework can more easily be applicable to any types of festivals and minimize setbacks. This should, consequently, pave the way for a smoother implementation in the practical part. Nevertheless, the iteration also has to be attentive to not overlook or underestimate any aspects of the execution to ensure that everything goes according to plan and avoid the same mistakes.

In the future, the ideal situation is to be able to test and execute the framework among as many festivals as possible, with a great variety of profiles, to build the most complete and correct festival management framework to be applied globally. It would also be interesting to work together with event management softwares, such as Eventival or Eventbrite, to use the framework as a complement or even incorporate it in their system.

## **CONCLUSION**

Festival management is still a growing field within management studies. Starting with the vast subject that is project management, this paper then focused more specifically in the event management branch. Using the basic principles of the PMBOK, event management built itself as an emancipated topic that included everything from conferences to sports events. Festivals were a big part of it and given special attention to because of their very complex nature that seemed to require a structure of its own. It is precisely this paper's intent to contribute to the development of festival management as a separate study field by providing it with its own management framework. The developed structure was tested at MOTELX – Lisbon International Horror Film Festival to assess its validity within such events, known for their inherent chaotic nature and

unpredictability. The framework is presented as a means to control this instability by offering festival managers a tool to better structure their organization plan.

This framework was difficult to implement in a festival with such a long history. It seems it would best fit as a starting guideline for anyone looking to set up a festival, benefitting from the experiences of more practiced festivals. Despite being established to stand the test of time and become something to follow along the years, it overlooked and underestimated certain aspects that made it challenging to implement within an already recognized and proven organization system. Iterations need to be done to perfect the theoretical part of the framework, which will in turn provide a more robust and complete structure for further implementations, regardless of the festival's background.

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