

ETHNOGRAPHIC EVENTS

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AUTOETHNOGRAPHY A REFLEXIVE TOOL FOR EVENT/FESTIVAL MANAGERS

Practice and Advocacy: Doing Ethnography on the Ground

Abstract:

High-quality production is the everyday expectation of people seeking leisure experiences through sporting events and/or (performance) festivals. People participate in events because "celebration can be experienced individually, but is realised more profoundly in significant social settings" deLisle (2009, p.6). However it is not only the event itself that contributes to the experience, it is a combination of the event and the ancillary services together that provide a 'seamless' consumer experience. There are a many strategies that can be employed to evaluate an event's successes and/or identify areas for enhancement, such as surveying participants during and post event. This paper explores an additional strategy, using auto-ethnography as a reflexive tool, to assess an event's effectiveness in meeting consumer expectations. Two event managers attended WOMAD, Taranaki 2010, as participants, to experience the event and ancillary services provided, to identify the impacts ancillary services had on the overall WOMAD experience. This paper will take the form of a conversation between the two event managers critiquing 'space', accommodation, parking, access, catering, children's opportunities, facilities, signage and event personnel. An audio-visual display will accompany this presentation highlighting some of the 'critical' factors that we, as participants, identified influenced our perceptions of the event's success.