



LAUREA
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Together we are stronger

Managing and Planning an Event for Case Company X

Palo, Elisa

2016 Leppävaara

Laurea University of Applied Sciences
Leppävaara

Managing and Planning an Event for Case Company X

Elisa Palo
Degree Programme in Business Ad-
ministration
Bachelor's Thesis
January, 2016

Palo, Elisa

Managing and Planning an Event for Case Company X

Year	2015	Pages	54
------	------	-------	----

This thesis is written for Case Company X, which is an international and sales-focused accelerator for innovative software companies. The company invests seed capital in their portfolio companies and deliver concrete results for their sales and international growth. In addition, Case Company X organizes events for startup founders. This thesis will discuss how to plan and manage an event for Case Company X.

The objective of this thesis is to clarify the process of organizing a successful event for Case Company X. The knowledge base will discuss event management and the event planning process. Data was collected using feedback questionnaires. The methods used are qualitative and quantitative and a thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The empirical study implementation discusses the steps to planning a Case Company X event called Situation Room.

Analysis of the responses from the feedback questionnaires suggest that the Situation Room event was successful, but there is still a need for future development. The main areas of future development are making a new RSVP system, improving the presentations, and creating more business opportunities and new networks.

Keywords: event management, event planning, events, marketing

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	6
1.1	Purpose of the thesis	6
1.2	Research problem	6
1.3	Research approach	7
1.4	Framework of the thesis	7
2	Knowledge Base	7
2.1	Definitions	8
2.2	Event Brief.....	9
2.3	Goals and Objectives	9
2.4	Scope of the Event	10
2.5	Target Audience	10
2.6	Theme	11
2.7	Venue and Logistics	11
2.8	Invitation	12
2.9	Scheduling	13
2.9.1	Checklist	13
2.9.2	Division of Responsibilities	15
2.10	Event Production	15
2.11	Event Marketing	17
2.12	Risk Management	21
2.13	Event Evaluation.....	22
3	Research Methodology.....	25
3.1	Methods	25
3.2	Data Analysis	26
3.3	Validity and Reliability	27
4	Empirical study	28
4.1	Background Information	28
4.2	Objective of Event	30
4.3	Target Audience	30
4.4	Theme	30
4.5	Venue.....	31
4.6	Program	32
4.7	Keynote Speakers.....	32
4.8	Budget.....	33
4.9	Invitation	33
4.10	Welcome Email	35
4.11	RSVP List	35

4.12	Contact with Event Team	36
4.13	Catering.....	37
4.14	Technology	38
4.15	Event Marketing	38
	4.15.1Marketing Strategy	39
4.16	Risk Management	40
4.17	On the Event day	42
5	Event Evaluation	43
	5.1 Feedback Questionnaire.....	43
	5.2 Quantitative Analysis	44
	5.3 Qualitative Analysis	47
	5.4 Comparrison to Previous Events.....	49
	5.5 Future Development	52
6	Conclusions and recommendations	53
7	Theoretical linkage	54
	References	55
	Figures.....	56
	Tables.....	57
	Appendixes.....	58

1 Introduction

Case Company X is an international and sales-focused accelerator for innovative software companies. The company invests seed capital in their portfolio companies and deliver concrete results for their sales and international growth. In addition to this, Case Company X organizes corporate events for startup founders. The current situation is that Case Company X organizes events every two months with different themes, but they do not have an event planning guide. This thesis has been creating to have an event planning guide for Case Company X, to ensure effective event planning and management of future Case Company X events. This thesis was produced because the author of this thesis planned an event for Case Company X and the author of this thesis worked as the event coordinator.

1.1 Purpose of the thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to create an event planning guideline for Case Company X. By following this guideline, anyone could plan a Case Company X event. The objective of this thesis is to identify the process of planning and managing a successful event for Case Company X. Focusing on three aspects of organizing a corporate event; planning, coordination, and evaluation.

This thesis was written because Case Company X produces events every two months, therefore a way to efficiently plan and manage an event has to be found. The event coordinator in future events must know what should be done to plan and manage an event for Case Company X. With the help of the guideline in the empirical study part, one could produce an event for Case Company X. The analysis of the Situation Room event, also gives insights to developing future events.

The empirical study will go through the steps of planning an event for Case Company X called the Situation Room event. The event will be analyzed afterwards, using qualitative and quantitative methods, to find areas for future development. The aim of the study is to see if the event objectives are achieved and if the event has been a success.

1.2 Research problem

Case Company X has produced events, without an event guideline to how to manage and plan a event, therefore the planning and managing has not been efficient. The research question in this thesis is how to plan a successful Case Company X event and what needs to be developed to ensure future events are successful.

1.3 Research approach

To be able to gain knowledge about event management and planning, knowledge base part of the thesis was created. The knowledge base has gathered theoretical information using different books on event management. The knowledge base includes all the steps needed to plan and manage an event, including; definitions, objectives, target audience, theme, venue, scheduling, event production, event marketing, risk management, as well as event evaluation. From the theoretical background in the knowledge base section, the author was able to find the best way to plan and manage an event for Case Company X, as well find the best way to collect event feedback.

Qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used in this thesis to collect event feedback. The data collected in this thesis has been done using a feedback questionnaire. This feedback questionnaire has both closed-ended questions, as well as open-ended questions; therefore, the data collected is both qualitative and quantitative. The closed-ended questions have led to quantitative data, which is numerical data that can be measured. The open-ended questions led to qualitative data, while is more descriptive data and cannot be measured.

1.4 Framework of the thesis

The structure of this thesis is first the knowledge base part consisting of the event management and event planning process. Then this thesis will discuss the methods used and the last part of the thesis is the empirical study. The empirical study includes the event planning guideline for Case Company X, which outlines all the steps needed to plan and manage a successful corporate event for Case Company X. The empirical study will first have background information on Case Company X and then the event planning guideline will start with the event planning stage, which will go through the event objective, the target group and choosing the venue. The event plan will then outline all the steps needed in planning a successful event for Company X. After this, the Situation Room event will be evaluated, and find areas in need of development for future events. The event plan will include everything that goes into managing a successful Case Company X event.

2 Knowledge Base

The knowledge base part of the thesis will provide explanations on the main parts of managing and planning an event that have been used to plan the event for Case Company X.

2.1 Definitions

Event is an experience, carefully crafted to deliver an impact on the person in attendance. Every event is held for a purpose, to bring people together to share an experience and produce a measurable outcome. Corporate events are events that support business objectives, including management functions, corporate communications, training, marketing, incentives, employee relations, and customer relations. (Silvers 2012)

Event management is the project management of creating and developing an event. Event management involves deciding event objectives, defining the target audience, choosing the venue, deciding an interesting theme, taking care of scheduling, managing the team, managing logistics and everything that needs coordination to make a successful event. Event planning is the process of planning and coordinating an event, this includes budgeting, risk management, venue planning, arranging speakers, décor and catering. Event planning and management is usually taken care by the event coordinator. Event plan process is the following, first objectives and goals are identified, then the event plan is made, then organizing and preparing the event is done, the implementation of the event and then lastly evaluation. There must be enough time to plan an event. Planning is crucial to having a successful corporate event. There are many resources to take into account when starting to plan an event. (Shone & Parry 2013)

The event coordinator is the one who takes care of all the operational and logistical requirements of an event. The event coordinator is the one who is responsible for the administration, design, marketing, operations and risks. Administration means taking care of all the financial, human resources, information, stakeholder, systems and time management. Design has to do with all the content, entertainment, environment, food and beverages, production program, and theme development and management of an event. The marketing part that an event coordinator needs to take care of are the marketing plan, merchandise, promotions, public relations and sales management. The operations part of an event that has to be taken care of are logistics, participants, site and technique production management, attendee, communications and logistics. The risks the event coordinator must take care of are compliance, decision, emergency, health and safety, insurance, legal and security management. (Silvers 2012)

Events are held everyday around the world, there are trade shows, training, marketing, human resources development, sport and athletic, and other corporate events. A successful event coordinator must have knowledge of formal and informal event practices and processes used by corporations. To be able to have this essential knowledge, the event coordinator must understand the corporate culture and differences in culture across corporations. Culture

is defined as shared beliefs and values of a group. Corporate cultures influence the way employees think, how they do their work, as well as how they relate to one another. It has a great influence on the company functions. By clearly understanding corporate culture and the differences in culture of organizations, the event coordinator is able to provide value to the corporation and personal success. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

2.2 Event Brief

The first step in event planning is to write an event brief. The event brief is a document that clarifies what the event is and why it is held. The event brief starts with answering basic questions; who, what, when, where, and why. To following must be defined; who are the wanted guests, what are the demographics, how many are expected, what type of function is it, what has worked before and what has not. Also guest preferences must be taken into account; including what have the guests liked and disliked in pervious events. The timing of the event, as well as the venue of the event should be decided. Defining the following is essential; why is the event being held, what is the preferred date, are all partners invited, who is invited and how many guests are wanted. The food and drink arrangement have to be decided, as well as will there be entertainment, a theme, decoration, dress code and budget. In order to plan a successful corporate event, the event coordinator must understand the purpose of the event, as well as the objectives and goals of the event. (Silvers 2012)

By having a document that is the event brief leads to constantly checking the requirements of the event in the planning and management phase of the event. Event brief should be a document with the following information; Event name and reason for event, location, date, guest details, requirements (for example dinner, dancing, entertainment), time, theme, transportation, budget, vision, note, and objective. (Lindsey 2011)

2.3 Goals and Objectives

The first step in event planning identifying the goals and objectives of the event. Objectives and goals must be defined early in the event planning process, because they influence all other factors of the event. Goals and objectives are the event purpose and an event may have more than one purpose. The main reason why corporate events are held is to educates, proactive recognition, offer intensities, improve public relations, mark an important milestone, or launch a new product. The goal of the event must be clearly stated in order to plan a successful corporate event. During the event planning stage, the goals must be evaluated, to see if the original purpose has changed. If it has changed, the event coordinator must make changes to keep in line with the event goals. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

Objectives of an event can be measurable, including the following; number of people attending, number of participants, contributions of sponsors, value of grants and donations, amount of profit, goals for charitable contributions, level of media exposure, number of repeat visitors and value of food and beverages sold. By having objectives of an event, will allow for the event coordinator to focus what they want to achieve. Measuring the outcomes of these objectives helps when planning future events. This allows the event coordinator to find main development areas for future events. (Van der Wagen & White 2010)

2.4 Scope of the Event

When planning a event, first the goals and objectives are established and then the scope of the event. Scope of the event is the date, time and duration of the event and its size. This is all dependent on the number of available resources. Resources that influence an event are human resources, physical resources and financial resources. Timing is very important as well, it is good to ensure there are no similar events during the time of the event. (Van der Wagen & White 2010)

2.5 Target Audience

The target audience should be determined, to ensure the event is planned for the right audience. The target audiences influence the event goals, theme, corporate culture, venue and event plan. Corporate culture is the rituals, values and beliefs of a corporation. The event coordinator should obtain information about the corporate culture and other facts (including production and logistics) of pervious events. This information can be gained by looking a records from past events, for example the guest list. By doing the proper research, the event coordinator can identify the needs, expectations, wants and desires of the guests, and this may influence the goal of the event. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

The event may be for the staff, clients, own family, co-workers or a large audience, it still has to been well planned and organized. Before the planning of the event, there should be a clear understanding of the target audience. When the target audience has been decided, the event coordinator should take into regard the guests age, gender and occupation. The event coordinator, should consider what would she or he want if they were the target audience. Analyzing the target audience in detail, this will lead to a successful event when knowing what the target audience expects. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2008)

To get the contact information of the guests who will be invited, depends on who the target audience is. Usually the contact information is found in the organizations own database, but

in some cases a newspaper advertisement might be the invitation. By keeping the organization's own contact database up to date, helps the event coordinator when inviting the guests. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

2.6 Theme

Theme can be defined as a subject or topic of an event. The theme of the event should be linked to the event's purpose. Not all events have a theme, but they have a key objective or message that they want to convey to guests at the event. Therefore, it is good to come up with a theme or message, which is the aim of the event, for example "Keep an Eye on the Action" or "Believe it". (Lindsey 2011)

The theme should alter the guest's sense of reality, affect the experience of space, time and matter, and fit into the corporate culture. The theme drives all elements of planning the plan, including event design and the event itself. The theme creates expectations for guests and affects the event experience. The theme builds excitement, creates anticipation and promotes involvement in the event experience, they allow for the company to reinforce their message, marketing goals and the desired behavior. A theme creates increased value for the event, but by itself does not mean much. (Silvers 2012)

2.7 Venue and Logistics

Venue is an important factor, when planning an event because it will influence the amount of attendees. When choosing the event venue lots of research has to be made. There are lots of different event venues, and it is good to consider the location. When the event venue is far away, it is good to offer transportation, but this adds to the costs of the event. Also by having an event far away, it might influence the amount of guests interested in the event in a negative way. Most people would rather not travel too far for an event. Participation increases when an event is near by. When organizing an event in another city, it is different to organizing one in a familiar surrounding. If the event is held abroad, one must take into consideration the laws and regulation of the country. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

The guests and theme of the event must be taken into consideration, when choosing the event venue. An honored event should have a venue worthy of the event. If an event is planned outdoors, it is essential to consider the weather and have a backup plan if it rains. One should consider if a tent or indoor place is needed, incase of bad weather. Another aspect to consider when choosing the venue, is if it has any restrictions for disabled guests, for example for a wheelchair. The event coordinator must choose the event early and evaluate it

well. The following should be evaluated; venue fit with theme and image of organization, location (is there good parking and public transportation), is the size good considering amount of guests, sound system, technology, catering, outside noise, and bathrooms. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2008)

The event venue must match the corporate culture and event criteria. Once the venue has been decided, the best way to take advantage of the space should be planned. The event venue is an environment that includes surroundings, attendees, facilities, atmosphere and activities. The way the event venue is used, can determine the movement, direct attention, enhance interactions and ensure a smooth progress during the event. The event space should be planned according to the event needs and objectives, therefore the placement, proximity, accessibility and position of the activities, equipment and service areas should be considered and carefully planned. When planning the position of everything, safety must be considered. The exits must be clear and not be blocked, as well as good space in the area in case of an emergency exit. (Silvers 2012)

Logistics of an event are very important, because it influences the flow of the event. Planning the way which all good will be put into place, how to get the needed equipment and people are essential to make a successful event. Logistics takes into consideration the resources of a particular location for a particular time. Logistics in events, refers to supply of materials and services, equipment and provisions, arrival and departure of guests, tickets and inquiries, as well as the flow of people and crew around the venue. If logistics is not planned well, the supplies needed for the event may not arrive correctly. Good communication is key to have successful logistics. It is essential that all participants know when, where and what is needed to arrive at the event. A production schedule is good to have to ensure great logistics. The production schedule should have a list of all activities that the event evolves in time order. This will allow for everything to happen at the correct time and everyone knows what is going on. (Shone & Parry 2013)

2.8 Invitation

The event invitation is the first demonstration of what the event will be like. It should give the audience an understanding of the event will be. When the guests look at the invitation, he or she will get expectations, feelings and thoughts about the future event. The invitation should not exaggerate or give false hope that the event cannot fulfil. The invitation can be a personal invitation or an open invitation to all. The invitation can ask guests to register if they are participating, but this is not essential in every event. (Häyrynen & Vallo 2008)

There are many types of invitations and the organization should choose the one that best suits them. The invitation can be a letter, card, email, phone call or an object sent by a delivery service. There are many types of invitation, but each invitation should consider; if the theme should come across, is it for one person or many people, what the event date is, who is inviting (organization name, contact information, and the name of the person sending the invitation), is the invitation asking to respond and if it is where (phone, email, or text), is the event free or does it cost money, dress code, asking for allergies. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

There are different ways of asking the guests to respond to an invitation. In English, the correct way is to use the French shortening R.S.V.P. meaning *Repondez s'il vous plait* (please respond). When the event is for over 100 guests, it is good to include some detailed instructions on how to respond at the end of the invitation, for example, 'Please respond by X Date' or 'Event is for the 100 first to R.S.V.P.' In some cases, the guests may be asked to bring their invitation to guarantee the entry to the event. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

2.9 Scheduling

When the event objectives, theme and venue have been decided, the following step is to plan the scheduling, this will ensure a successful corporate event. The tasks that have to be accomplished can be divided into two parts; parallel, where tasks can be performed at the same time and serial, where tasks must be done in a sequence. To start, all the tasks that have to be completed for an event must be listed. When all tasks have been listed, they should be put in the correct order in which they should be completed in. Also the timeline of each task to be completed should be set. The timeline can be flexible or strict. The event coordinator must set times for each task to be completed, some may have a strict deadline, while some can float, therefore doesn't have a strict deadline. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

2.9.1 Checklist

Making an event checklist is crucial to make sure everything is accomplished on time. The checklist should have a time line of everything that has to be done and it should be in chronological order. The checklist is made by first writing down everything that needs to be done a month or two before the event, the title should always be "X days/weeks/months before event", the second part should list everything that has to be done three to two weeks before event, the third part should list everything that has to be done by three to one day before event. Then what to do on the day of the event and lastly after the event should be listed. After every thing that should be done has been listed, there should be an empty column. This is where the event coordinator writes a check when the task is completed. This checklist will ensure everything is done on time and that no task has been forgotten. (Lindsey 2011)

Checklists are very useful in successful event planning, since they allow for are small details to be listed and thereby completed. Checklist can be used at any stage of event planning or executions. The main benefit of checklists, is that no task will be forgotten. Checklist have the least words as possible, these leads to remembering them all better. The more words a checklist has, the less it will be used. Checklists ensure, no task will be forgotten. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

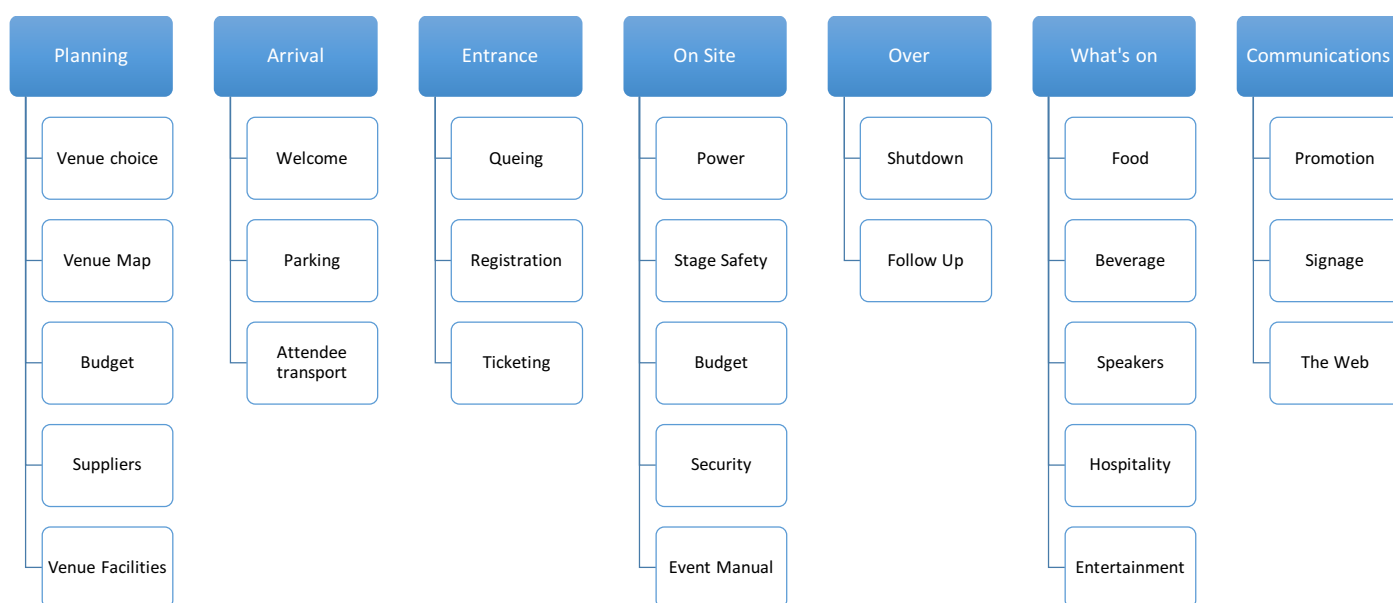


Figure 1 Schema of Checklists (Mikolaitis & O'Toole 2002)

The Figure above, shows the schema of checklist. The different parts of a checklist include planning, arrival, entrance, on site, over, what's on and communication. Planning part includes; venue choice, venue map, budget, supplies, and venue facilities. The Arrival part of the checklist includes welcome, parking and attendee transport. The entrance part of queuing, registration and ticketing. On site part of the checklist includes; power, stage safety, budget, security, and event manual. The over part of the checklist includes shutdown and follow up. What's on part includes food, beverage, speakers, hospitality and entertainment. Communication is the last part of the checklist and includes, promotion, signage and the web. All these parts should be on a successful event checklist. (Mikolaitis & O'Toole)

2.9.2 Division of Responsibilities

The event coordinator cannot handle everything at an event by themselves if a large group of guests are attending. It is essential to know who will be helping and giving them responsibilities. It is essential that all members of staff and helping at the event, know what they are doing. This can only be done with good communication. It is crucial to run through everything that is happening with everyone helping with the event and then telling them what their task is in every part. There are different parts where help is needed. At the event there should be a helper who can work the microphones and lighting, a person for PowerPoints/visual productions, waiters serving food and drinks, welcoming individuals, and cloakroom workers. To make a good impression on guests, when they enter the event space, is for someone to be there to welcome them. This gives the guests a welcoming and warm feeling and they know where to go. (Capell 2013)

Front house is the part of the event team that interacts with the guests. An example of a front house worker is the bartender serving drinks or person taking registration details of guests. Depending on the venue, the front house people will be from the venue or will have to be hired. The host of the event is the most important front house worker, since most guests will have the most contact with the host. The host is usually the one to welcome the guests and talk in-between presentations. The person hosting, must have the image of the brand, they must give a good impression of the company. At corporate events, it is good for the host to work for the company organizing the event. If the host is not from to company, it is essential to brief the host on the company message and the brand, this will ensure the host reflects to the right what when talking to guests. (Capell 2013)

Catering is a good idea to ensure a successful event. This allows the event planner not to deal with serving food and drinks, therefore it is good to hire catering. Food and beverages are an integral part of an event experience. It is crucial to have refreshments at an event; most guests will expect refreshments therefore its good to meet guest expectations. The better the food and drinks, the better the event experience will be for the guests. The type of food and beverages served at an event must go with the event objective and theme. The presentation of the food is important and it should be presented well to ensure guests want to eat it, the food should be fresh and have something for everyone, therefore a vegetarian option is needed. It is good to ask guests before hand if they have food allergies. The most important requirement at events is to serve water, make sure water is always available. (Silvers 2012)

2.10 Event Production

Event production is complicated and dependent on many different factors. The event infrastructure includes; trained labor pool, political and community support, transportation and parking access, public transit, technology and communication systems, power, water and utility systems, safe and sanitary conditions as well as facilities and venues. The table below shows the event infrastructure overview, therefore all the factors found in the table must be taken care of. (Silvers 2012)



Figure 2 Event Infrastructure Overview (Silvers 2012)

Depending on the type and size of an event, the transportation requirements have to be considered. When planning an event, the transportation needs to be considered, for example are travel arrangements needed, do streets need to be closed for a parade, do busses need to be hired to transport guests from one location to event location. The way which guests arrive to the event must be considered and planned to make it as smooth as possible. Parking should be taken into account when planning the event. If most guests arrive by car, check the parking at the venue, and if there isn't a big parking lot, make a plan of where guests can park. (Silvers 2012)

The lighting at the venue, should be taken into consideration during the event planning. It is essential that if there are performers or speakers that there have good lighting to highlight them. The stage must have great lighting, but other parts of the venue can have adequate illumination. Well lit areas should be bathrooms, reception, corridors and foyers, this will lead to proper functioning of these areas. Exits must have great lighting and be clearly illuminated. (Parry & Shone 2013)

When booking a venue, the sound system should be checked, to ensure good event production. The followed should be checked at the venue; venue sound system, microphones and how everything works. Microphones are a critical factor to make sure the audience hears the performer and speakers. The event coordinator must know how to work all the sound systems, in case of problems on the event day. How music can be played has to be checked. When booking the venue, the event coordinator should check the quality of the sound systems to ensure they work and are load enough. (Parry & Shone 2013)

The timing of the events affects the number of guests who are able to participate in the event. It is essential to have the event at a good time, when most guests can attend. The best time to have events for business organizational is early in the morning or late at night, because the event will not stop the workday. Morning event participation is higher than afternoon events, because during the day participants may have more work tasks or schedule problems and therefore can not come to the event. Mondays and Fridays are the most challenging for guests to attend, when considering all the week days. Most guests will have plans for the weekend, therefore the best days to organize events are in the middle of the week. When planning a corporate event, it is good to make sure there are no similar events. This will lead to more participants. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

To ensure good registration, it must be planned well. A good registration system is needed, when guest arrive at the venue because it is their first impression they have of the event. Everything must be in order and go smoothly to ensure a positive experience for guests. Usually at corporate events, guests are given name tags, therefore the name tags must be in an effective order. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

2.11 Event Marketing

According to Nigel Jackson (2013) "Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customers". This definition defines that there are different parts to marketing. One being the management process, meaning the event coordinator is in control of the event itself, as well as the image and information portrayed on the potential participants, sponsors and consumers. Another part to marketing is the marketing process,

meaning the way it is viewed by the consumer. The final part of marketing is profitability, meaning marketing must be profitable in form of money or some other form of value. The two main characteristics of marketing are identifying the target audience, as well as generating value to customers through the marketing mix. (Jackson 2013)

Marketing mix is a part of marketing, when determining the product or what the brand offers. The most common marketing mix used is the 4Ps developed by Jerome McCarthy in the 1960s, which identified the importance of Product, Price, Place and Promotion. This can be used in event marketing, but Hoyle 2002 has 5Ps for event marketing, which are; Product, Price, Place, Public Relations and Positioning. In event marketing, the event product is considered to be the event experience, therefore it is what participants and staff experience. The event product is a combination of many components, that can be affected by different aspects of the event. Another one of the 4Ps is place and in event marketing place refers to the event venue and its physical setting as well as the one-site process. Promotion part of the 4Ps is the marketing communication of the event. Promotional tools include; direct sales, sponsorship, advertising, direct marketing, trade shows, public relations, sales promotion, as well as cause related marketing. Price refers to the price of the product, place and promotion, therefore in event terms all the prices referring to the event experience itself, the event venue and the costs of marketing the event. (Jackson 2013)

The event coordinator must decide if the event should be advertised and what is the best way. If an event should be advertised depends on the type and size of event. Many events fail, because the public does not know the event is taking place. Therefore, it is essential that your target audience knows there is an event and where and when it is taking place. There are many forms of advertising an event, for example; newspapers and magazines, free coverage, radio, member, handbills, public transportation, internet, chain email, social media, fly posting, and hoarding/signs. The event coordinator must choose the best form of advertising to reach the target audience. The most essential part is to advertise in the right place, at the right time, with the right advert, at the right price. (Conway 2009)

With proper marketing, it will communicate the following to the target audience; the date, time and location, costs, agenda, actions guests should complete before event, general event and brand awareness for those not attending. The most effective marketing is done, when an event marketing plan has been made. The aim of the marketing plan is to promote the purpose of the event and attract the wanted audience. Marketing plan should have the following; executive summary, information on target audience, description of event, event objectives and a marketing strategy. (Capell 2013)

When starting the marketing plan, it is good to start with identifying the target audience. Market research is essential to understand how the target audience thinks. It is good to consider, who is the wanted participants to come to the event, will these people want to come to the event, what are their needs, why won't they come and are there competing events at the same time. (Capell 2013)

The marketing message of an event should be a description of the event that the people understand what the event is about and why they should want to attend. Take into consideration the target audience, what would make them come to event, are they interested in networking or are the price sensitive. When developing the marketing message, start by describing the event; what is it all about, what is the program (speakers, performers, topics, entertainment), what are the value added items, what are the practicalities (venue, date, time, location, food and drinks), pricing (ticket costs, details). After describing the event and having a clear understand, think of why guests would want to join the event. Some reasons for why are; original or unique experience, best speakers/performers, best place to network, special atmosphere or best location/venue. (Capell 2013)

When the marketing message has been found, the next step is to decide the media strategy, in other words, where to advertise. There are three types of media; owned, earned and paid. Owned media is where advertisement has been created by the organizational themselves and they are in charge of it. Own media is the organization's website, social media channels, such as Facebook and Twitter, and direct marketing media, for example emails. Earned media is when other people tell your story, for example, word of mouth, when social media posts are shared and reply to online posts. Paid media is considered as traditional marketing, it is using TV, radio, posters, web banners, Google adds and newspapers. All these cost money, which is why they are defined as paid media. (Capell 2013)

When using owned media to promote an event, there are three stages; creating a brand identity, designing a website and optimizing the language used on the website. A good recommendation for an event marketing is to create an identity for the event. When creating the brand identity, there are three main considerations to be made; the name, look and feel and core positioning. The name of the event is very important, it must be relevant, appropriate and memorable. The better the name, the more people are drawn to the event and remember it. The look and feel of an event should be considered because it affects the way people experience the event. It is essential to leave a positive impact and experience on the guests. If the name of the event does not convey all the needed information about the event, it is good to add a strapline, that will provide more information and can be used for branding. (Capell 2013)

The second part of creating an identity for an event is designing the website. This can be done either by creating a complete new website for the event or making one page on a corporation's website about the event. Before stating to make the website or post about the event, it must be decided if it is a hub for social interaction or only a source of information. The content on the webpage should be relevant to the event and provide all needed information about the event. The content should be developed based on the message or objective of the event. (Capell 2013)

Another part of using owned media is using social channels. Using social media channels is important when marketing an event, it is good to link the website on all corporation's social media sites. It is essential to remember to also use traditional marketing, websites and email marketing in addition to social media marketing. Social media marketing keeps growing and growing and is becoming more integral in everyone's life. Most adults use different social medias regularly, therefore it an an inexpensive and great tool to market an event and make it popular and have people talk about it online. Facebook is considered to be best for consumer audiences, but not so good for business audiences. On the other hand, LinkedIn is considered to be best for business audiences. Twitter and YouTube are the best for both consumer and business audiences. (Capell 2013)

Pre event marketing is essential to increase awareness of the event. Social media channels are a very affective way of increasing awareness of an event. For example, Uber has 1 billion active users, and more then half of them use Facebook on mobile devices. Through Facebook, pre event marketing can happen by status updates and posts, Facebook events and pictures on Facebook. Status updates about the event on Facebook are important to increase more interaction. It is essential to post status updates regularly about the event, for example when new speaker is announced. Facebook is a way for guests to get instant information about the event and to ask questions. Creating a Facebook is event is a good idea because it reminds guests the event is approaching. Facebook events is a good tool and easy to set up and allows for people to have interaction before and after the event. Posting images on Facebook before and after the event is a good marketing tool for the company. Posting images before the event, creates buzz and increases expectations for guests, therefore it is a great tool for event promotion. Before the event the company can add photos of speakers, the venue and confirmed guests. Posting images after the event on Facebook is a great marketing tool for the company and future events. After the event, the company can encourage guests to tag themselves to the event photos and to publish the photos to their own wall. (Capell 2013)

Pre event marketing with LinkedIn can be very effective if done well. LinkedIn allows to reach out to a specific business audience. On LinkedIn it is possible to share links of the event on the company's LinkedIn profile, as well as relevant groups. It is good to ask guests who have

registered to the event to post about the event on their LinkedIn profiles to create awareness among their connections. (Capell 2013)

Pre event marketing with Twitter is a very effective way of creating event awareness. Over half of active twitter users follow companies and brands, this offers a great opportunity to promote events on twitter. Since on twitter the text can be only 140 characters long, the words used need to be affective and snappy for followers to pick it up. Add "Please RT" to the end of the twitter post, RT means re-tweet. This encourages followers to retweet the event post and thereby they share it with their followers. Adding effective hashtags is great when using twitter. One event hashtag that should be used is "#eventprofs", which is a well known and well used hashtag in the event industry, therefore a larger audience can be reached. Also using other creative hashtags to create a hype is great, for example making a hashtag with event name and company. This is effective, when others talk of the event to ask them to use the event hashtag. A great way to improve marketing is to tweet during the event, which encourages guests at the event to tweet as well. (Capell 2013)

Email marketing is a way to gain event awareness. Email is when a message is sent digitally from one computer to another. By using email marketing, the event coordinator is able to inform and persuade potential participants to join the event. The email can create hype and expectations for the event. Email is usually a private message sent to one person, but by directing the event email to many people, the same email can be sent to thousands of people easily. (Jackson 2013)

To improve the promotion of an event, it is great to get earned media. By having effective social media promotion can lead to earned media. It is essential that the content used on social media about the event is something people want to share and can lead to conversations. To have a successful corporate event, it is essential to have event awareness and this can happen affectively through social media channels, as well as email marketing and website posts. (Capell 2013)

2.12 Risk Management

The best way to prepare for an event is to define all the potential risks and find out a solution to the problem. There are four steps to risk management; identify, assess, plan and review. The first step is to identify the potential risks. There can be external risks, as well as internal risks. External risks can be hard to identify, since there are many potential ones. External risks are those we cannot predict and and stop, for example a fire at the venue. It is good to list down the external risks that many happen, one external risk is that the venue becomes unusable due to any reason, for example fire. Internal risks, on the other hand, are those

risks that can be affected, one example is not having enough food or microphones do not work. All potential external and internal risks should be listed and written down how likely each risk is because this ensures successful risk management. (Capell 2013)

The potential risks have to be assessed after they have been identified. Every risk has to be evaluated and all consequences have to be identified, in case the risk becomes a reality. Examples of problems that may need to be solved, are that not enough guests come to the event and then the event looks empty or having large amounts of food and drinks left over. It is essential to prepare for every scenario. The following step is making a plan. To reduce the impact of all possible scenarios, it is essential to develop a plan where the most likely situations are identified. The aim of the risk management plan is that it will not be used, but in case something goes wrong it is good to have a plan. Let the whole team know of the plans, therefore they are also prepared for any situation and can act quickly. (Capell 2013)

The last step of risk management is reviewing the risks. While preparing for the event, it is good to review the risk management plan and modify it if needed. The closer the event comes, more risks may have been handled and can be taken off the plan, or new risks can arise, for example a spreading virus or the team being sick. This is why it is essential to review to plan while planning the event and making modifications. Remember to update the team on possible changes to the risk management plan. (Capell 2013)

2.13 Event Evaluation

Event evaluation is important in order to be able to develop future events. It is essential to find out what the event guests thought of the event. It is good to find out what was done in order to reach expectations, what could have been done better and what did the guests think was the best part of the event. When the feedback has been collected, it should be evaluated with the event purpose. The organization's know-how and knowledge grows when it collects and analyses feedback from every event. From every event, the organization will learn and be able to improve the next event, by knowing what works and what doesn't. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2008)

In order to see if an event is successful or not, it is essential to have a clear objective when planning the event. With the objective, one is able to measure if the event was successful or not. If the objectives have been reached, the event can be considered successful. The reason for measuring the success of an event is to justify the event budget, justifying the budget for the next event, identifying areas of improvement and providing company with insights about the brand or company. There a number of different methods to measure the success of an event, there can be quantitative and qualitative. (Capell 2013)

Quantitative research is based on numerical analysis and statistics and thereby focuses on numbers or quantities. Most quantitative researches have a large amount of participants, because it increases the statistical power. It is best to have a large sample size; this leads to the results being more accurate. It is good to have at least 100 participants when conducting a quantitative research. (Capell 2013)

Qualitative research is word based research that focuses on the differences in quality, rather than differences in quantity. In most cases qualitative research has less participants than in a quantitative research. This is due to the depth of data collected from qualitative research and the time it takes to analyze the data. Qualitative research leads to detailed results and leads to a better understanding of the quantitative data, because it allows for the company to find out what guests thought was bad in the event and why would they recommend the event to friends and so on. (Capell 2013)

There are many different ways to research if an event was a success or not. One approach is to have face-to-face research. This can be done at the event site and is a useful method to gain immediate feedback. Telephone research can be done after the event by having follow-up interviews with the guests. Not all guests will be happy to do this, but this will gather useful qualitative feedback. Online research is another research form; this is done by sending an online survey by email. When using this method, most people will not answer the survey, but it is a great way to gather feedback. This method is suggested for bigger events, because calling all participants takes too much time. (Capell 2013)

To conduct quantitative research, a control group may be used. Control groups are good if the aim is to find out if the event achieved its objectives. The control group should be as similar as possible to the target audience. Control groups are not needed if the only need is to find out the perception of the event itself. In these cases, the only thing needed is to interview the guests. Observation is a good method to use when the budget of the event is very low. Observation research is watching and listening to the guests at the event. Most commonly the event manager is very busy at the event, therefore it volunteers for this may be needed. Brief the volunteers to observe well, but fit into the audience and let them know what to look for and how to report their findings accurately. (Capell 2013)

The most common evaluation tool for events are questionnaires. They can be conducted either verbally with an interview, or with written form or through a website. Questionnaires are used at events to gain data about the demographic, preferences, satisfaction levels, and specific feedback. Questionnaires can provide very descriptive data and thereby they can identify behavior patterns. Questionnaires are a great for of gathering information from a large

group of people. Questionnaires are considered to be very effective, because people are used to questionnaires and it is low cost. (Silvers 2012)

The questionnaire can have quantitative and qualitative questions. These questions can be open-ended or closed-ended. Closed-ended questions have a limited number of responses, from which the guest can choose. Closed-ended questions are easy to analyze, when compared with open ended questions. Open-ended questions do not require the guests to choose one response, but they are encouraging to give an in-depth answer. Open-ended questions provide more information, but are harder to analyze. The best questionnaires have a combination of both qualitative and quantitative questions. (Capell 2013)

ACCURACY	EFFICIENCY	ENJOYMENT LEVELS	FREQUENCY
IMPROVEMENT	INCREASES/DECREASES	POPULARITY	PRODUCTIVITY
PROFITABILITY	QUANTITY	RECALL	RELIABILITY
RETURN INVESTMENT	SATISFACTION LEVELS	TIMELINESS	USAGE
CONSISTENCY	COSTS/REVENUES	EFFECTIVENESS	DEMAND LEVELS

Figure 3 Typical Event Evaluation Measurements (Silvers 2012)

The figure 3 above, demonstrates the typical topics that should be evaluated after an event. The questionnaire should have a series of unbiased and well structured questions, that can obtain the needed information and have a reliable response. When making the questionnaire, the questions should be as simple as possible, the questionnaire is easy and quick, as well as ensure that it is anonymous. The following must be considered when making questionnaires; the question formatting, the question phrases, their sequencing, and the categories of questions. When making the questions, the formatting is important and all closed-ended questions should have sufficient and logical alternatives, to ensure a reliable answer. The open-ended questions however should not have any form of persuasion and encourage truthful answers. Phrasing must be paid attention to and only suitable vocabulary should be used when creating the questions for the questionnaire. The working must not be biased and welcome all points

of view. The order which the questions are in should be first having very simple questions or factual information and more sensitive questions should be at the end of the questionnaire, to ensure more responses. The questions should be grouped with topics, issues or objectives and include headings. (Silvers 2012)

Questionnaire have to be simple and easy to answer, and be given to guests at the right time to ensure more responses. Once the questionnaire has been given to all guests and they have responded, the answers must be analyzed. The questionnaire answers must be analyzed the best way for the company. By analyzing the feedback, it will serve the current obligations and contribute to future events- The data must be analyzed well and then cross reference the findings to the goals and objectives of an event. This is an essential tool to improve the future events and make them a success. (Silvers 2012)

3 Research Methodology

This part will discuss the different research methods used in this thesis. In this study both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Quantitative research generates or uses numerical data and qualitative research generates or uses non-numerical data. Both research methods were chosen in this study, in order to gain in-depth knowledge of future development areas. The study was conducted in the form of a questionnaire.

The study was conducted by collected data using a feedback questionnaire, which had both open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out how successful the event was and what guests want to be developed in future events. The data was analyzed using different methods. The quantitative data was analyzed by studying the mean, mode and medium. The qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic analysis method.

3.1 Methods

The study was done using a feedback questionnaire, in order to evaluate the event Situation Room created for Case Company X. The feedback questionnaire included both qualitative and quantitative questions. The quantitative questions had pre-determined answers, while qualitative questions led to explanations for the previous answers. Qualitative research method provided more in-depth data. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to gain the best feedback, with the most useful amount of information to improve and develop future events. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out how successful the event Situation Room was.

The questionnaire was made online, using google forms because this method is very efficient and low cost. The questionnaire was given to all guests who attended Company X event. The event guests were all startup founders. A link of the questionnaire was given to guests by e-mail after the event. The questionnaire was sent to 150 guests and 40 guests responded to the questionnaire, therefore 27% percent of the guests answered the questionnaire. All guests were asked the same questions in the same predetermined order. The feedback questionnaire was answered anonymously.

The feedback questionnaire was chosen as the best method to collect data of the Situation Room event. The reason this method was chosen, is because it gives in-depth results by having both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The detailed results lead to a better understanding of the event and allows for guests to give open feedback and give reasons for their answers. This allows for future event to develop the way guests want to, because the feedback questionnaire allows for the guests to give suggestion areas.

The closed-ended questions had a limited amount of responses and asked guests to rate different parts of the event from one to five, five being the best. The guests were asked to rate how the event succeeded in achieving the event objectives, to rate the profile of the guests, the venue space and service. The guests were also asked to rate the presentations from the scale one to five. These closed-ended questions, were followed by open-ended questions. The open ended questions encouraged guests to give in-depth answers. The open-ended questions asked guests for open feedback, as well as what themes and topics they would want in future events. The questionnaire aim was to see if the event objectives were reached, as well as find out what factors were considered a success and what factors need improvement.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by studying the mode, medium and mean, as well as doing a thematic analysis. The feedback questionnaire data was analyzed well and then cross referenced to the goals and objectives of an event. The feedback questionnaire had both open-end questions and close-ended questions, therefore both qualitative, as well as quantitative data was collected.

The closed-ended questions asked guests to rate different parts of the event from one to five, where five was the best response. Quantitative data was collected from the close-ended questions. The quantitative data from the feedback questionnaire was studied using three different techniques. The three techniques were the mean, median and mode. The mean was calculated to find the average value of the responses. The mean is calculated by adding all the responses (which are numbers from 1 to 5) and then diving it by the number of responses.

The median was analyzed to find the mid point of the results. The median is calculated by re-writing the responses in correct order and finding the middle value, in this case rewriting the numbers from one to five. The mode is the most common answered and it was analyzed to find the value, which appeared the most.

The responses from the open-ended questions were analyzed by finding reoccurring themes. This was done, because the open-ended questions did not offer numerical data that could be analyzed by measuring and using calculations. The way which the open-ended questions of the feedback questionnaire were analyzed was called the thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the most popular form of analyzing qualitative data. Thematic analysis aims at recording patterns or themes in the data. Thematic data is done using six phases which are; familiarization with data, coding, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. The first phase is to get to know the data, which is done by reading and re-reading the data to become familiar with it. During this phase, it is essential to pay attention to reoccurring patterns. The second phase is to generate initial codes, therefore outlining where the patterns happen. During this phase the results should be labeled to codes in order to create categories of the patterns. The third step is to combine the codes and search for themes. The fourth phase is to find the ways which the themes support the data and analyze the themes. The fifth phase is to define the theme meanings. The sixth and last phase is to write a report and describe the reoccurring themes within the data. (Bryman & Hardy 2009)

3.3 Validity and Reliability

This is a reliable thesis, because the author of this thesis worked with Case Company X and created the event plan and produced an event for Case Company X. The author worked as an event coordinator for Case Company X. The data collected was from guests who attended the event. This thesis is valid, because only the attending guests had access to the feedback questionnaire. To ensure the most valid results, the results of the questionnaire were checked after the analysis. This was done to ensure there were no errors. The questionnaire results were made sure that no additional zeroes were added and that there were no mistakes in calculations. This ensures that the results can be considered valid and reliable.

The advantages with using the thematic analysis is to be able to identify reoccurring themes within the open-ended question results. It provides a way to analyze the open-ended question data, and find categories and themes from the data. However, there is a reliability concern with this analysis. Thematic analysis may not find all the themes in the data and some may be missing if the author of this thesis did not find them. Thematic analysis is also considered to be flexible and not have a certain point of focus, which is a disadvantage.

The possible factors that may affect the reliability of this study; wording of the questions, respondent's mood, false emotions, errors in calculations and missing data. The respondent's mood may influence the way he or she answers the question. The questions on the questionnaire were made to be the most neutral, without giving the respondent an influence on which way to answer. The wording and order of the questions were carefully planned to ensure the most reliable study.

4 Empirical study

This part of the thesis is an event plan for Case Company X and includes a data analysis of the Situation Room event planned for Case Company X.

4.1 Background Information

Case Company X is an international and sales-focused accelerator for innovative software companies. They invest seed capital in their portfolio companies and deliver concrete results for their sales and international growth. In addition to this, Case Company X also organizes corporate events for their community members. Case Company X has a community including start-up founders, corporate executives, venture capitalist and business professionals. Case Company X will organize an event for only start-up founders of the community and other start-up founders, who find the event through the Company X website and social media channels. Case Company X organizes these events, because it gives them a change to gain potential investment opportunities. This thesis aims to be a guideline to managing and planning a Case Company X event.

Case Company X has organized three events since June 2015. Organizing events is a completely new business area for Company X, because before they have only invested in startup companies without organizing any events. Case Company X, decided to start holding events, because they wanted to meet new startup founders and create new business opportunities for themselves. From these events, Case Company X can find potential startups they can invest in. The three events Company X has organized has been done without any kind of event plan. The event planning has not been done correctly and efficiently. The previous events that have been organized are called "Startup Go International" and "Exit Only". The aim of this thesis is to find out how to best manage and plan an event for Case Company X. With this thesis, Case Company X will be able to plan and manage future events successfully.

The Case Company X events have two parts; first part is keynote speeches and the second part is networking. The Case Company X events have keynote speakers, in order for start up

founders to learn new insights. The events may also have a panel discussion, where the panel includes of 4 to 7 business professionals, where they discuss a certain topic. Before panel discussions, guests can ask questions via email, which will be answered in the panel discussion. During keynote speeches and panel discussion, guests are encouraged to ask questions, in order for them to gain more knowledge.

After the keynote speeches, Case Company X events have a networking part, where food and drinks are served. The networking part allows for guests to talk to each other, learn from each other, create new business opportunities and connections. The guests are free to talk to everyone, while being served food and drinks. This part of the event, lasts until the event ends. The events are a great opportunity for startup founders to network with each other and hopefully find new business opportunities.

Case Company X organizes events every two months for their community members. The past events have been organized for only start-up founder members of the community. These events are free for all participants, because Case Company X's partner companies are paying for the events. The events are free, in order to attract more founders to join the event. The events are held at Case Company X's partner company's premises or venue. Case Company X organizes these events, because it gives them a chance to gain potential investment opportunities.

The Case Company X events have had 130 to 200 startup founders attending. This thesis is an event plan for Case Company X, including all the steps to manage and plan a successful Case Company X event. The event plan will start with the event planning stage, which will go through event objective, the target group and choosing the venue. The event plan will then outline all the steps needed in planning a successful event for Case Company X. After this, the event plan will evaluate the Situation Room event, and compare it with the previous events (Startups Go International and Exit Only events), and find areas in need of development for future events. The event plan will include everything that goes into managing a successful Case Company X event.

The event that will be planned and managed is called Situation Room. The event, Situation Room's theme is to discuss how to get the most out of your board and advisors. The Situation Room event will be organized together with Case Company X partner company called PricewaterhouseCoopers. The following will go through all the steps to plan the Situation Room event and then evaluate if the event was a success. The first step in planning is making the event checklist, the event checklist for Situation Room event is seen in Appendix 1. The event checklist has all the steps that need to be done before the event, to ensure a successful

event. Case Company X uses the checklist to ensure no steps are forgotten and everything is done effectively.

4.2 Objective of Event

Case Company X event objectives are for guests to gain new insights, business opportunities and make new networks. The Situation Room event is only for start-up founders, because the event program and insights learned have been designed for startup founders. The aim is for Case Company X events to have at least 150 guests attending and for all of them to be startup founders. The objective is that at the Situation Room event will only have startup founders attending, learning something new, meeting new people and finding new business opportunities. Situation Room event aims for all founders to learn about how to get the most out of their board and advisors, which is the event theme.

4.3 Target Audience

The target group for Case Company X events are start-up founders. The events are exclusive to founders only. The reason for this is, because Case Company X invests in start-up companies and this allows for Case Company X to network with up and coming start-ups, who might be potential investment target. Case Company X partner companies also work with startups, therefore they also want only startup founders at the event, for them to have potential business opportunities. The aim is to have at least 150 startup founders attending the Situation Room event.

4.4 Theme

In order to have a successful business event, it is essential to have a good theme. The theme of the event will draw more audience to come to the event. If the theme is considered to be boring, guests will not join the event, this is way it is important to be careful when choosing the theme. When deciding the theme, the objective of the event should be considered. What is the message Case Company X wants to portray on the guests has to be determined. Another aspect to be researched is if there a need that start-up founders want to learn about, for example information from previous feedback questionnaires, where guests can let Case Company X know what themes they would like in the future. Many aspects have to be considered when choosing the theme, but the final decision is made by the Company X CEO.

Case Company X chose the Situation Room event theme to be “how to get the most out of your board and advisors”, this was chosen because the event day was a week before Slush 2015. Slush 2015 is a popular event for startups, and usually they look for board members and

advisors there. By attending the Situation Room event, the founders will know how to choose the best board and advisors. The aim is to have all parts of the event about board members and advisors. The keynote speakers will be selected, according to how well they suit the theme, therefore all keynote speakers must be board or advisor professionals.

4.5 Venue

Case Company X events are organized together with one of Case Company X's partner companies. These partner companies have venues, where the Case Company X events can be organized. Case Company X partner companies are the following; Mehiläinen, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Castren & Snellman, Valjas and Dagmar.

The Company X events are free for all attending guests, because the Company X partner companies pay for the events. The reason why the Company X's partner companies pay for the events, is because it gives them a chance to get to know startup founders, gain new business opportunities, as well as make new connections.

The venue has to be chosen carefully, to make sure there is enough room for the amount of guests wanted. First it has to be decided, which Partner company will the event be organized with. After this has been chosen, the possible event venues at partner's office have to be seen. If the partner company's venue is not right for the event, for example too small, other options have to be considered. Company X has held past events at Castren and Snellman's premises, as well as PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Case Company X has held events are Castren and Snellman's premises. They have their office building in the Helsinki city center on Espland park. The maximum amount of guests that fit in Castren and Snellman's event space is 150. The keynote speeches have been held in a separate room, while networking has been held on Castren and Snellman's top floor terrace and inside area. This venue is best in the summer, when the rooftop terrace can be used, since it has great views of Helsinki. Castren and Snellman are very hands on with planning the event and usually have taken care of the photographer, food, drinks, name tags, welcoming guests and cloakroom. It must be remembered that the maximum guest number is 150, but even this is too much since the event space runs out of air and is very cramped. If the event objective is to have more than 150 guests, another venue has to be chosen.

Case Company X has held events together with PricewaterhouseCoopers, who have their office building in Ruoholahti, Helsinki. The PricewaterhouseCoopers office has an event venue for 100 guests to attend. Since at most events Company X wants at least 150 guests, the

event has been held at the Supercell office building, which is across the PricewaterhouseCoopers office. The events have been held in the Supercell building's lobby and auditorium. The maximum number of seats in the auditorium is 150, while the lobby is huge and can fit over 500 people. Even though the event is not held at PricewaterhouseCoopers premises, they still take care of the venue, food, drinks, welcoming guests and nametags.

The Situation Room event has been chosen to be organized with PricewaterhouseCoopers. This partner company was chosen, because the objective is to have 150 founders at the event and they can provide a venue for that amount of guests. The event will be held at the Supercell building. The keynote speeches will be held at the auditorium, while the networking part of the event will be held at the building's lobby. When entering the space, there is a big reception area, perfect for a registration table. The reception area also has the cloakroom nearby.

4.6 Program

The following step after the theme and venue has been decided is to plan the program of the event. The program of the event should be interesting, this will lead to more guests being interested and wanting to join the event. The program of Case Company X events is usually very similar in all events. The Situation Room event will start at 17:00, to ensure more guests can come because usually most people end work around 16:00 or 17:00. The event then has 30 minutes of welcoming guests with drinks and snacks, therefore if there are late arrivals it does not disrupt the event. After this at 17:30, the keynote speeches will start. The host of the event will be the PricewaterhouseCoopers Manager. First the host of the event will welcome the guests and talk for about two minutes, then the CEO of Case Company X will say a couple of words and then the keynote speeches or panel discussion will start. After about an hour or hour and a half, there will be a 10-minute break, therefore guests can go to the bathroom and fulfil their drinks. Then the panel discussion will start after the break. They will last until about 20:00, after which the networking part will start, this continues until the end of the event. The networking part will have food and drinks for guests. The program can be planned without keynote speaker confirmation. The keynote speakers can be informed to guests later, via e-mail, company website and social media channels.

4.7 Keynote Speakers

In order to have an interesting event, where guests can gain new insights it is essential to have keynote speakers. Keynote speakers should be good speakers with interesting topics. What the keynote speakers talk about should go with the event theme. Case Company X's CEO and Partner companies take care of organizing the keynote speakers for the event. The Situation Room event will have a keynote speech by Kimmo Rasila, who will talk about choosing

the board and advisors. After this there will be a panel discussion with, Kimmo Rasila (Nixu, Sysart, Hallitusammattilaiset ry), Kim Groop (Enevo, Youredi), Pekka Koskinen (Snoobi, Lead-Feeder) and Marina Vahtola (Aalto University). This panel discussion will discuss how to get the most out of your board and advisors. Guests will be asked before the event to send questions, they would like to be answered during the panel discussion.

After the keynote speakers have been chosen and confirmed, the event coordinator will be the contact person to the speakers. It is essential all keynote speakers are briefed, to ensure they know what they should say, how long they should talk for, they should reserve time for questions and make the presentation interesting. When the keynote speakers have been confirmed, let the Partner company organizing the event know their names, company and contact information. After the speakers are confirmed, their information should be added to the company website, and social media channels.

4.8 Budget

The budget of Case Company X events is usually small, because the venue space is usually free. There are no costs for the venue, because the events are held at the Case Company X partner company's premises and the keynote speakers come for free. The only costs at the event are food, drinks and catering staff. The events usually only need two catering staff members.

The food, drinks and catering staff are all paid by Case Company X's partner company. The partner company organizing the events, takes care of all the costs. Usually, there is no set budget, because Company X and the partner company, want to offer the guests great quality and variety of food and drinks. The budget depends of the amount of guests attending the event. The Situation Room has no budget, because PricewaterhouseCoopers has not set a budget. The aim is that the food is good and there is a variety of drinks.

4.9 Invitation

When the event objective, target audience, theme, venue, budget and program have been planned, the invitation of the event can be sent to guests. The invitation to the Case Company X event is very important, because it influences how many guests will join the event. The theme of the even, should come across clearly in the invitation and not lead guests to expecting too much from the event. The invitation should be made when the venue and date of the event have been confirmed. The invitation is made for start-up founders around the age of 25 to 50, therefore the invitation should have a business mindset.

The invitation for Case Company X events should have the following; Event name, General Information, Date and Time, Venue name and address, program, RSVP information, Information on Case Company X and the logos of all partner companies (PWC, Corium, Valjas, Dagmar, Castren & Snellman, Mehiläinen). The general information on the invitation should be the following; “Company X welcomes ambitious founders to join us for drinks, food, networking and learning! The theme of the evening is XYZ as a response to wishes from our community members. The event is free of charge and for founders only, no service providers”. The Situation Room invitation can be seen in Appendix 2.

Case Company X sends event invitations through email. The email is the first look that guests have of the upcoming event. The email will have the event invitation as a PDF, this will lead to guests to have expectations about the upcoming event. The email sent to possible guests of the event should have a good subject, as well as a good and interesting body text. The subject of the invitation email should state clearly that it is an invitation and include the name of the event and date. The email text should not be too long and only include all essential information. The guests are asked to RSVP to the event by replying to the invitation email and sending their contact information. The invitation PDF should be attached to the email. All the people the invitation email is sent to, should be added to the blind carbon copy, to ensure guests do not see each other’s emails. Make sure the email has the following; Welcoming statement, Time & Date, RSVP information, State it is a free event and Attach the invitation. To see an example of the email, check appendix 3 for an invitation email template.

The invitation email is sent to only start-up founders, because Case Company X events are exclusive to startup founders. It is important that the guest list only consists of founders. The people Company X invites to their events are found in the Company X Membership Database. Company X has a membership database, which is a list of different founders and their contact information. From the Membership Database, only founders are invited, therefore the role of the person should be checked before inviting them.

In order to be updated on up and coming start-ups, Company X wants to keep the Membership Database updated. It is important to find start-up founders using start100.net, email correspondences, and other sources. Depending on the information available, founders of companies are not always easy to find, therefore also CEOs, Managing Directors, CTOs, etc. can be added to the Membership Database. When adding new founders to the database, the following information must be included; First Name, Last Name, Company, Title/Position, Email, Phone and Address.

Case Company X will send the Situation Room invitation email a month before the event to all founders. Who the email has been sent to and who has responded has to be kept track on. To

those who have not responded to the invitation email, are sent a reminder invitation email two weeks before the event.

To those who have not responded to the Situation Room invitation email, a reminder email is sent two weeks for the event. This is the second email Company X sends to those who haven't responded to the first email. In this email, it is essential to have a good subject and a good email text. The subject of the reminder invitation should have the event name and date, for example the Situation Room reminder invitation subject was; "Reminder: Event Situation (November 3, 17:00), 120 founders registered". The email text should include the welcome statement, date, time, place, state it is a free event, RSVP info, program and speaker's names. Make sure all emails are being added to the blind carbon copy space. To see an example of the email, check appendix 4 for an invitation reminder email template.

4.10 Welcome Email

CaseCompany X always sends a welcoming email to the guests who have registered to the event. The purpose of the welcome email is to welcome guests to the event, as well as remind attending guests that the Company X event is in a couple days and remind them of the time of the event. This must be sent latest two days before the event to all attending guests. After this email, usually there are some cancellations.

The Situation Room welcome email is sent to all attending guests two days before the event. This is the second e-mail Company X sends to attending guests. To see an example of the email, check appendix 5 for a welcome email template. Remember to add all email addresses to the blind carbon copy space. The subject should be clear and have all essential information; event name, date, time and address. The Situation Room subject was, "Situation Room event on Wednesday, 17:00, Itämerenkatu 11 Helsinki". Remember to attach the invitation PDF.

4.11 RSVP List

The guests who want to attend Case Company X events, are asked to RSVP to the event by sending their contact information via email. This information is then collected to an excel spreadsheet that Case Company X has created. Case Company X makes a RSVP list to keep track of which founders have been invited to the event, who is attending the event, who has cancelled and who has been rejected. The RSVP list is made to record all these, therefore a new excel spread list is made. The contact information of attending guests, partners, speakers, investors, rejections and cancellations should be added the the RSVP list. Separate categories should be kept for founders, partners and investors. The RSVP list should include the

following contact information; First Name, Last Name, Company, Position, Email Address, Phone Number, Address, Zip Code, City and Country.

Case Company X events are usually only for founders of start-up companies. Therefore, all backgrounds of attending guests must be checked, to make sure they are founders from startup companies and not from big corporations. The people who have signed up for the event and are found in the Company X Membership Database, are usually allowed to attend. Sometimes people not wanted at events, end up in the Company X Membership Database, therefore everyone who had registered to the event needs to have their background checked.

Registered guests can find the Company X event through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the company website, therefore all background must be checked. This is done by, googling the company and checking if it is a big corporation or a start-up company, as well as checking who the individual is who signed up for the event (making sure they are not students for example). If the signed up guest isn't a founder of a start-up company, they must be rejected to the event. Since the event is an exclusive event for founders, an email saying politely that they cannot attend and have to give a reason for the rejection has to be sent. Rejected guests are kept track in the RSVP excel.

4.12 Contact with Event Team

Company X events are organized by the event coordinator and one partner company. The partner company offers Company X to use their venue for an event and they also offer to help with the event management. The event coordinator needs to have a contact person with the partner company, usually this is the event coordinator or manager or assistant of the partner company. In the Situation Room event, the partner company is PricewaterhouseCoopers and their contact person is the event manager, Niina Kinnunen. The Situation Room event team is the Company X event coordinator and Niina Kinnunen, as well as staff, PricewaterhouseCoopers employees and Company X employees. Company X's event coordinator must keep contact with PricewaterhouseCoopers contact person and keep them updated on everything to do with the event.

Together with PricewaterhouseCoopers, this following will be agreed upon; program, venue space, food & drinks and photographer. It must be decided; which company takes care of which aspects. The partner company should take care of the venue arrangements, unless you have agreed otherwise. It has to be checked how many guests can fit in the venue and does the venue offer microphones, sound and light systems.

The food and drinks can be decided together with the Company X PricewaterhouseCoopers, but the person in charge of contacting catering must be agreed upon. Last part to agree on is the photographer and it must be decided if a photographer is wanted, and does the partner company have one. If not, it has to be decided who will be in charge of hiring the photographer. Another aspect that has to be decided between Company X and the partner company is that who will take care of the following; invitations, rsvp list, name tags, host, welcoming speech, music, slideshows and cloakroom.

4.13 Catering

The catering arrangement must be made at least one month before the event. The catering arrangements include; deciding the food served and what drinks are served at the event. The catering arrangements are made together with the partner company organizing the event with Case Company X. It must be decided which company will be the contact person for the catering, to update them on the amount of guests and what food and drinks are wanted.

The food served at Company X events must be planned carefully with the catering company. At the Company X events, food should be served in the beginning of the event, as well as in the networking part of the event. The food served at the beginning of the event, during the welcoming drinks part, should be snack food. The snack food means easy to eat while standing up, as well as something small and not too heavy. An example of food that can be served that the beginning of the event is small light sandwiches. Food served at the networking part of the event should be heavier, since most guests will be hungry at this part of the evening. The food served at the networking part should be easy to eat standing up, for example hot dogs. With the catering company make sure there is enough food for all guests, it is essential to rather have too much food than too little.

In addition to food, the drinks should also be organized with the catering company. There should be drinks at the beginning of the event and at the networking part. The drinks at the beginning of the event should be a special cocktail or a glass of sparkling wine, to make guests feel welcome. During the event there should always be water available. Drinks served during the networking event should be beer, cider, red wine, white wine, in addition to water.

For the Situation Room event, the catering was decided together with PricewaterhouseCoopers, while they were the contact person. It was agreed upon that when guests arrive to the event venue, they will be served a glass of sparkling wine. During the beginning of the event, the guests will be also served with small cheese and ham sandwiches. Water, beer and cider will also be offered during the beginning of the event. At the networking part of the event,

guests will be served three different kinds of hot dogs. There will be tuna hot dogs, pulled pork hot dogs, as well as a vegetarian hot dog. They will be served with many different kinds of fillings. The drinks served at the networking part of the event, will be beer, cider, white wine, red wine and water.

4.14 Technology

When booking the event venue, the technology has to be checked. The amount of microphones the event has should be checked, to make sure there is enough. Also it has to be found out who knows how to operate the technology, and that they can arrive to the venue early on the event day.

In order to have successful Case Company X, the technology has to work. To ensure the technology works well, the event coordinator should know how to work all the technical equipment. To learn how all technical equipment works, technical support should be asked to come before the event to teach how everything works and help set up microphones and presentations. Technical support should stay nearby the event, and their phone number needs to be taken, therefore they can be called if any problems occur. Before the event, it must be checked that all presentations work and microphones work and have battery.

The Situation Room event has six different speakers, therefore the event needs six microphones. The Situation Room event is held at the Supercell building, therefore technology must be checked from them. The Supercell building has 10 microphones and a great presentation system that works with all computers.

4.15 Event Marketing

Case Company X wants their events to have as many different kind of founders as possible participate at the event. Company X has a membership database, which is a list of different founders and their contact information. The membership database only has a small amount of start-up founders that are found in Finland, therefore it is essential for Company X to advertise their event. If only sending an email invitation to the founders on the Company X membership database, the amount of attendees would be small and the events would always have the same people. Company X, therefore needs to advertise the event, to ensure more attendees to the event, as well as gain new connections.

The target audience of the marketing plan for Company X events are start-up founders. The target audience is both males and females between the age 25 to 50. All start-up founders

are welcome and the person should already be a start-up founder and not bethinking of becoming one. The aim is to have at least 150 start up founders take part in the events.

The objective of the event is for guests to gain new insights, business opportunities and new networks, this should be seen in the marketing plan. The event has two parts, first keynote speeches by different business professionals and then a networking part with food and drinks.

4.15.1 Marketing Strategy

The aim of the marketing strategy is to gain more registered guests to the Situation Room event. The objective is to create awareness of the upcoming event. The marketing message of a Company X event is the theme of the event, which is “how to get the most out of your board and advisors”. This allows for people understand what the event is about and why they should want to attend. Why guests join Company X events are because of the good keynote speakers, it is free, a good place to network and the great profile of the guests. Therefore, this should come out in the marketing of the event.

The marketing channels used to advertise Company X events are; the company website, social media channels and partner companies. Company X will make an interesting post on their website about the upcoming Situation Room event. The post will include, an interesting cover picture, in this case a picture of Obama called Situation Room and all essential information about the event. The Company X website post should have information of the date and time of the event, the general information about the event, the detailed programme, information about the keynote speakers and their pictures, as well as RSVP information. In the end of the website post, there should be information about Company X and what they do and a link to find out more.

To have pre event promotion, Company X will advertise this website post about the Situation Room event in their social media channels. The social media channels Company X uses in event marketing are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Facebook is Company X's most used social media channel. The first step in advertising an event on the Company X Facebook page, is to change the cover photo, to a picture promoting the event which has the event time, place and RSVP information. When the cover photo is clicked, there should be addition information about the event and a link to the event website post on the Company X website. After this a new status update on Facebook should be made. This status update should have a link to the Company X's event post on their webpage. This status update should include a short description of the Situation Room event and include RSVP information. This update should be made straight away after the invitations to guests have

been sent. Company X will update their Facebook once a week and advise the event with status updates. Every time a new keynote speaker has been confirmed, it should be updated on Facebook as a new status update. When over 100 founders have registered for the event, it should be updated on the Facebook page, as well as when the registration is almost full, to influence a couple of last minute registrations. Adding pictures on Facebook is a great way for promote the Company X events, before the event Company X will add pictures of the venue and speakers, to create buzz and increase expectations of the guests. After the event, Company X add all event pictures on Facebook and encourages guests to tag themselves and add pictures to their own timeline. All the pictures of the Situation Room event will be added to Facebook by Company X, have the Company X logo, which create great brand awareness.

Twitter and LinkedIn can be used in similar ways as Facebook, by updating them once on a week about the event and linking the Company X webpage post on the social channels. LinkedIn allows to reach a specific business audience, therefore Company X can specifically advertise to start up founders, for example in relevant groups. Twitter is very efficient marketing tool to promote events. Hashtags are very popular in Twitter, therefore Company X should make their own event hashtag, for example “#eventnameX2015”. The hash tag for the Situation Room event will be “SitationRoom2015”. This is recommended, because when guests talk about the event, they are able to use the event hashtag. It is important to encourage guests to tweet during the event, about the event, therefore make sure all guests know the event hashtag for twitter.

Partner companies will also promote the Company X event on their websites, as well as their own social media channels. The partner companies will use the Company X website post to promote the event, as well as email marketing.

4.16 Risk Management

Risk management is essential to having a successful event. It is good to forecast all possible problems and then find ways to prepare if they happen. Risk management should be done when the event venue, speakers and program have been confirmed.

Risk	Risk Factor
Keynote Speaker Cancels	High
Technology does not work	High
Guests Cancel or are no shows	Medium
Photographer cancels	Medium
Traffic	Medium

Supplies Does not Arrive on time	Medium
Bad weather	Low
Excess Noise	Low

Table 1 Risk Management

The table above, shows all the possible risks that could have at Case Company X events. The table also shows the risk factor from low to high of the possibility of happening. The risks that are rated as having a high possibility of happening are that the Keynote Speakers cancel and that the technology at the event venue does not work. The risks that are rated as medium risk of happening are that a large amount of guests cancels or there are many no shows at the event, photographer cancels, large amount of traffic or the supplies does not arrive on time. The low risks that could happen at Company X events are that there is bad weather or excess noise.

One high risk is that one or more keynote speakers cancel. In order to be prepared, if this situation happens, it is essential to book more than one keynote speaker. This way if one keynote speaker cancels, there will still be at least one keynote speaker. It is also good to come up with a backup keynote speaker, who can be called on short notice if a keynote speaker cancels.

Another high risk at Company X events are that the technology does not work at the event venue. In order to avoid this risk, the event coordinator should check how all the microphones, presentations, sounds systems and lighting works at the venue before the event. The event coordinator should get the number for technical support, therefore they can be called if help is needed. The event coordinator should arrive early at the venue and check everything work and if something does not work, then technique support should be called.

Guests will always cancel their attendance, but if a high number of guests cancel or there is a high amount of no shows at the event, this is a medium risk. In order to solve this problem if it occurs, the event coordinator should come up with a way for the event space to not look empty. This should be planned before the event, to ensure it works on the event day.

Company X events always have a photographer, in order to have memories of the event and post them on the Company X website and social media channels. The photographer canceling is a medium risk. The photographer might be sick and have to cancel or be a no show. It is essential to prepare for this risk, by researching other photographers. It is good to have a list of possible photographers and their numbers, therefore if one cancels, the event coordinator can call another one from the list. It is also a good idea to agree with the photographer, that if they are sick or must cancel, it is their job to find a replacement.

Traffic is considered to be another medium risk, that may happen at Company X events. Traffic leads to guests not being able to arrive on time to the event. To prepare for this problem, make sure to check the location of the event venue, find out if it is a location with bad traffic and hard to get to. If it is at a bad location, traffic might make many guests late. Prepare for guests being late at the start of the event, by making sure the program does not start straight way. Have welcome drinks and food in the beginning with free networking, therefore it does not matter if guests arrive late because they do not disrupt the event.

Case Company X events, have another medium risk that could happen, which is the supplies not arriving on time. To prepare for this risk, arrange for the supplies to arrive earlier than needed if possible, therefore it will not affect the time table if the supplies are late. Arrange with the supplies providers, that if arriving late the amount paid will be less, this leads to a smaller risk of the supplier being late.

At Case Company X events, there are two low risks that may happen, these are bad weather and excess noise. Bad weather will affect the number of guests attending the event, because bad weather affects their way of arriving to the event. In case of bad weather, for example a storm, check the weather forecast regularly to be updated on the situation. Event should be cancelled if horrible weather is forecasted. Another low risk is excess noise, which can happen if the event makes too much noise, for example from music. Check the surrounding area of the event venue to see if noise would disturb anyone, let nearby places know of the event and to call if there is too much noise. If the venue is in a bad location, it is good not to have music and keep the noise at a low level to avoid trouble.

4.17 On the Event day

On the event day, everything at the venue must be in order to ensure a successful corporate event. Review the risk management plan, to ensure everyone is prepared for all possible problems. All supplies and staff must arrive early at the venue. The catering staff should be briefed on the event venue and when everything should be served and where. The food and drinks should be served at an area, where lines can be avoided. Make sure there is enough food and drinks.

After food and drinks, as well as catering staff are sorted out, the registration table and cloakroom have to be arranged. The registration table should have all the name tags in alphabetical order and the cloakroom should be near the registration table and be in order. After this, the technical aspects of the event should be checked. Technical support should arrive early and make sure all microphones, as well as presentations work. The technical support

should teach the event staff how everything works, including the lighting, sound, microphones and presentations.

Keynote speakers must arrive early. When they arrive, they should be briefed on the program and what will happen and when. Keynote speaker's presentations should be checked with them and arrange how slides will be changed. When the photographer arrives, brief them on the event program and where everything is. Brief them on the photos wanted and what kind of feeling the photos should portray.

5 Event Evaluation

The method chosen to evaluate the success of the Case Company X Situation Room event, is using feedback questionnaires. The feedback questionnaires are sent to all attended guests after the event via email. With the feedback questionnaires, Case Company X can determine if an event has been successful and what needs to be developed for future events.

5.1 Feedback Questionnaire

To collect data about the success of the event, feedback questionnaires are sent to all guests. The questionnaires provided Case Company X with descriptive data, that can help identify what the wants and needs of guests are. This allows for Case Company X to learn what needs to be improved to ensure the success of future events. The questionnaire is made of quantitative and qualitative questions. The questions in the feedback questionnaire are both open-ended and close-ended questions. The feedback questionnaires start with closed-ended questions, asking guests to rate the different aspects of the event for 1 to 5, where 5 is the best. After this the questionnaire has open-ended questions, asking guests for open feedback, how to improve future events and what themes they want for future events. The feedback questionnaires are anonymous to ensure more answers. An example of a feedback questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 7.

Case Company X makes the feedback questionnaires using Google Forms. The title of the feedback questionnaire should be the event name and date, and it should state it is a feedback questionnaire. The title for the Situation Room feedback questionnaire was "Situation Room Nov 3rd, Feedback Survey". The questionnaire should have a short introduction, thanking guests for their participation in the event, as well as stating this is an anonymous survey. The feedback questionnaire should be made a week before the event and then sent to the Case Company X CEO, as well as the partner organizing the event, to check if they would like to add questions. Events are always unpredictable, therefore speakers might cancel, therefore after the event, it should be checked that the feedback questionnaire has the right

names of the speakers and they are in the correct order, according to their performance order. The feedback questionnaire is sent to guests the next morning after the event. The feedback questionnaires are sent by email to all attended guests. The email text should be every short and to the point, maximum 3 sentences. Example of the email text can be found in Appendix 6.

5.2 Quantitative Analysis

After the Situation Room event, a feedback questionnaire is sent to all guests. The feedback questionnaire has both qualitative and quantitative questions, which need to be analyzed in order to be able to improve future events. The questionnaire has open-ended and close-ended questions. All the close-ended questions are asking guests to rate different parts of the event from 1 to 5, therefore they are easy to analyze. However, the open-ended questions analysis can take a lot of time, due to the amount of descriptive data.

The Situation Room event has three objectives; create business opportunities, networking opportunities, as well as create new insights. To see if these objectives were a success, Company X asked guests to rate the event in terms of business opportunities, networking opportunities and gained insights from 1 to 5, 5 being the best. The feedback questionnaire got 40 respondents out of 150 guests. The table below shows the mean of all question results.

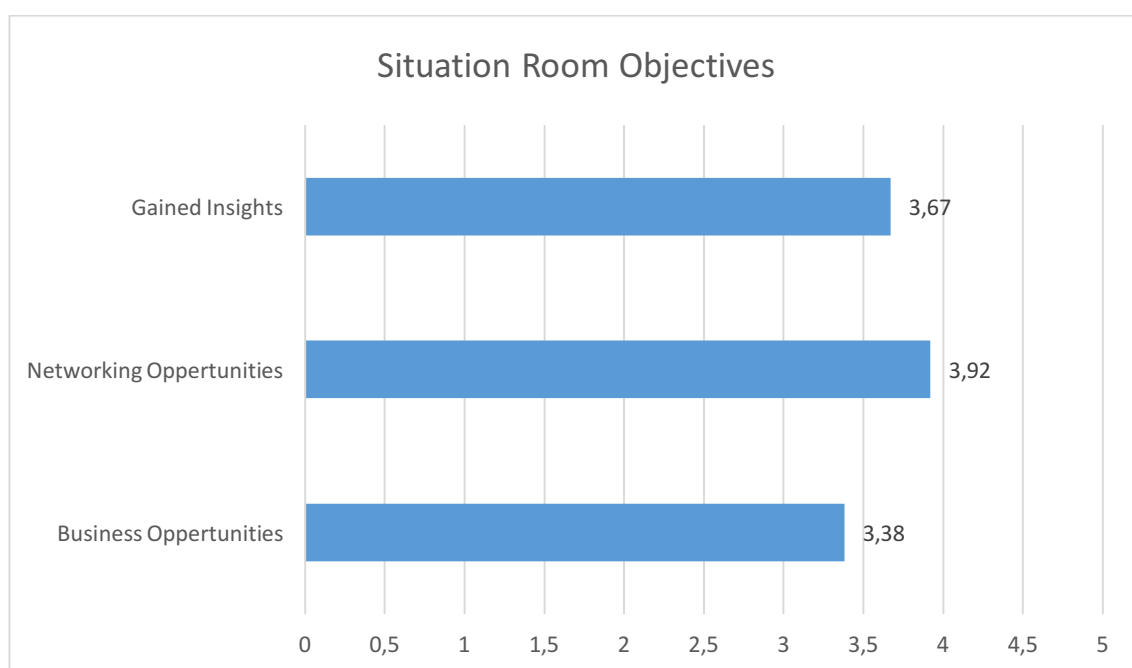


Table 2 Situation Room Objectives Feedback(Mean)

From the table above, it can be seen that the objectives were not reached to the highest potential. Five was the best score, but the overall mean for all objectives was under four. The

mean can also be discussed as average. The first question asked “How was the event in terms of gained insights” and the guests could choose an answer from one to five. Participants of the Situation Room event evaluated the gained insights having a mean of 3,67, therefore this shows the keynote speeches and panel discussion could have been better. The results of the amount of gained insights gained by guests had the mode and medium being 4. This means that even though the mean was 3,67, the most common answer was 4. 55,5% of the respondents rated the Situation Room event as being 4, while only 11% of the participants rated the gained insights as 5. 44,5% of the participants of the event rated the event in terms of gain insights as 3 or less.

The second questions asked “How was the event in terms of networking opportunities” and the guests could answer from a scale of one to five. Networking opportunities was ranked with the highest mean of 3,92, which should it was good, but could be improved and developed. The mode was rated as 4, while the mean was 3,92. This means that even though the average was under four, the most common response was four, since 42% of the participants of the event rated the networking opportunities to be 4. 27% rated the networking opportunities to be 5 and 31% of the guests rated the event in terms of networking opportunities to be 3 or less.

The third question of the feedback questionnaire asked “How was the event in terms of business opportunities” and the guests could answer from a scale of one to five. The business opportunities of the Situation Room event had the lowest mean score, with only 3,38 being the average. This most common answer was four, even though the mean was less than four. 35% of all the participants rated the business opportunities to be 4, and 30% rates them as being 5. The rest of the participants rated the event in terms of business opportunities to be 3 or less. This result shows there is a lot to do to make sure Case Company X events create new business opportunities for guests.

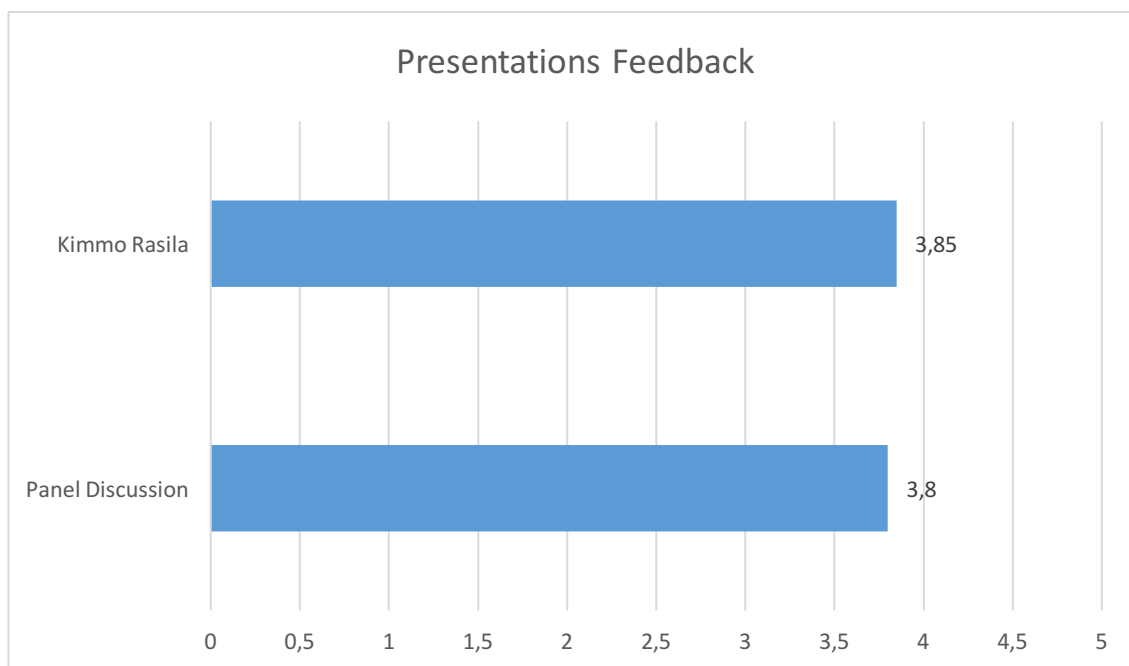


Table 3 Situation Room Presentations Feedback (Mean)

The table above shows the feedback from the presentations of the Situation Room event. The Situation Room had a keynote Speech by Kimmo Rasila and then a panel discussion with board professionals. The fourth question on the feedback questionnaire asked guests to rate Kimmo Rasila's presentation from 1 to 5, where 5 was the best. Kimmo Rasila was rated with a mean of 3,85 out of 5, which is an okay result. 42% of the participants rated Kimmo Rasila's presentation as being 4, 31% rated it to be 5 and 27% of the participants rated it as 3 or less.

The fifth question asked guests to rate the panel discussion from one to five, five being the best result. The panel discussion was rated with a mean of 3,8 out of five, while both the medium and mode were 4. This shows the most common answer was four, and out of all participants 54% of them rated it as 4. 15% rated the panel discussion as five, while the rest 27% rated the panel discussion as 3 or less. These results explain why the gained insights part earlier was rated low. The presentations are the ones that create new insights, therefore it is essential that the presentations are good. One reason for these results is that the presentations were in English, while the native language of all speakers is Finnish. Therefore, the speakers were forgetting words and the panel discussion was not so smooth.

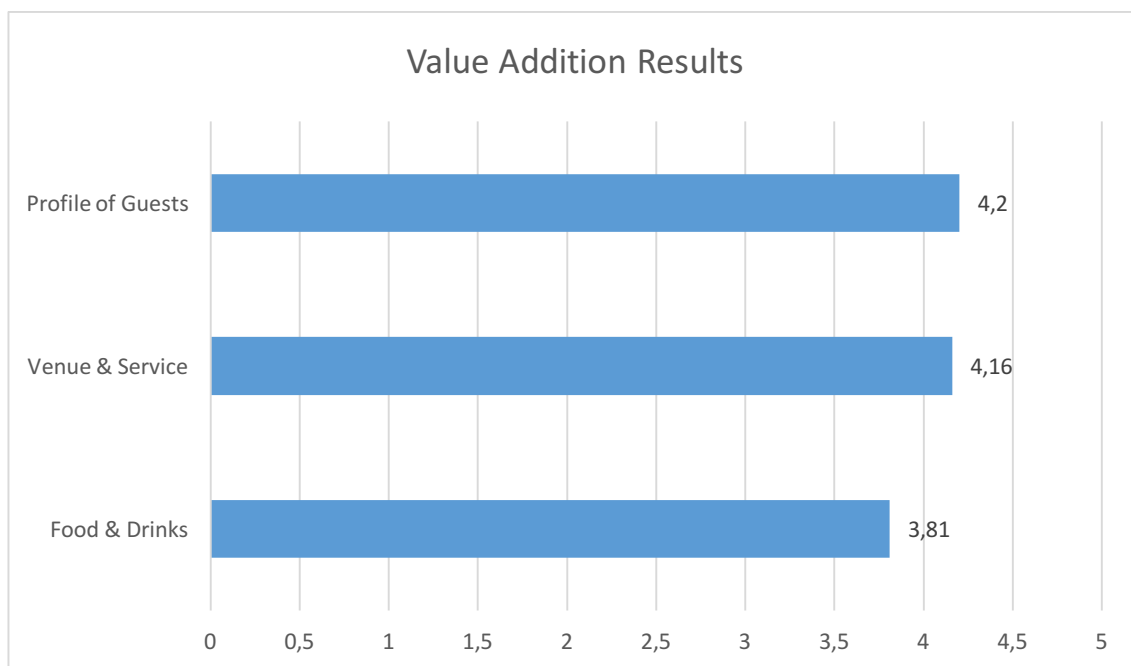


Table 4 Situation Room Feedback (Mean)

The guests were asked to rate to profile of quests, venue and service, as well as the food and drinks from one to five and the mean results can be seen from the table 4 above. The profile of guests was rated with a mean of 4,2 out of 5, which is a good result. The mode and me-
dium of the profile of guests was four, therefore the most common answer was four with 46% of guests voting for it. 35% of guests rated the profile of the guests to be 5, while the rest 15% rated it as 3 or less. This shows that the way Company X invites guests works and most guests bring value to the event.

The venue and service were rates with a mean of 4,16 out of five, which is also a good result. The guests of the Situation Room Event rated the mode and medium of the venue and service to be 4, this means the most common answer was 4. 65% of guests rated the venue and ser-
vice to be 4, while only 23% rated it to be a 5. 12% of the guests rated the venue and service to be 3 or less.

Food and Drinks were rated with a mean of 3,81 out of five, therefore there is area for im-
provement to serve better food and drinks The guests rated the food and drinks of the Situa-
tion Room event to have a medium and mode of four. 65% percent of the guests rated the
food and drinks to be 4 out of 5. 12% of the guests rated the food and drinks to be 5 and the
rest rated the food and drinks to be 3 or less.

5.3 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data was collected from the open-ended questions on the feedback question-
naire. The guests were also asked to give open feedback on the Situation Room event. The

open feedback gathers every descriptive data and allows for Case Company X to develop future events with the data. The qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic analysis.

The results of the thematic analysis found reoccurring themes that appeared in the open-ended question responses. The open-ended questions that were asked in the feedback questionnaire were for guests to give open feedback and what themes or topics they want for future events.

With the thematic analysis, the open feedback was analyzed. The responses to the open feedback were studied and re-read to become familiar with the results. The responses were then categorized into different categories. The categories were A, B, and C. These categories were then analyzed and the main themes were gathered. The reoccurring themes from the open feedback question were; food & drinks, presentations and positive feedback.

The first theme is food and drinks from the open feedback question. Food and drinks got a lot of feedback, both positive and negative. The food and drinks were described to be poor and not enough. The food was also described as being good, therefore in future events there should be more of a variety in food. Food can not always please everyone, but still with a larger variety there are more chances for pleasing everyone.

The second theme found was presentations. This means that there was a lot of feedback on presentations. The main findings were that the presentations (including panel discussion), were too long. Feedback was given on having a tighter time schedule and moving from one question to another faster. Another reoccurring comment was that the presentations could have more real life examples.

The last theme found was positive feedback. The Situation Room event got lots of positive feedback about the venue and the event itself, saying it was a success. The participants of the event were considered to be interesting and good company. The event gave lots of new insights to guests. Creating new insights was one event objective, which was achieved. Even though there was a lot of positive feedback, there is still area for improvement. For future events the presentations must be developed, the timetable should be tighter, the panel discussion should move faster and serving of food should be better.

The second open-ended questions asked guests to list themes or topics for future Company X events. The responses were analyzed and put into categories. The categories were labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, and K. These were then analyzed more and the main themes resulted to be; Case Presentations / Success Stories, Marketing and Sales, Launching a New Product,

Founder Dilemmas, HR, Financing, Internationalization, Mergers, Growth, SaaS and Investing. Now Case Company X knows, which themes startup founders want in future event.

5.4 Comparison to Previous Events

Case Company X has held three events in 2015 and these three events have been compared with each other in this part of the analysis. In the first event “Startups Go International”, the feedback questionnaire got 36 responses out of 120 guests. The second Company X event “Exit Only”, the feedback questionnaire received 58 responses out of 150 guests. The third event “Situation Room”, the feedback questionnaire got 40 respondents out of 150 guests. All three events all together have had 135 respondents.

The first analysis was made of the closed-ended questions, which asked participants to rate the event in terms of business opportunities, the event in terms of gained insights and the event in terms of networking opportunities from one to five, where five is the best result. These questions were asked, because the objective of Case Company X events are that guests gain new business opportunities, gain insights and make new connections. The results can be seen from the table 5 below, showing the mean results.

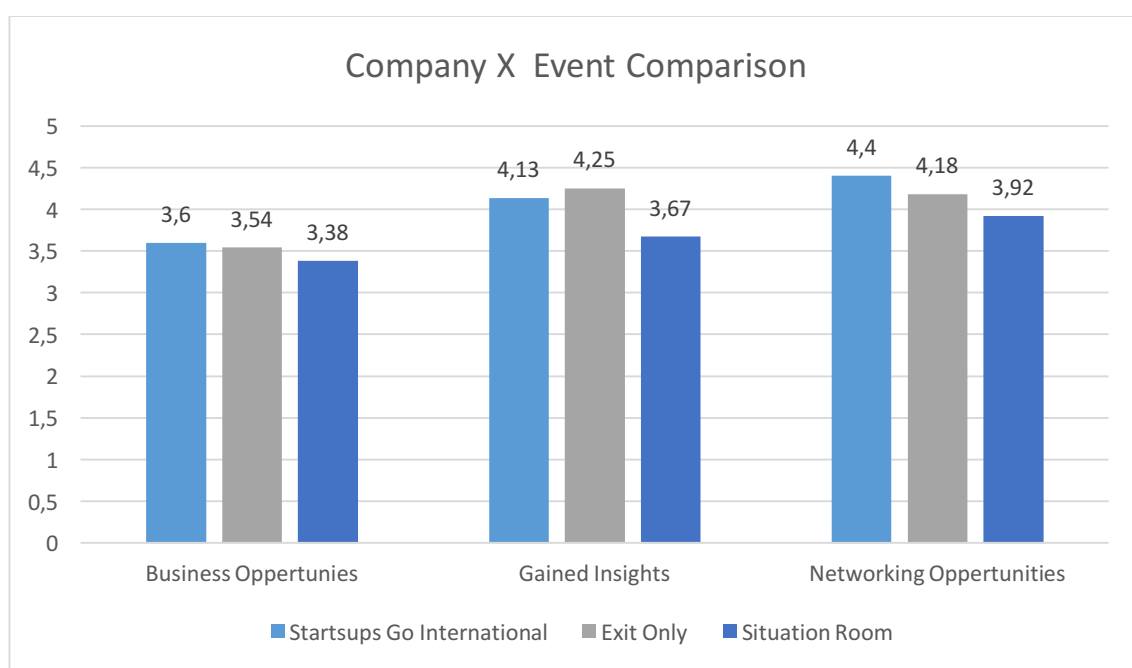


Table 5 Company X Event Comparison 1

In terms of business opportunities, the guests rated the overall average of the three events was 3,5 out of 5. This shows that there is a need for improvement and must be developed for

future events to create more value to guests. The three events held so far, Startups Go International event was rated the best in terms of business opportunities. Situation Room was rated the lowest in terms of business opportunities.

In terms of gained insights, the guests rated the overall average of the three events to be 4 out of 5. This a good result, but there is still need for improvement when considering future events. Exit Only event had the highest result in rating the gained insights. Situation Room was rated the lowest in gained insights, therefore there is a big need to develop future events.

In terms of networking opportunities, the guests rated the overall average of the three events to be 4,2 out of five. Out of all of three the different aspects, the events have succeeded in giving guests great networking opportunities, allowing them to make new connections. Startups Go International rated the networking opportunities to be the highest.

The second part of the feedback questionnaire, also asked closed-ended questions and for guests to rate the following from 1 to 5 (5 being the best); profile of the guests, the venue and service, as well as the food and drinks. The mean results can be seen in the figure 8 below.

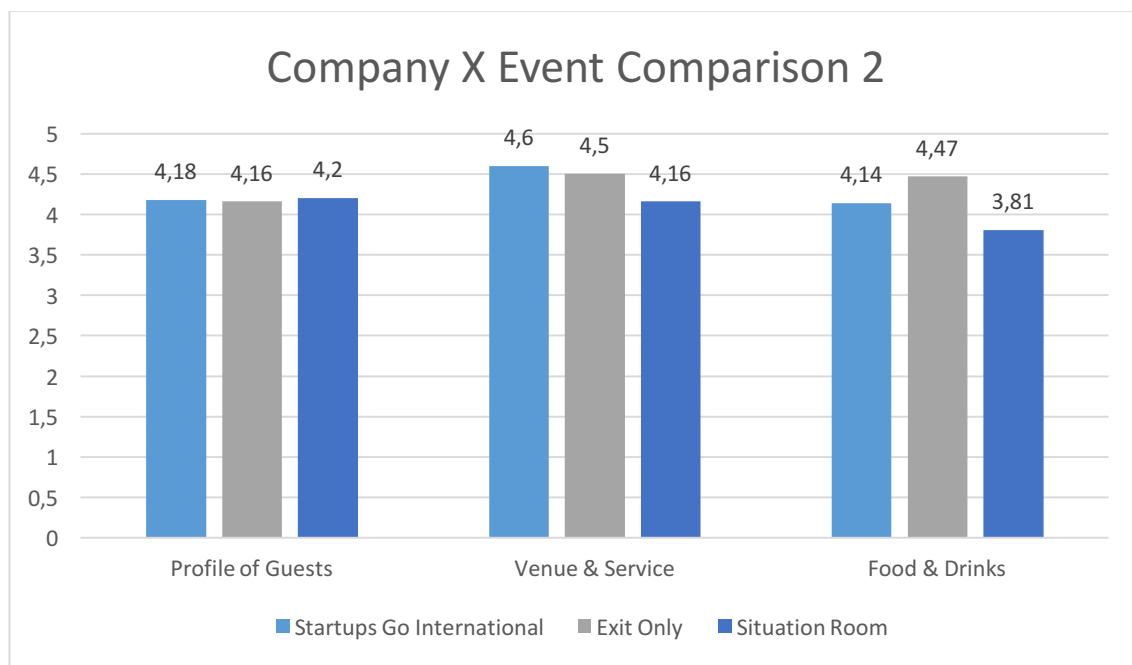


Table 6 Company X Event Comparison 2

The guests were asked to rate the profile of the questions and the average result for the three event is 4,18 out of 5. The guests, therefore consider all participants of the events to

have a good profile and bring value to the event. The event that rated the profile of the guests to be highest was Situation Room event.

The venue and service has been considered to be above average at all events, with an overall average of 4,42 out of 5. The guests therefore view the venue and service to be of good quality, but there is still need for improvement. Situation Room event was rated the lowest in terms of venue and service. Situation Room was held at the Supercell Building, while Startups Go International and Exit Only were held at Castren and Snellman, therefore the place might have an influence on the results.

The guests were asked to rate the food and drinks at the events, and the guests rated the average of all three events to be 4,14 out of five. This shows there is still need to improve of drinks and food served at Company X events. Situation Room was rated the lowest in terms of food and drinks, this may be because the pervious events were held at Castren and Snellman and this event was held at Supercell building.

The feedback questionnaire asks guests to give open feedback. The open feedback question was an open ended question, and gave a lot of detailed data. The open feedback answers were very similar to each other; therefore, they have been categorized into themes. The open feedback questionnaire themes were the following; complementing event, asking for presentation material and RSVP list, wanting shorter speeches, better/more food, and complementing of venue. From the open feedback, Case Company X can learn how to develop their future events. Company X should make more effort on the food, and making sure there is a lot of food in the beginning of the event, ass well as breaks. The guests should be sent the presentation material and the RSVP list after the event. From the open feedback question, Company X has learned that keynote speeches should be shorter and the venue space should not be tights or fully booked.

The event objectives were that Company X events provides guests with new insights, business opportunities and new networks. To some extent these objectives succeeded, but all of them still have need for future development. Startup Go International succeeded in these objectives the best with an overall average (including gaining insights, business opportunities and new networks) of 4,04 out of 5. When rating the Exit Only event, the overall average for all three objectives was 3,99 out of 5. The worst event when rating the average of the three objectives was Situation Room event, with an average of only 3,66 out of 5. None of the events scored a perfect 5 in any of the categories, therefore there is need for improvement in future events.

The aim of the events is to have at least 150 start up founders join the events. Startup Go International was the only event that did not reach this goal. Exit Only and Situation Room both had 150 startup founders. At every Company X event, the attending guests have been different startup founders, therefore they achieved their aim in having different guests at every event.

5.5 Future Development

From the feedback questionnaire, Case Company X has learned how to develop future events. The main development areas for Case Company X future events is that the events should create more business opportunities for guests. The networking part should be improved, and instead of only having free time to talk to everyone, the networking part should be organized where everyone can meet each other. The networking part can be developed a lot, in order to bring more value to the attending guests and create new business opportunities. One idea to improve future events is that the networking part as guests to form groups and discuss a certain theme or topic.

In order to guarantee the success of future events, the event program should be improved. The events should not have too much time for networking. The first hour of networking could be improved to make sure all guests talk to different people. An example of this is that there could be round table discussions for the first hour of networking, and afterwards have free networking.

The presentations at the future events should be done better than in the Situation Room event. The speakers should be comfortable with English (if the event is in English) to ensure a good presentation and the flow of conversation to be good. If native English language speakers can not be found, the events should be held in Finnish, this allows for the presentations to be better when speaker is speaking in their native language. For future events, the presentations should focus more on real life examples, instead of just the technical parts. The timetable of presentations should be tighter, and panel questions should move faster and not focus on one question for too long. Guests suggested that Company X would send them the keynote speech presentation material, as well as the event guest list after the event. In future events, both the guest list and presentation material could be sent when asking guests to answer the feedback questionnaire. This will add value to guests.

The event marketing should be improved and done very efficiently in future events, this leads to having more event awareness and creates buzz for the event. During the event, the guests

should be encouraged for to talk about the event on social media. The PowerPoint presentation should include the event hashtag, that guests can use on twitter and Instagram to create event awareness and encourage guests to use social media.

The RSVP systems needs to be improved for future events. To save time and not have any guests missing from guest list, the future events should use an online registration system. Therefore, a website can be used, where guests fill out their contact information and register to the event. This information can then be seen by Case Company X personnel, who can be updated on the guests attending. This will be a much better system, then having all guests send emails as a registration.

The theme suggested by guests for future Case Company X are the following; Case Presentations / Success Stories, Marketing and Sales, Launching a New Product, Founder Dilemmas, HR, Financing, Internationalization, Mergers, Growth, SaaS and Investing. By having future events with these themes, will lead to interest in participation of start-up founders.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, Situation Room event can be considered a successful event, because the objectives of the event were achieved, but not to the highest potential therefore there is need for improvement. The objective of the event was to gain new insights, make new networks and create business opportunities. Situation Room succeed in creating good networking opportunities, as well as gained insights. Business opportunities, on the other hand was not as good, but by developing it in future events, it can be very successful. The aim of the event was to have 150 guests, which the Situation Room event achieved and all guests were start-up founders.

The main areas of future development are making a new RSVP system, improving the presentations, improving the networking and marketing of the event. The RSVP system, should be made online to save time and enhance efficiency. The presentations during the events should have more real life example, speakers speaking in their language and not be too long. The presentations should shortly focus on one point and then move to another, to keep to the timetable. By improving the presentation, it leads to guests having more insights, which is a Case Company X event objective.

The networking part must be improved to be able to create more business opportunities and create new networks. The way to improve the networking part, is to ensure most guests have a chance to talk to each other, using round table discussion. This is where guests are asked to form groups and discuss a topic that goes with the theme of the event. To improve the profile

of guests, event marketing should be enhanced and done better. There should be more of a focus on the marketing of future events, to gain more event awareness. With these parts being developed for future events and following this event guide, future Case Company X events can be guaranteed to be successful.

7 Theoretical linkage

The knowledge base part of the thesis, included different theoretical information, which enabled the author of this thesis to create an event for Case Company X. With the theoretical information, an effective and good event plan for Case Company X was able to be created. The theoretical background included all the steps needed to plan and manage an event. From the theoretical background, the author was able to find the best way to plan and manage an event for Case Company X, as well find the best way to collect event feedback. With theoretical background, the feedback questionnaires were made. The empirical study was based on the knowledge base part of the thesis.

Without the theories and knowledge base, an effective event plan would have not been made for Case Company X. The chosen theories have been useful and appropriate for this thesis.

References

- Bryman, A. & Hardy, M. 2009. Handbook of Data Analysis. 2nd Edition. London: SAGE Publications
- Capell, L. 2013. Event Management for Dummies: A Wiley Brand. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd
- Conway, D. 2009. The Event Manager's Bible: The Complete Guide to Planning and Organising a Voluntary or Public Event. 3rd Edition. United Kingdom: How to be books Ltd
- Fenich, G. 2015. Planning and Management of Meeting, Expositions, Events, and Conventions. United States of America: Pearson
- Hoyle, L. 2002. Event Marketing: How to Successfully Promote Events, Festivals, Conventions, and Expositions. United States of America: John Wiley & Sons, Inc
- Häyrinen, E. & Vallo, H. 2008. Tapahtuma on tilaisuus: tapahtumamarkkinointi ja tapahtuman järjestäminen. 2nd Edition. Helsinki: Tietosanoma
- Jackson, N. 2013 Promotion and Marketing Events. First Edition. United States of America: Routledge
- Lindsey, K. 2011. Planning and Managing a Corporate Event. United Kingdom: How to be books Ltd
- Mikolaitis, P. & O'Toole, W. 2002. Wiley Events: Corporate Event Project Management. United States of America: John Wiley & Sons Inc
- Parry, B. & Shone, A. 2013. Successful Event Management: A Practical Handbook. 4th Edition. United Kingdom: Cengage Learning EMEA
- Raj, R. & Rashid, T. & Walters, T. 2009. Events Management: An Integrated and Practical Approach. United Kingdom: Sage Publications Ltd
- Silvers, J. 2012. Professional Event Coordination. 2nd Edition. United States of America: John Wiley & Sons, Inc
- Van der Wagen, L. & White, L. 2010. Event Management for Tourism, Cultural, Business and Sporting Events. 4th Edition. Australia: Pearson

Figures

Figure 1 Schema of Checklists (Mikolaitis & O’Toole 2002)	14
Figure 2 Event Infrastructure Overview (Silvers 2012)	16
Figure 3 Typical Event Evaluation Measurements (Silvers 2012)	24

Tables

Table 1 Risk Management.....	41
Table 2 Situation Room Objectives Feedback(Mean).....	44
Table 3 Situation Room Presentations Feedback (Mean)	46
Table 4 Situation Room Feedback (Mean).....	47
Table 5 Company X Event Comparison 1	49
Table 6 Company X Event Comparison 2	50

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Event Checklist	59
Appendix 2 Invitation	62
Appendix 3 Invitation Email Template	63
Appendix 4 Reminder Invitation Email Template	64
Appendix 5 : Welcome and Reminder Email Template	65
Appendix 6 Feedback Questionnaire Email Template.....	66
Appendix 7 Feedback Questionnaire.....	67

Appendix 1: Event Checklist

Month before Event

TO DO	DONE (✓)
Decide theme	
Decide time & date	
Book venue	
Meeting with venue organizers	
Establish responsibilities	
Confirm and brief Keynote speakers	
Create invitation	
Determine guest list	
Send invitations	
Check guests attending event	
Food and drink arrangements	
Advertise event on social media	

2 Weeks before Event

TO DO	DONE (✓)
Send reminder invitation	
Keep partners updated on attending guests	
Check program	
Check food & drink arrangements	
Arrange for photographer	
Advertise event on social media	

Arrange after party	
Remind keynote speakers when to send PP	
Background music	
Make feedback survey	

2 Days before Event

TO DO	DONE (✓)
Send welcoming/reminder email to guests	
Update partners on guests attending	
Check audio & lights & seating	
Print Programs (if needed)	
Make sure all speakers have sent their PowerPoint	
Check all guests will have name tags	
Send RSVP list to Partner organizing event	

On the day of the Event

TO DO	DONE (✓)
Check location set up	
Arrange registration table	
Check sound and lighting equipment	
Make sure there is water for speakers	
Make sure everyone knows what they are doing	
Have technical support nearby	
Make sure speaker's PowerPoints work	
Make sure you know how to handle technology	

Brief the photographer	
Set up the roll-ups	

After the Event

TO DO	DONE (✓)
Send feedback survey e-mail	
Collect survey data	
Get photos and post them online with Partner logos	
Check how many guests attended event	
Send RSVP list to all partners	
Write a article on the event and post on website	

Appendix 2 Invitation



Nov 3, 2015, 17:00



Supercell building, Itämerenkatu 11-13

What is the role of the Board Members and Advisors in startups and growth companies? Are they just bunch of smartasses contributing nothing? In most of the cases yes, but playing your cards right you can get real tangible value.

Join us and other founders to learn about how to get the most out of your Board and Advisors. Great insight, new networks, drinks & food. The event is free of charge and for ambitious founders only. No service providers or students.

17:00 Welcoming Drinks & Snacks

17:30 Keynotes & Insights, Part 1

18:45 Drinks Refill

19:00 Keynotes & Insights, Part 2

20:30 Networking, more drinks and snacks

Confirm your participation to community@supercell.com ASAP

The exclusive event is for a limited amount of founders!

Supercell Community provides increased networks, insight and business opportunities for ambitious entrepreneurs. To learn more and to join the community go to supercell.com/community.

Powered by:  pwc

 CORUM
MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

 VALJAS

 DAGMAR*

 CASTRÉN & SNELLMAN

 MEHILÄINEN

Appendix 3 Invitation Email Template

1st email

Date: 5 weeks before

Sent to: All founders

Subject: Invitation - *Event name* by Company X (*Month, day, year*)

Hi!

Welcome to Company X's event on *weekday, date* to meet founders and to learn about *theme*.

We will serve good food, drinks and company. For free.

Before the main event at *time*, we will organize a *name of pre-event* with *Partner company name (time)*, where you will gain meaningful insights.

Event will be held at *venue name, address*.

RSVP: ASAP to email community@company.fi (as: cc). Please let us know if you will attend at *time of pre-event* or *time of main event*.

Best regards,

Your name

Attachment: Invitation

Appendix 4 Reminder Invitation Email Template

2nd email

Date: 2 weeks before

Sent to: those who did not reply to 1st email

Subject: Reminder: *Event Name (Month, day, year: time)*, 120 start-up founders signed up

Hi!

Welcome to Company X's event on *weekday, date at time* to meet other start-up founders and learn about *theme*.

The event has already *x number of* people signed up and the keynote speeches will be about *theme*.

We will serve good food, drinks and company. For free.

Before the main event at *time*, we will organize a *name of pre-event* with *Partner company name (time)*, where you will gain meaningful insights.

Event will be held at *venue name, address*.

RSVP: ASAP to email community@companyx.fi (as: cc). Please let us know if you will attend at *time of pre-event* or *time of main event*.

Best regards,

Your name

Attachment: Invitation

Appendix 5 : Welcome and Reminder Email Template

Date: 2 days before event

Sent to: Attending guests

Subject: "*Event name*" event on *weekday*, *00:00*, *Address*

Hi!

Welcome to our "*Event name*" event this week *weekday* in Helsinki. The event is held this *weekday (date)* at *time* in *venue name*. The address is *address*, Helsinki.

According to our information you are not attending to the pre-event *name of pre-event* starting at *time*. Please let me know if you are joining us already at *time* or you are unavailable to join to the event at all.

See you on *Weekday!*

Best Regards,

Your name

Attachment: Invitation

Appendix 6 Feedback Questionnaire Email Template

Date: Day after event!
Sent to: attended guests

Subject: 1-2min feedback / *Event Name*

Hi!

Thank you for joining us yesterday!

Please take 1-2min of your time to fill in this anonymous feedback form: *insert link*

And if you are not yet following us Facebook, here you go :) *Add link to facebook*

Best regards,
Your name

Appendix 7 Feedback Questionnaire

Title: Event X (Date): Feedback Questionnaire

Rate the following questions from 1-5 (5 being the best):

1. How was the event in terms of business opportunities?
2. How was the event in terms of networking opportunities?
3. How was the event in terms of gained insights?
4. How would you rate the profile of the guests?
5. Rate the Presentations:
 - a. Person X, Company X
 - b. Person X, Company X
 - c. Person X, Company X
6. How was the venue and service?
7. How was the food and drinks?
8. Please give us open feedback.
9. What themes and topics do you wish to have in future events?