

The Implementation of an Online Ticket Platform as a Cultural Management Strategy

A Implementação de uma Plataforma de Ingressos Online Como Estratégia de Gestão Cultural

Cidália Oliveira

cidalia.oliveira@eeg.uminho.pt
NIPE –University of Minho, Portugal

Gonçalo Vieira Castro

goncalovieiradecastro7@gmail.com
Instituto de Estudos Superiores de Fafe, Portugal

Carmem Leal

cleal@utad.pt
University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro; Portugal CETRAD

Rui Silva

ruisilva@utad.pt
University of Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro; Portugal CETRAD

Abstract/ Resumo

The significant reductions in local government funds generate several challenges, especially to provide continuous development of the area of culture, due to reduced financial resources.

The present theoretical-practical research aims to evaluate the cultural management planning model of a local government in Northern Portugal, as neither in the literature nor in an empirical analysis has the implementation of an online ticket platform been described. The planning and implementation of an online platform is seen as crucial to, on the one hand, improve and develop the online communication of the planned events and, on the other, enable a correct cost analysis of the sold tickets. This analysis becomes crucial as local governments need to have interesting programs to boost culture, but also to assure the economic sustainability of these programs, so it is increasingly important to make a balanced management of resources.

This research addressed a gap in cultural, mana-

As significativas reduções de verbas do governo local geram diversos desafios, principalmente no que diz respeito ao desenvolvimento contínuo da área de cultura, devido à redução dos recursos financeiros.

A presente investigação teórico-prática pretende avaliar o modelo de planeamento da gestão cultural de uma autarquia do Norte de Portugal, uma vez que nem na literatura nem na análise empírica foi descrita a implementação de uma plataforma de bilhetes online. O planeamento e implementação de uma plataforma online é considerado fundamental para, por um lado, melhorar e desenvolver a comunicação online dos eventos programados e, por outro, permitir uma correta análise dos custos dos bilhetes vendidos. Esta análise torna-se fundamental, pois os governos locais precisam ter programas interessantes para fomentar a cultura, mas também têm de garantir a sustentabilidade económica desses programas, por isso é cada vez mais importante fazer uma gestão equilibrada dos recursos.

gement literature, as it intends to shed some light on the barriers of cultural programming and its cost-analysis. Only a few studies are directly related to cultural management, which triggered the need to address this gap.

This study employs a qualitative case study method of research on the implementation of an online ticket platform.

Based on this research a guide to select an online ticket platform was drawn up. Even if it cannot be generalized, it provides pertinent information on management practices in the cultural management area. This study provides practical insights into an online ticket system as a cultural management strategy at city level. Results could inform the decision-making of practitioners who are responsible for management cultural programmes.

Future research may develop the present investigation to enable benchmarking between local governments.

Keywords: Management, Cultural Management, Culture, Cultural Planning, Cultural Programming

JEL Code: R11

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we notice that culture has increased its relevance and in order to understand this development, it is pertinent to highlight that culture is not limited to artistic manifestations or political actions. Usually, cultural policies are understood as the set of interventions carried out by civil institutions and organized community groups in order to guide symbolic development, to satisfy the cultural needs of the population and to obtain consensus for a kind of order or social transformation (Coelho, 2011).

To achieve social transformation, cultural management faces huge challenges, especially in small local governments. Bearing these barriers in mind, in order to guide managers or administrators to evaluate the performance of events (number of tickets sold) a cultural management tool would leverage the control over local government's activities.

Furthermore, as cultural management is relevant to promote communication and plan

Esta pesquisa abordou uma lacuna na literatura de gestão cultural, pois pretende lançar alguma luz sobre as barreiras da programação cultural e sua análise de custos. Poucos estudos estão diretamente relacionados à gestão cultural, o que desencadeou a necessidade de suprir essa lacuna.

Este estudo consiste num método qualitativo de estudo de caso de pesquisa sobre a implementação de uma plataforma de tickets online.

Com base nesta investigação foi elaborado um guia para selecionar uma plataforma de ingressos online. Mesmo que não seja generalizável, fornece informações pertinentes sobre as práticas de gestão na área de gestão cultural. Este estudo fornece informações práticas sobre um sistema de ingressos online, aplicado como uma estratégia de gestão cultural. Esta investigação permite orientar, os profissionais responsáveis por programas culturais de gestão, na tomada de decisão.

Investigações futuras poderão desenvolver a presente investigação para permitir o benchmarking entre governos locais.

Palavras-chave: Gestão, Gestão Cultural, Cultura, Planeamento Cultural, Programação Cultural

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cultural programs, interactions need to be boosted to consequently allow higher performance and better cost analysis of the programs. On the one hand, there has been a sharp increase in cultural events taking place in cities, to animate communities, celebrate diversity, and improve quality of life (Quinn, 2005) leading consumers to consider culture as a relevant (Costa, 2017). On the other hand, as a result of the economic environment, culture has been directly and primarily affected by the budget reductions over the last few years (Mendinhos, 2012). Bearing these opposite approaches in mind, cultural activities could be analysed in an integrated and comprehensive way to ensure the growth of diversified cultural practices and activities by local government (Costa, 2017). Regarding the constraints related to boosting culture, due to the economic restrictions, cultural management bridges culture and development, viewing culture as one of the pillars of territorial capacity building for sustainable development (Bianchini, 1999). Fostering cultural habits

leads to value recognition in diverse cultural fields (Costa, 2017). Tourism continues to be considered as a feasible economic option, especially when interrelated with culture, leisure and retail, as it is capable of boosting culture and economy. Culture and tourism are interlinked, as cultural experiences attract tourists and residents to leisure activities and provide an opportunity to improve their sense of belonging (Herrero et al., 2011). The key to develop this strategy, namely to boost culture based on tourism, lies in finding the right balance between attracting new visitors and nurturing existing ones (Rentschler, 2004). Planning fosters economic linkages emphasizing local community consultation and tourism as a positive development option (Smith, 2004).

Bearing in mind the need to improve and develop the online communication of the planned events and, on the other hand, enable a correct cost analysis of the sold tickets this research aims to describe the steps involved in selecting and implementing an Online Ticket Platform.

Following this research path, the next section will highlight the relevant literature, followed by a methodological section in which the Case Study methodology is described, the discussion of the results and conclusion ensue and finally a short description of limitations and suggestions for further research is provided.

Although there is a great variety of research carried out on Management Performance Tools in several areas, namely Higher Education, as in the literature of Fijałkowska and Oliveira (2018), or other industrial or service providing areas (Kaplan & Norton, 2007; Marr et al., 2004), our literature review evidences a lack of an aggregated Cultural Management Performance Tool.

The aim of this research consists in providing guidance for the following Research Question:

To what extent is cultural ticket performance relevant as a cultural management strategy?

Consequently the following propositions have been identified.

- 1- Understand the relevance of Cultural Ticket Performance;
- 2- Identify the value of an online ticket platform for the cultural agenda of cities.

2. CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Cultural management has only recently gained relevance, which means the available literature review is still in a growing phase, and is known as an area that adapts the principles of management to the cultural and arts sectors (Colbert & St-james, 2014; Cray et al., 2007), one that is grounded on management (DeVereaux, 2009).

Regarding its relevance, on the one hand, culture plays a key role in tourism as it socially sustains local communities (Zaidan, 2019). On the other hand, it is noted that the acts of tourism are diverse, complex and multifaceted, which means that tourism does not fully add to this complexity. It is recognized that overtourism is necessarily a uniformity of tourism impacts triggering the need for cities to have a support capacity (Koens et al., 2018).

Cultural Management facilitates the organization of artistic and cultural activities, as a cultural manager monitors the whole cultural management and enables the production of art (Chong, 2010). It is known that a cultural manager, besides supporting and monitoring its team, is also involved in managing the needed resources for the events (Byrnes, 2012). Effective leadership ability is afforded to manage people and achieve goals (Cray, Inglis, & Freeman, 2007). A model of analysis for decision-making regarding partnerships in the artistic field can be used as a systematization of the flow of activity of the cultural organization for the purposes of its internal management (Preece, 2005). Branco (2013) refers that the most relevant change that Preece (2005) introduces to Porter's model (1980) is the substitution of profitability by viability as a way of constructing value in the performing arts, as cultural organizations guide decisions to reach viability.

Regarding the aim of cultural management Chong (2010) argues that most people in creative industries consider cultural management as related purely to administrative functions of a cultural institution or organization.

Management principles increase the benefits for all stakeholders in a sustainable way, in cultural management as in other activities planning is crucial to enable the right and correct resource allocation. Consequently, the definition

of what matters and the definition of strategic planning for metrics are crucial to guide action (Taylor, 2006). In order to have a complete monitoring of indicators the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable and Agreed, Realistic, Time-based criterion) methodology is useful (Teixeira, 2011). Quality management intended for the public service of cultural organizations (Branco, 2013).

Management tools are facilitators to achieve objectives, meaning that cultural organizations can act as for-profit entities, but in a non-profit-oriented social responsibility activity (Taylor, 2006). Colbert (2003) considers that cultural management involves a double risk, related to the orientation towards the fulfilment of the mission of the organization, and its profitability, as it focuses on balancing the organization's mission with the available budget to ensure sustainability.

In cultural management there are four key activities that need to be performed, namely planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling. Artistic institutions can benefit from quantitative and statistical analyses of management theories, as well as from monitoring practices of routine procedures (Byrnes, 2012). Cultural organizations fall into the category of new organizations defined by Teixeira (2005), composed of knowledge workers. In these organizations, unlike traditional organizations, knowledge focuses on the basis rather than the top and decisions are made by these experts. The manager of these teams is, above all, an integrator and facilitator.

The role of a cultural manager is to recognize in the environment around the organization the elements that can offer opportunities or threats, in order to guide the organization. Artists are encouraged to perform interactions and explore new ideas in order to develop public art that is meant to stimulate the local environment (Kovacs & Biggar, 2018). It is known that culture can leverage urban regeneration and image renewal due to its economic dimension (García, 2004). To this end, a simple method of analysing an organization's environment may be based on a SWOT analysis. Strategic planning requires recognition of the organization's current situation (internal analysis of strengths and weaknesses) and its external environment (external analysis of opportunities and threats). The identification of these elements are achieved by gathering and analysing information from a variety of sources, namely the public, the

community, internal teams, the board of directors, other cultural and artistic entities, the media and critics, professional associations and consultants, among others (Byrnes, 2012).

As most of the activities that are carried out in a cultural organization are based on the interaction between the organization and its external environment, and on the exchange of information, it represents a management priority to accomplish the organization's mission by maintaining dynamic balances among all linked factors (Byrnes, 2012).

At each level of management, the objectives should be specific and concrete to have achievable targets. In order to achieve clear targets, organizational vision and mission such as the communication of the global strategy is extremely relevant, as these are the base for the cause and effect linkages (Hoque, 2014).

3. ORGANIZING CULTURAL EVENTS

Within cultural management, organizing cultural events consists in converting foreseen targets into actions, namely allocating people and resources, defining details, creating a schedule and budget. Each organization has its own process to assign people and other resources to the execution of the plans in order to achieve the established objectives (Kaplan & Norton, 1996c).

The uniformity of criteria is important in the institution's interactions with the public. According to Byrnes (2012) organizations should adapt to fulfil its objectives and mission.

When devising strategies related to urban planning, these strategies should be adjusted to suburban contexts. Cruickshank (2018) reveals that culture may be an instrument to help rural local governments flourish, but, on the other hand, it also might impede development.

These organizational structure processes can be divided into several forms, such as functional (departmental by function); divisional (departmental by area of activity - product, geographic area, market); by projects (departmentalization in project teams) that vary with time, depending on the beginning and end of the projects that the organization develops; by matrix (simultaneously with functional departmentalization, project teams are formed, giving rise to two lines of authority).

Myrvold and Wergeland (2018) have devoted especial attention to understanding how

public art practices influence ongoing reconfiguration, regarding the effort of both public administration and art community to stimulate citizens to nature-oriented and public spaces. Art leverages interdisciplinary collaborations that may lead to transformation in cultural policy (Myrvold & Wergeland, 2018).

Organizational culture makes each organization unique and different, conditioning and framing the way it is managed, namely how planning, organization, leadership, and control are done. Schein (1990) proposes three levels of organizational culture: artifacts (what you see, hear and feel, decor and furniture; people's dress code, and cabinet doors).

Related to the organization of cultural events, strategic corporate communication is crucial to influence behavior and to achieve the defined organizational performance (Spear & Roper, 2016). Even knowing the relevance of strategy communication, managers experienced difficulty in measuring the impact of communication due to its intangible nature (Ritter, 2003).

4. COORDINATING AND COMMUNICATION IN CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Coordinating consists in having an organization's members aligned to achieve a global vision of what can be achieved. In this sense, leadership and efficiency are very important (Kaplan & Norton, 2001a; Nikour, 2017; Oliveira, 2020).

Cultural managers that work with highly motivated and independent collaborators have a greater possibility of becoming good leaders, even if there is not one right way to exercise leadership. Organizations linked to cultural management have an intense creative and intellectual component. Even bearing this in mind, very often it is noted that leaders get bogged down in routine and administrative tasks, rather than performing activities that actually contribute to the organization's mission (Byrnes, 2009). Leadership is intrinsically related to motivation which will develop efforts in order to achieve the objectives of the organization (Teixeira, 2005). The manager develops an effective motivation in his subordinates when he achieves an alignment between the objectives of the organization and the personal objectives of each person.

Therefore, it is important to remember how essential it is to highlight the need for develop-

ment of creative work (Byrnes, 2012).

The main key to providing a bridge for all the activities related to the organization is communication, as communication beyond being accurate, needs to be persuasive (Carmona et al. (2011). By means of strategy communication, a leverage on Organizational performance and learning might be reached (Angwin, Cummings & Daellenbach, 2019). In this sense, before communicating strategy, it is known that mapping has the potential to provide persuasive communication (Carmona et al., 2011; Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Mintzberg (1989) considers that managers spend about 80% of their time communicating. In addition to formal communication, which stems from the hierarchical lines of the organizational structure - communication between superior and subordinate, either downwards or upwards - there is informal communication, which tends to fill in formal communication gaps. This communication occurs faster than formal communication, since it lacks standards and procedures, and works out of time and work space, making it very difficult to control. It is, however, a mechanism that can add effectiveness to formal communication. A participatory work environment in which people feel valued and motivated is an environment in which informal communication flows in a beneficial rather than detrimental way. Collaborators may feel uncomfortable, devalued, unmotivated when led by ineffective leaders and where relevant information tends to be centralized, creating a climate of mistrust that promotes perverse informal communication flows and counter intelligence.

The relevance of business analytics has to be taken into account as it is known that these influence the way planning, control and performance measurement tasks are performed. In this sense, namely to monitor performance, BSC fosters the fulfilment of procedures by monitoring several indicators (Rikhardsson & Yigitbasioglu, 2018). Information technologies distinguish competitive advantage, as they determine the cost position, as well as the differentiation of the organization (Buhalis, 1998).

Even knowing about the advantages of online platforms, it is common to see that many consumers get in long lines, for many hours at the ticket office just to buy tickets. The fact that inhibits them from buying online is related to payment security, so when implementing an online platform, it is essential to safeguard a

safe and trusting environment for consumers (Chen, 2006). On the other hand, there is yet another limitation, related to privacy (Kolsaker et al., 2004). Through information technologies, consumer satisfaction can be leveraged by providing more options and information (Buhalis, 1998), for example. Online platforms bring price transparency (O'Connor & Frew, 2004).

In particular, communicating strategy to employees is critical in order to guide their behavior and drive organizational performance (Spear & Roper, 2016). As online ticket platforms have a determinant role, it is known that communication is relevant to promote the sales. Consequently, managers have difficulty in measuring the impact of communication due to its intangible nature (Ritter, 2003). Regarding online ticket platforms of local governments, it is difficult to measure the impact of communication on the number of sold tickets, but given the relevance of this intangible nature, Alsharari et al. (2019) state that intellectual capital is part of organizational strategy.

5. CONTROLLING IN CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Controlling in cultural management consists in monitoring and checking the results against the targets and identifying actions to reach the defined targets in the short-term period. In this sense, controlling is closely related to planning activity and consists of assessing the organization's work, i.e., checking compliance with plans, comparing actual performance with previously defined standards. Cultural management is a combination of bottom-up and top-down, which is more desirable than an unregulated initiative. Unregulated initiatives ensure that initiatives remain financially viable (Liddegard, 2018). As managers are not able to control everything that goes on in the organization, it is important to select strategic points of control to concentrate the effort. In the 80s Controlling achieved prominence as at this time also public institutions began to recognize the importance of Controlling areas. By means of Controlling tools, public institutions were also able to implement their strategies and to monitor their performance (Kaplan & Norton, 1996b; Kennerley & Neely, 2003; Taticchi et al., 2010).

For several years the reform in public sectors was driven by global movements of New Public Management as referred by De Boer et al.

(2007), devoting special attention to defining performance targets and forms of measurement (Moynihan, & Pandey, 2010; Rabovsky, 2014). Management tools also allow for the monitoring of public organizations, adapted to their needs (Green et al., 2002; Gumbus & Lussier, 2006; Rosa et al., 2016).

In public sector organizations there is a potential for implementing tools linked to Management Control, as referred by Kaplan & Norton (2001), triggering a re-centering since the classic configuration is more suitable for private organizations whose purposes are associated with profit (Chan, 2004; Kaplan, 2001). However, the maximum objective in public organizations is not, as in private organizations, the financial perspective as the maximum objective is not aimed at profit, being the customer perspective the most valued (Kaplan & Norton, 1996a). Additionally, in order to exceed the expectations of their visitors or users, public sector organizations are dedicated to the continuous improvement of their services (Kaplan, 2001).

Management Control monitors the performance and guides managers in their decision taking (Collier, 2015). Furthermore, it supports managers in decision making depending on the degree of uncertainty of organizations or processes (Saukkonen, Laine & Suomala, 2018).

Through management tools, the connection of the mission and strategy to day-to-day operations is enabled (Kaplan, 2001) and have to be based on a robust organizational strategy capable of combining performance measurement systems (Langfield-Smith, 1997).

In this vein, Nielsen, Mitchell and Nørreklit (2015) stress the need to use comprehensive indicators to support decisions as managers need their decisions to be based on rational indicators.

Public organizations have particular difficulty in monitoring organizational performance, given that traditional Management Control systems focus mainly on financial indicators. For these organizations their success is due to the effectiveness and efficiency of their objectives (Kaplan, 2001). These strategic points should be chosen taking into account due to their relevance in achieving the organization's objectives, which are proportionality between the necessary control effort, (namely costs and time to obtain information) and benefits (scope and extent), to enable effective prevention or corrective actions. Control systems are based on

performance standards, which stem from the objectives set during planning and can relate to monetary values (budget control systems), time (such as project management systems) or behavior (Teixeira, 2005). Besides the traditional indicators, special attention needs to be devoted to some indicators related to non-financial records, such as high-quality services and intellectual capital (Chavan, 2009; Oliveira, Pinho, & Silva, 2018).

Standards should be measurable in the context of the organization, even if the mission is difficult to quantify. Collier (2015) states that the information mainly serves the interests of internal users as the management reports are not strictly linked to audits or accounting rules. Furthermore, Collier (2015) states that operational decisions are based on financial and non-financial information. In cultural organizations, one of the most important and also complex challenges is the definition of evaluation indicators which, despite not being quantifiable, can be verified by comparing a standard or target to real value. The implementation of a management tool allows for a greater rigor in the monitoring of organizational performance (Busco et al., 2014). As cultural managers have the need to follow their indicators based on strategic guidelines, objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPI), the use of management tools will allow for the strategic paths to be supported by an efficient performance measurement system (Cokins, 2017).

6. METHODOLOGY

This research intends to contribute to improving and developing the online communication of planned events and, on the other hand,

enabling a correct cost analysis of the sold tickets, namely by guiding managers or administrators in the evaluation of the performance of events (number of tickets sold). Considering the research aim a qualitative research method was selected, namely a single Case Study to shed more light on the issue (Yin, 2003).

Bearing in mind the research aim, the following propositions have been identified.

1- Understand the relevance of Cultural Ticket Performance;

2- Identify the value of an online ticket platform for the cultural agenda of cities.

The data collection is relevant as it is the preliminary source of information, gathered and explored in detail. By underlining the relevance of having in-depth understanding and knowledge, case studies are adequate for this purpose (Yin, 2005,2015).

The process of systematic inquiring sheds light on a problem by successive and interconnected steps to provide insights into the research question (Real & Ferreira, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to get empirical evidence in this interpretative and exploratory study. They are a popular method in qualitative research, aiming to provide deeper knowledge of interviewees' experiences (Patton, 1990). A first semi-structured interview with the head of the Municipality was carried out. Four other interviewees were selected by convenience as they were the ones who work directly with the Cultural Division.

Despite having received authorization to record the interviews, it was agreed that the interviewees would remain anonymous, so they were coded as I1, I2, I3, I4 and I5, as seen below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Interviewee profile

Code	Gender	Years of experience	Academic degree	Position	Interview Duration
I1	Male	40	Bachelor	President	45 minutes
I2	Male	28	Bachelor	Culture Councilor	50 minutes
I3	Male	41	Bachelor	Division Head	35 minutes
I4	Female	30	Bachelor	Head of Communication	45 minutes
I5	Male	25	Master	Councilor Advisor	30 minutes

Source: Self elaboration

By means of these interviews the relevance of the topic was tested, which is crucial to implement a relevant and useful tool.

Initially, the first interview was conducted with the Culture Councilor of the Municipality, who is the person to whom the Mayor delegates the powers to administer and manage the municipal equipment and its programming, so he was interviewed for the initial questions. Following this first interview, the four subsequent interviews were performed. After the first interview process, several sessions of brainstorming were held to define the implementation.

To identify and analyse the management tool, so as to consequently enable its implementation, a methodological model was designed, explaining the steps to identify the adequate model and how to control and measure the implementation benefits.

7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ONLINE TICKET PLATFORM

The first step consisted of the main interview with the Culture Councilor, in which the need to have an integrated way to control the tickets of cultural events was discussed. A total of five interviews were conducted to collect information on the issue of setting up a platform for the management of tickets and their related costs.

The usefulness and validity of the implementation of such a model was tested, based on an effective strategic planning logic. Furthermore, the aim is to be able to permanently monitor and evaluate the performance allowing for a continuous adaptation of the defined strategy.

The feasibility of the platform in terms of its effectiveness and efficiency, namely the costs (in economic terms, time, effort), in obtaining and processing information needs to be controlled to enable a continuous and regular process. By monitoring and evaluating results it may be possible to measure the effects of each of the concrete actions that are put in place to achieve them (Lueg, 2014)

Finally, it is important to stress the importance of involving stakeholders in the establishment of indicators, of being directly involved in establishing the goals to be achieved and even in the choice and calibration of the indicators used to evaluate their activity. This involvement is important for both the implementation and the monitoring of the platform.

Considering the explained relevance, several online ticket platforms were analysed by the

interviewees in brainstorming sessions, to evaluate the strengths and threats of each platform in order to identify the most adequate platform for this specific case, namely the planning and monitoring of the cultural agenda.

The group of five interviewees analysed the advantages and disadvantages of four different online ticket platforms in detail, having focused mainly on:

- Possibility to adjust the dimension of the rooms;
- Analysis of the tickets sold per year;
- Analysis of additional costs to online sales;
- APP validation;
- Drill-down of implementation costs.

After having analysed the specific details of each platform, the most adequate was selected, based on a cost benefit analysis. In this cost analysis, also hardware, like control systems and ticketing, pre-order systems, consulting services and other related costs were included. Furthermore, the evaluation took into account whether the platform was able to accommodate a particular venue, i.e., whether it could issue the exact number of tickets available for a specific event.

8. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Even if the purpose of public administration is not to obtain profit, but to satisfy the needs of society as far as culture and other basic services are concerned, there is still great difficulty in managing a municipality.

The interview data highlight the need for the implementation of an online ticket platform to manage the cultural area of the municipality. Our results support Preece (2005) as in the cultural area decisions are guided by the criterion of viability. This viability is noticeable in artistic merit, community contribution and organizational effectiveness, so this tool makes it possible to quantify and measure, through well-defined indicators and objectives, the contribution of a given event to the municipality.

The online ticket platform's effectiveness depends on the dynamic it has to reorganize priorities and reorder strategies. As challenges in the cultural field are constantly changing, this tool must be flexible to assess multi-level action and not focus only on quantitative measurements.

In addition, it is assumed that the implementation of this tool is fundamental to monitor

cultural strategies and their impacts over time and on an ongoing basis. It should combine indicators of several types (input, output and outcome), which will initially be provided in a more quantitative way, but which should be complemented by others of a more qualitative nature. It is important to emphasize the importance of involving those responsible for the guardianship when it is time to stipulate and validate the indicators.

Regarding the online platform, reliability and speed are crucial during ticket validation.

Validation, in general, must be able to guarantee two things: legitimacy and

ticket ownership. Legitimacy is confirmed by checking that the ticket provided to the validator is of a legal transaction and not an unauthorized copy.

This tool needs to incorporate the operationalization of the cultural area strategy and the current management processes (*modus operandi*) of the culture division of the municipality, dedicating special attention to performance monitoring and target definition, as stated in the literature (Moynihan, & Pandey, 2010; Rabovsky, 2014). The mapping, monitoring and evaluation of the cultural activities of the city will thus contribute to improving the management of the municipality, promoting a better coordination between departments.

By resorting to this platform the whole ticket management process would become less bureaucratic, since the previous process entailed the ordering of printed tickets for each event. Other benefits include speed and immediate availability of the ticket office for any event, at any time, offering environmentally-friendly solutions, namely by reducing paper usage and waste.

Indeed, in its current structure, the culture sector needs to continuously and efficiently evaluate coordination, planning and interaction in the diverse cultural division. This means that constant attention is devoted to performance measurement and target setting (Moynihan, & Pandey, 2010; Rabovsky, 2014). An external entity may designate a set of more or less standard indicators to evaluate an action, but managers that are directly involved are the ones that should be present in the definition of objectives so as to be able to define resource allocation, and practical implementation. For this reason, policy makers and others appointed by them will need to be necessarily and properly involved in setting goals and indicators used to

assess their activity. At the same time, although the know-how of this tool may come from external entities, it seems fundamental to build a structure that has the capacity to accumulate knowledge, work practices and data collection and processing mechanisms capable of ensuring consistent and continuous monitoring. This would allow for an effective monitoring system and not just a set of indicators and targets for periodic or occasional evaluation.

Nowadays, when it comes to define points sales points, the public today tends to opt for the convenience of online shopping. The speed of booking a ticket with just a few clicks, without having to move to a sales desk makes the process much more agile, with the organizer also being able to measure the impact of the event online and on-time, comparing it to the target audience. In case of deviations, the Brainstorming Focus Group identified that through social networks, an increase in sales might be promoted.

This research encourages reflection on cultural management in local governments and although it cannot be generalized, it provides pertinent information on the conceptions and practices of management in the area of culture. Although in a local government or public context it is assumed that the most important objective is the promotion and dissemination of culture and not the financial return, this does not imply that the management model cannot be optimized.

9. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research consists in understanding the relevance of Cultural Ticket Performance by identifying the value of an online ticket platform for a cultural agenda. Furthermore, the platform enables the monitoring of ticket performance. By detailing the implementation steps of an Online Ticket Platform, some relevant insights into the cultural management topic have been provided.

By means of the interviews it was ascertained that cultural programming is crucial and assumes a facilitating role towards performance. It is especially relevant to consider the role of culture, as it is known that tourism socially sustains local communities (Zaidan, 2019).

The implementation of the online ticket platform supports cultural planning and works as cultural management strategy, enabling the continuous improvement of the culture sector

within local governments. On hand of the detailed planning, manual work of collaborators is avoided, with errors of manual reservations being eliminated and the efficient and proper price definition process is guaranteed.

Currently, more attention is being devoted to cultural planning as all the institutions, not just the ones related to production, are being appraised based on their performance. Bearing this in mind, the implementation of Online Ticket Platforms is still in development, considering the need that Councilors have to monitor performance to guide them in their decision making (Collier, 2015).

Regarding the second proposition, namely *Identify the value of an online ticket platform for cultural agenda of cities*, the interviewees reported the most relevant aspects to bear in mind, when doing a cost-benefit analysis, which were used as the basis for the comparison of the four different platforms.

Furthermore, based on the Online ticket platform the event organizer can easily monitor performance and take immediate actions in order to maintain the defined strategic path. Besides social sustainability, the online ticket platform brings to light also some limitations related to consumers without internet connection or smart

phones, who will count on the usual support of desk collaborators to issue tickets to have access to culture.

Finally, even if in a preliminary phase, as this research focuses mainly on the selection and implementation of the Online Ticket Platform, there was consensus among interviewees with regard to the main research objective, confirming that Cultural Management Performance might be improved by monitoring an Online Ticket Platform.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research was based on a qualitative methodology, which enriches in-depth research, but it does denote a clear limitation related to the fact that it consists of just one isolated case.

Even if in this municipality the implementation of an Online ticket platform was well accepted, further comparative studies in other local governments should be performed to compare and enable a benchmark.

Further research should be conducted in this specific area, as there is still the need to leverage the monitoring of performance in local governments to provide automatic and online information for Councils to take their decisions and monitor their performance in the area.

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