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# Temporal Event Tourism Strategies

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## Learning outcomes

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After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Understand the temporal nature of events within a tourism context,
  2. Describe the different event typologies in this context,
  3. Describe typical event strategies that can be applied to overcome temporal issues in tourism.
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## Introduction

Event tourism is the practice of attracting tourists to a destination via a structured event programme or portfolio. The case for academic study of event tourism has been made by several authors (Bramwell & Rawding, 1994; Getz, 2008; Getz, 2016). Destinations may use event tourism for several reasons: to overcome seasonality, for broader socio-economic reasons or to achieve competitive advantage. This chapter will explore the different typologies, challenges and strategies associated with event tourism from a temporal dimension.

Richards and Palmer (2010) discuss the concept of cities becoming eventful. While not all destinations are cities, Richards (2017) suggests events are attractive to destinations (in particular, cities) for both economic and social development. Socially, they can celebrate local heritage, culture or history

as a way of boosting social cohesion. From an economic perspective, they provide opportunities for image enhancement, income generation, repositioning and job creation (Pugh & Wood, 2004; Richards, 2017).

Destinations can be defined from a number of perspectives. They may be visitor attractions or resorts, geographic entities or perhaps places characterised by a distinct purpose of visit, such as VFR or business tourism. Destinations with distinct patterns of seasonality, such as ski resorts, may seek to become eventful as a means to overcome temporal issues by developing an event program during their off-season. Connell (2015) examined the role of events in mitigating seasonality within specific tourism attractions, suggesting that having an events programme helps destinations maintain hotel occupancy levels and restaurant use, and brings other economic gains across the year.

While some destinations enjoy the benefits of traditional tourism assets such as landscapes, culture, heritage or leisure pursuits, some are located away from such attractions. These destinations may use event tourism to provide a competitiveness level (Crouch, 2010). For example, post-industrial cities may choose an event tourism portfolio to compete with more culturally rich counterparts (Bramwell & Rawding, 1994). For these places, the effects of temporality may vary depending on the source of visitor footfall. Thus events can be used as a means to rebalance demand across a year to provide a consistent competitive offer.

The concept of using festivals and events as tourist attractions would stand as a potential alternative to traditional tourism assets (Connell et al., 2015; Pacione, 2012). In many ways, events have long been a destination's answer to managing the fluctuations of temporality. If festivals and events can become tourist attractions in their own right, they become a powerful tool for destinations to mitigate the effects of temporal fluctuations in their tourism economy.

Event tourists are those people who primarily travel during the time of an event rather than necessarily travelling for the wider appeal of the destination itself. However, research has suggested that the destination's overall attractiveness still plays a part in event motivated travel (Oh & Lee, 2012). Clearly though, there must be a symbiotic relationship between destination image and event image, since both play a role in travellers' decision-making process (Lai, 2016).