

CONCLUSION

The survey on the professional practices implemented in the organisation of a pluridisciplinary festival was based on interviews with the participating team members of MigrActions, VolterraTeatro, Travessuras Culturais and on observations carried out during their edition in 2016 for the first two, and in 2017 for the latter. The answers to the online questionnaire on the Pas de deux website also were substantial material.

This overview made it possible to highlight the importance of articulating the strategic reflection on the positioning of the structure in its environment, which affects its viability, and on the search for a continued improvement in different methodologies of management related to the situations encountered.

Any organization must define its identity by clarifying best its goals. The assessment of the practices' efficiency and relevance must be situated according to the available human resources in the context of organizational strategy, which is deployed in a local and national judicial, political, economic environment. The importance of knowing these frame indications must complete the artistic and organizational skills: legislation monitoring is recommended in the fields of employment law and the social security system, intellectual property rights, performance contracts and safety norms.

Financial sustainability

The financial sustainability of a festival implies the acknowledgement by the local authorities, partner institutions and/or sponsors of a value added for the territory development and the circulation of performances deemed relevant. The implication of the spectators in participatory creations, workshops, co-responsible behaviours, and the layout of sociability spaces also constitute more and more elements to be taken into consideration, related to the multiculturalism enshrined in the internationalised cultural action doctrine of the creative industries. The organisational and strategic specificities can thus release competitive pressures, which have intensified in the performance art area following the high demographic growth of the number of shows and companies.

Nonetheless, the levels of corporative, media and digital reputations have important effects on the room for budget manoeuvre in a context where the assessment of the aesthetic value of the performances programmed play a major role in the materialization of the monetary value of the artistic production. These systemic constraints influence the hierarchy of the objectives, orientated first – according to our poll – to the consolidation of the renown of the festival, the programming of innovating artists, in accordance to the originality of the artistic demands carried by the area of the public theatre service. The extension of the impact of the artistic manifestations on the territory is also one of them. Risk taking is also accentuated by the intervals between the phase of prospection for the construction of the festival programming and the realization of the monetary value through the cashing of the ticket office and sponsors income, and the granted subsidies. It is not seldom that public subsidies have not received any validation such as in the first edition of the festival Travessuras Culturais, or have not been completely paid to the organizers at the end of the event.

The majority of the festivals still depends on public subsidies. As it could have been seen in the introduction, according the 70 answers of the online investigation sample on public subsidies, the average part in the budget is of 56.5 % and is positively correlated to the size of the festival. Only five festivals from the survey declared to be dependent from any public subsidy at all. This budget dependency is a fragile source in case of a change in cultural politics, especially by local authorities. Thus, the withdrawal of the town council of Volterra in the financing of the festival which was supported by the association Carte Blanche has continued in 2017 with a new reduction of the endowment of public tender to €38,000 (instead of €65,000) and a postponement in the answer to a call to the point where Carte Blanche came down to abandon its organization. In France, a study from the Centre national de la chanson, des variétés et du jazz assessed that, for 87 music festivals in 2016, the additional charge due to the rising standards of security and safety related to the terrorist threat is of 2.7 % of their average budget, whereas the reconfiguration of local authorities territorial areas increased incertitude about the percentage of subsidy allowed.

The festival project

Like any project, the arbitrations to be carried out during the planning and running of a festival fall between the constraints of the calendar, of the budget and of the demands related to the content of the events. As the dates chosen for a festival are difficult to move, tensions in the preparation and conduct of events crystallize on the forms of adaptation of programming and hosting logistics to fluctuations in funding opportunities without departing from the values of the artistic and cultural projects. Risk anticipation must be carried out in order to limit the risks of expenditure drift by prioritizing their probability and degree of severity. This applies in particular to the supply chain, the technical logistics of the scheduled shows and the travel costs of the companies hosted, the involvement of the various stakeholders in the organization of the festival, and the degree of achievement of the incomes forecast.

Agile methods may be more appropriate under these conditions than the predictive methods of cutting the project into phases punctuated with technical reviews. Incremental and iterative progress in the preparation of the festival, the regular organization of short meetings to discuss the progress of the tasks and the blocking points are means of activating the collective intelligence of the team in order to take corrective action without waiting for the end of a planned phase.

The engagement of team personnel in the planning and implementation processes to accompany programmed artists, spectators, trainees and volunteers, and to value activities through communication, plays a leading role in adapting to uncertainties and thus increase the likelihood of achieving organizational goals. The survey confirmed the importance of adhering to the artistic and ideological values promoted by a festival on the level of staff commitment. The vision of the world underlying the values of the organizational culture gives a humanistic sense to the organization of the planned events, which makes it possible to consolidate the motivations of the staff members, thus incited to show solidarity within the team and reactivity to unforeseen events.

The works on occupational psycho-sociology recommend a degree of autonomy of employees to reduce resistance to change and thus facilitate the adoption of the necessary adaptability to hazards. This approach is particularly suitable for small performing arts organizations where the versatility of the teams is difficult to circumvent and can be effective if the coordination of the tasks is assured. This coordination can be based more on horizontal links than on hierarchical lines. However, a management approach based on the delegation of tasks must ensure that people have the necessary skills to carry out the tasks entrusted to them, particularly when it comes to trainees, volunteers and young employees.

The objectives of the internal communication are to reinforce the staff's commitment to the objectives of the artistic and cultural project and to precise the methods of coordination. The use of on-line digital tools is a relevant option to publicize information to all administrative, technical and artistic teams rather than multiplying bilateral contacts, leading to information loss. The external communication of festivals is first of all directed towards the journalistic coverage of organized events in order to increase their level of media reputation and influence. The development of socio-digital networks requires investment in forms of interactive communication. The involvement of the Net surfers in the exchanges on the programming and the life of the festival by stories of experience, the downloading of photos and videos, is a way to develop in this sense. Paper supports with contents and graphics representative of the spirit of the festival and attractive should supplement the forms of digital communication on the website of the organiser for the promotion of its manifestations.

The construction of partnership relations for the co-financing of the festival and the development of the public requires an effort to bring together the organizational cultures of the festival and the institutions solicited around common objectives. Intercultural dialogue with populations in the zone of influence of relay of the social field, as well as with directorates of non-artistic companies, supposes an approach of mutual understanding of the expectations of the stakeholders before being able to initiate a dynamic of a joint project. Attention marks designed to enhance the self-esteem of those involved in partnership actions are important.

Perspectives

Several issues affect the future of festivals. A diversification of resources is necessary against the financial disengagement of public authorities. The extent of the forms of tariff discrimination must be designed to optimize ticket office incomes, which requires a better knowledge of the willingness of spectators to pay according to their already known and latent preferences. Public surveys can help to better understand the segmentation of the population that feels concerned by the offer of the festival to varying degrees. The notoriety of the programmed artists induces a spontaneous level of attendance: attracting the attention of potential viewers to less renowned artists requires creativity in the communication and implementation of the accompaniment of shows. According to our survey, festivals anticipate a three-year hike the highest for bar receipts, catering, rentals and merchandise sales. However, these resources are marginal. A more substantial development of philanthropy incomes raises the question of the processes of involvement of non-artistic companies and foundations in supporting theatrical and choreographic performances less spontaneously

attractive than concerts or operas. The logic of building partnership relationships requires a significant amount of time dedicated to this mission, which is difficult for small, multi-purpose teams.

The reduction of the environmental footprint is a paradoxical challenge in the face of systemic pressures for the renewal of shows, the development of the territorial influence of companies and the audience, which determine the reputation level of festivals. It is still an area less taken into consideration by multidisciplinary festivals without musical dominance than by musical festivals. However, within three years, our survey indicates the highest rate of change for the importance given to this general objective. Short circuits for suppliers, the use of reusable products and selective sorting are currently the most common actions. Within three years, the highest rates of change relate to the reduction of fluid consumption, the organization of shuttles, the reduction of noise nuisance and communication on eco-responsible behavior. While we can anticipate the introduction of an eco-conditionality in the distribution of public subsidies in the context of the increase in the cost of plans to fight against global warming, the awareness of spectators and suppliers through communication appears as the most prominent practice, with the organization of car-pooling too.

Finally, the processes of continuous improvement of professional practices suppose, on the one hand, a collective reflection on the balance sheets of the previous edition of the festival in order to think of readjustments in its strategic positioning and corrective actions in the organizational processes implemented. On the other hand, the improvement of professional practices is based on the appropriation of a personalized methodology in order to improve the efficiency of the organizational routines and to be inventive to the unexpected. The methodological benchmarks shown in this guide are thus a starting point in organizational learning which can only be defined by experience gains. This process of appropriating methods better adapted to a specific organizational context was difficult to verbalize by the professionals interviewed during the field investigation. This attitude, which is part of the acquisition of tacit knowledge, is found in most of the teams of festivals interviewed online. The 44 responses to a multiple choice question on the modes of capitalization of organizational learning in previous editions of the festival indicate an informal mode in 66% of the cases. This rate is positively correlated with the size of the festival from 54% for small structures to 69% for large ones. Activity reports are mentioned by 54% of respondents, the delegation of authority increased by 32% and the implementation of training by 27%. The increased centralization of festival management was mentioned by only 11% of respondents.

The efficiency of a team is therefore based on idiosyncratic mechanisms in the organization of work in synergy with the strategic objectives set to maximize the value of the programming of shows and cultural action devices. Nevertheless, it is possible to recommend the development of procedures for assessing the degree of achievement of objectives according to the means available, and the cyclical configuration of the organization of the festival.