

**A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE ON MEGA-EVENTS AS AN ELEMENT
OF TOURISM DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS**

by

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ABSTRACT

South Africa's hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ came at a time when the position as host of a high-profile mega-event has become a sought-after status for countries worldwide. Not only do these events hold the promise of extensive triple-bottom-line legacies, but they also offer an extremely powerful destination marketing platform. However, no destination is guaranteed success and sustainable competitiveness by being offered the once-off opportunity to host a major international event. This study focuses on the ways and measures in which mega-events can contribute to destination competitiveness in its entirety as depicted in a popular model of tourism destination competitiveness. Existing literature on destination competitiveness and mega-events, as well as comparative case studies of recent mega-events were explored to furnish a set of apparent key success factors for the sustainable hosting of mega-events. This set of factors was then tested within a case study context through the collection of primary and secondary qualitative data. Industry experts from both the tourism and events industries in the City of Tshwane were interviewed on the eve of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™. In addition, strategic documents and other secondary data were investigated to form an understanding of the role of the event as a potential catalyst for destination development. The City's competitiveness was evaluated before the event, and compared to an evaluation of its perceived competitiveness as a result of the event. Based on the findings, a set of five critical success factors was developed. It includes the need to address events as a strategic destination priority; effective stakeholder identification and role clarification; resource management for the event; alignment of the event strategy with the overall destination marketing strategy; and pro-actively addressing environmental issues. These factors are presented within a timeframe before, during and after the actual event. Through the proposed framework, it may be possible to manage the hosting of events in such a way as to contribute to sustained, holistic competitiveness of the host destination; ensuring alignment with the overall destination marketing and management strategy.

KEYWORDS: *destination competitiveness, mega-events, 2010 FIFA World Cup™, critical success factors*

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