

Strategic Repositioning of Heritage Destinations through Large-Scale Events Management

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the conditions required to consider mega-events as a tool for the re-launching and development of a heritage destination. What emerges from the observation of the management of some recent large-scale events is that the existence of a good central government of the destination in which the event takes place is a crucial condition not only for the success of the event but also for the development of tourism in the destination in the long term. Other crucial conditions required are: the existence of a clear and coherent destination strategy; coherence between the event and the heritage of the destination; the link between the event and other attractions of the destination; the existence of entrepreneurial roles in the destination involved in the organisation of the event; as well as the development of skills among the main players in the destination, which will be useful for future initiatives.

Keywords

Destination management, strategic positioning, repositioning, mega-events, and heritage cities.

Destination Management and the Management of Large-Scale Events in Cultural Destinations

The literature on districts and local networks (Visconti F. 1996, 2002; Minoja M. 2002; Becattini G. 1987) points out the importance of destination management leadership and its influence on the strategy of the district firms. Also in heritage areas, destination management activities are a fundamental condition for the development of both the district as a whole and the district firms.

Since the mid-1990s numerous studies have addressed the subject of the over-arching management of such districts, with particular reference to tourism. These studies have undertaken an assessment of the over-arching management processes involved in destination management and the relationship between different forms of over-arching government and the performance of tourist areas as well as of the enterprises working in them.

Among the numerous papers available in the literature on the subject of *destination management* those that are of greater interest for our purposes are those based on an

corporate and managerial approach. These contributions, by analysing the destination from strategic and competitiveness standpoints, have attempted to identify types of over-arching strategy capable of strengthening the competitiveness of the destinations themselves and of the companies doing business in these areas. (De Carlo, 2000; Tamma, 2000; Bieger, 1997,1998; Dredge D. 1999; Molteni and Sainaghi, 1997; Pechlaner H. Weirmair C. 2000; Tamma 2000; Flagestaad and Hope, 2001; Franch, 2002; Sainaghi, 2004).

An assessment of certain cases involving European tourist destinations which in recent years have been successful in improving performance (for instance in terms of attracting increased numbers of tourists, improving the seasonal nature of the tourist flows and increasing room occupancy rates) has revealed that regardless of the differing contexts in which these destinations are located (geographical area, specific features of the natural and cultural attractions available and the nature of the entities responsible for over-arching government) improvements in performance are always connected with the existence of a strategy which has been developed for the destination as a whole. These forms of strategic over-arching management can take hold where there are entities prepared to put in place a shared vision for the development of the destination, to manage the local political processes for the purposes of attracting the resources required to achieve the agreed positioning, to act as catalysts for the entrepreneurial drive existing within the area and to channel it into shared objectives rather than individual initiatives.

A second aspect which emerges clearly after empirical assessment is the importance of large-scale events which provide opportunities to reposition and re-launch tourist destinations (Brent Ritchie J.R., Smith B.H. 1991; De Carlo, Sainaghi 2003; Carlsen J. and Taylor A. 2003; Getz D. 1997; Hughes, H., D. Allen, D. Wasik, 2003; Jago L., L. Chalip, G. Brown, T. Mules, S. Ali. 2003; Nica M., Swaidan Z. 2004). Many areas which have shown the most significant growth rates in recent years are in fact large-scale event locations. Empirical evidence shows that a growing number of destinations are looking to such events as a privileged opportunity for local development, and that there is growing competition among the various destinations to host these huge events. However, it must be underlined that managing an event of this type does not automatically lead to the expected results for the host destination. There is a high risk that the event could produce limited results in the short term, generating high organisation costs and for sustainability of the tourist flow which may not lead to adequate returns, and that the value created by the event is effectively controlled by a small number of players, many of whom may not be local.

The aim of this paper is therefore to understand how large-scale events can be included in the strategic management process of a tourist area, contributing to the repositioning of the destination itself, strengthening its image (Erfurt, Johnsen, 2003; Pike, 2002) and leading to a sustainable improvement in performance over the long term. In other words, we aim to assess the conditions under which an event of this type can favour the harmonious development of the district rather than simply realising the goals of a small number of players, generating added value for the destination greater than the costs incurred in hosting the event and producing long term sustainable growth instead of giving results limited to the time at which the event takes place.

Methodology and Research Issues

The research we have undertaken is based on comparison, with theoretical comment, concerning the management of tourist areas and strategic management in general, in relation to

the empirical evidence provided by a number of cultural destinations which have achieved particularly noteworthy performances over the years, starting from the management of large-scale events.

The methodology used to carry out this research is multiple case studies (Yin, 1984; Eisenhardt K.M., 1989). We decided to analyse two recent cases of strategic repositioning of heritage cities through mega-events. The tourism destinations we intend to assess are Genoa and Parma. We chose these cities for different reasons:

- Both destinations presented an initially difficult situation characterised by competitiveness issues connected with a trying economic context and by the need for strategic repositioning;
- In both cases strong over-arching strategic management roles emerged which facilitated the putting in place of a series of initiatives aimed at repositioning the destination;
- the repositioning process was favoured by the setting up of a large-scale cultural event.

Italian cultural destinations were chosen as the focus of this study for two main reasons, the first being the increasing importance of the cultural tourism segment, and of heritage cities in particular, in the growth of the tourist business in Italy in general over the last five years, and the second, the particular importance of cultural events as a factor in the development of emerging destinations.

With reference to the first aspect, it is interesting to observe that during the years 1999-2003 cultural tourism recorded growth (+40%) significantly higher than that of the tourism sector overall (+26%), meaning that the relevance of cultural tourism to the sector went up from 24% to 26%. This development is due more to a rise in the number of secondary destinations which recorded a 78% increase in tourists over the period than to the major cultural destinations (Rome, Venice, Florence and Naples) which accounted for an 14% gain in visitors. In relation to the second point it is worthy of note that in many of the heritage cities that benefited from the highest growth during the period it was the staging of a large-scale event that led the way for a process of repositioning and re-launching which made such results possible.

In the years 2000-2003 the number of visitors to exhibitions taking place in heritage cities saw steady growth, rising from 7.844.730 in 2000 to 9.722.342 in 2003, and the numbers of visitors per exhibition recorded an average rise (+52% from 2000 to 2003), corroborated by the ranking, by numbers of visitors, of the most important exhibitions held in Europe in 2003, in which four Italian destinations are included in the top 10. This extension was accompanied by an increase in visitor numbers in Italian heritage destination (+24%), particularly interesting in the case of the major cultural destinations (+40%).

The empirical analysis is based on qualitative and quantitative data. We conducted a number of extensive interviews with destination managers and with town councillors in both Genoa (5 interviews) and Parma (5 interviews). Moreover, we organised tourism data into a database; we analysed performance of the major events organised (visitors and tickets sold), monthly Italian and foreign arrivals and tourist stay, performance of hotels (occupancy rates, average room revenue) over the last four years. This analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information allowed us to understand the effects of the large-scale events on the destinations' performance.

The study carried out in this paper is influenced by the underlying idea that the event can be the driver for the development of the destination, to the extent that it becomes a coherent constituent part of the strategic management process of the destination as a whole. To do this successfully means that at the beginning of the process there must be a clear awareness of the current positioning and the intended positioning of the city as well as the of coherence between the nature of the event and the type of positioning to be aimed for. Where these conditions are fulfilled the event can have a significant effect on the strategic development process, both by stimulating the emergence of new forms of tourism offering capable of exploiting the attractions of the area and by favouring the setting up of new destination management entities and new types of co-ordination among the various players.

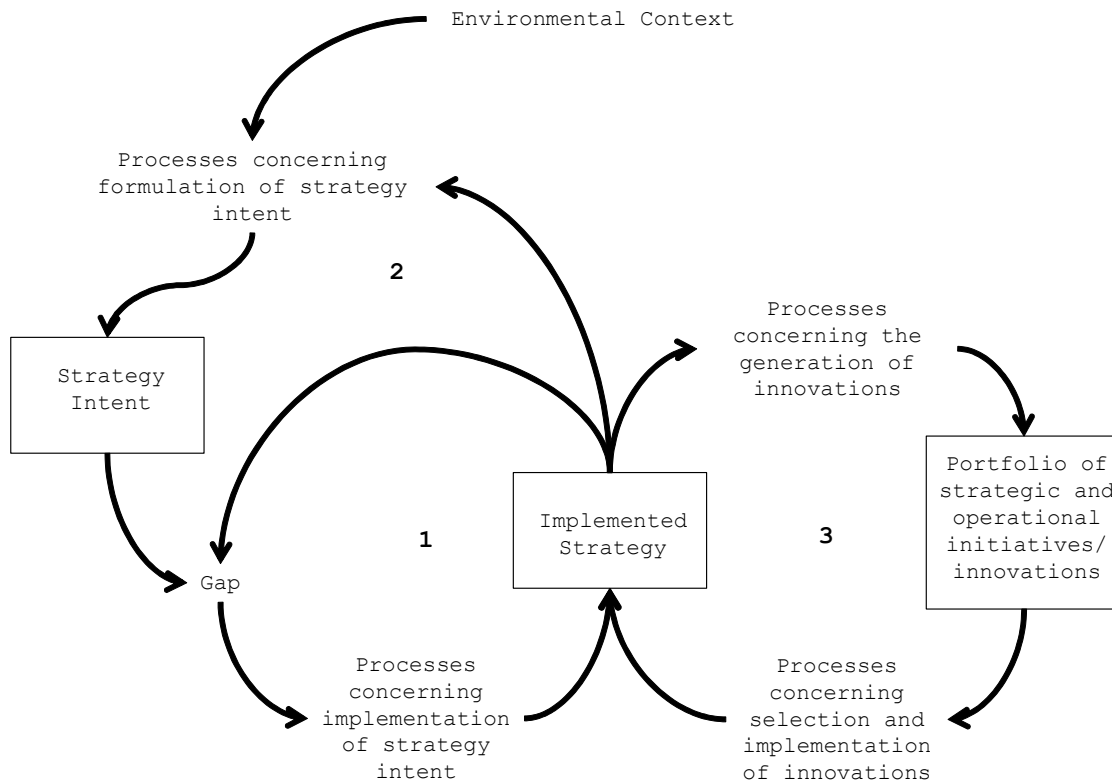
To this end it is necessary to describe the dynamics underpinning the destination strategy formulation to be then able to assess the way in which the management of the event is included in it and influences it. In order to do this we will use a dynamic strategy analysis model used for company assessment, adapting it to the circumstances of the tourist areas studied.

The structure of the model is presented in the following paragraph. The fourth paragraph provides an explanation of the two cases studied for the purposes of bringing to light, by means of the model, the ways in which the staging of the event is included in the process of formulation and implementation of the overall strategy for the district and contributes to the achieving of strategic objectives. A summary of the main findings of the research is given in the fifth paragraph, where the queries posed in paragraph two are also addressed.

A Dynamic Strategy Analysis Model for Destination Assessment

To understand the process by which these cities reposition themselves through large-scale cultural events we apply a dynamic strategy analysis model used for company assessment (Coda and Mollona, 2001) and applied to the tourist destinations studied (figure 1).

Figure 1: The Dynamic Strategy Analysis Model



Source: Adapted from Coda and Mollona, 2001

The description of the dynamics underlying the formulation of strategy within a tourist area is based on a distinction being made between processes and the products of those processes, the former being observable over a period of time (flow variables) and the latter at a given moment (stock or level variables). The stock variables are:

- the strategy intent of those who play a role in destination management (destination managers);
- the strategy implemented in the destination;
- the portfolio of strategic or operational initiatives/innovations.

The first variable is *strategy intent* (with reference to companies: Mintzberg, 1978, 1985; Hamel and Prahalad, 1989) expressed by those who carry out the activity of over-arching governance in the destination (destination managers). The profiles of these players can vary vastly in the different contexts studied. In certain cases it may be a public body (the City Council, for example), in others a private entity (a company in the area which takes on a guiding role, or an association of private entities), in yet others it can be a mixed group representing both public and private interests in the area (for instance a consortium comprising representatives of the City Council, the Province, traders' and hoteliers associations). Strategy intent concerns itself with objectives, strategic aims and plans to put them in place. In the case of a tourist destination, strategy intent can take a number of different forms, ranging from an out-and-out Strategic Plan for the destination, to strategy documents aimed at developing tourism in the

destination, to medium- and long-term plans aimed at obtaining funding from State or European Union sources.

The second variable level is the *implemented strategy*. By this expression we mean those factors and relations which define the current structure of the tourist area at any given time and within a given context - the strategic positioning, the tourism offering system, the organisation of the players involved in governing the destination and the implementation and commercialisation of the various components of the offering system –.The strategy implemented is reflected in economic, competitive and company performance measurable at district level and in the results of the individual companies working in that area.

The last variable level is the *portfolio of strategic and operational initiatives/innovations* which includes both projects and business ideas still in an experimental phase, as well as innovations, ideas and proposals not yet finalised, aimed at improving the performance of the area and of its companies. Large-scale events fall into this category of initiatives.

In addition to the three variables outlined above, the model identifies four groups of processes which influence the state of the level variables:

- processes concerning formulation of strategy intent;
- processes concerning implementation of strategy intent;
- processes concerning the generation of innovations;
- processes concerning selection and implementation of innovations.

The first group considers the *processes concerning formulation of strategy intent*, which are responsible for generating the contents of the new strategy which the district intends to put in place. The second group assesses the *processes concerning implementation of strategy intent*, these being processes which follow upon strategic intentions with a view to putting them in place. These are ascribable to activities involving communication of the strategies of intent and consensus gathering in relation to them, making a selection of target clients at whom to aim the offering, stipulating budgets and assessing the effects of the actions carried out on the performance of the destination and those working in the sector. The third group comprises *processes concerning the generation of innovations* of an operational and/or strategic nature. These processes are, in different ways, stimulated by opportunities arising in the area as well as by the cultural features of the area. The last group of processes includes the *processes concerning selection and implementation of innovations*, which act as a filter in relation to the various emerging initiatives.

In order to manage strategy, both as a continuing process and as a single act of deep transformation, it is necessary to take the existence of three circuits which connect the stock and flow variables described above into consideration.

The first circuit shows the capability of destination management to put in place managerial acts aimed at implementing the contents of the strategy of intent. At destination level these actions are the development of infrastructure (e.g. roads, urban decor, etc.), facilities (hotels, sports grounds, exhibition areas, etc.), as well as tourist and cultural products.

The second circuit refers to the capacity of destination management to monitor the gap between strategic intentions and structural change within the environment and the circumstances in which the area is situated, with the aim of keeping up the level of cohesion among the players in the area with regard to shared goals and of attracting the economic, entrepreneurial and

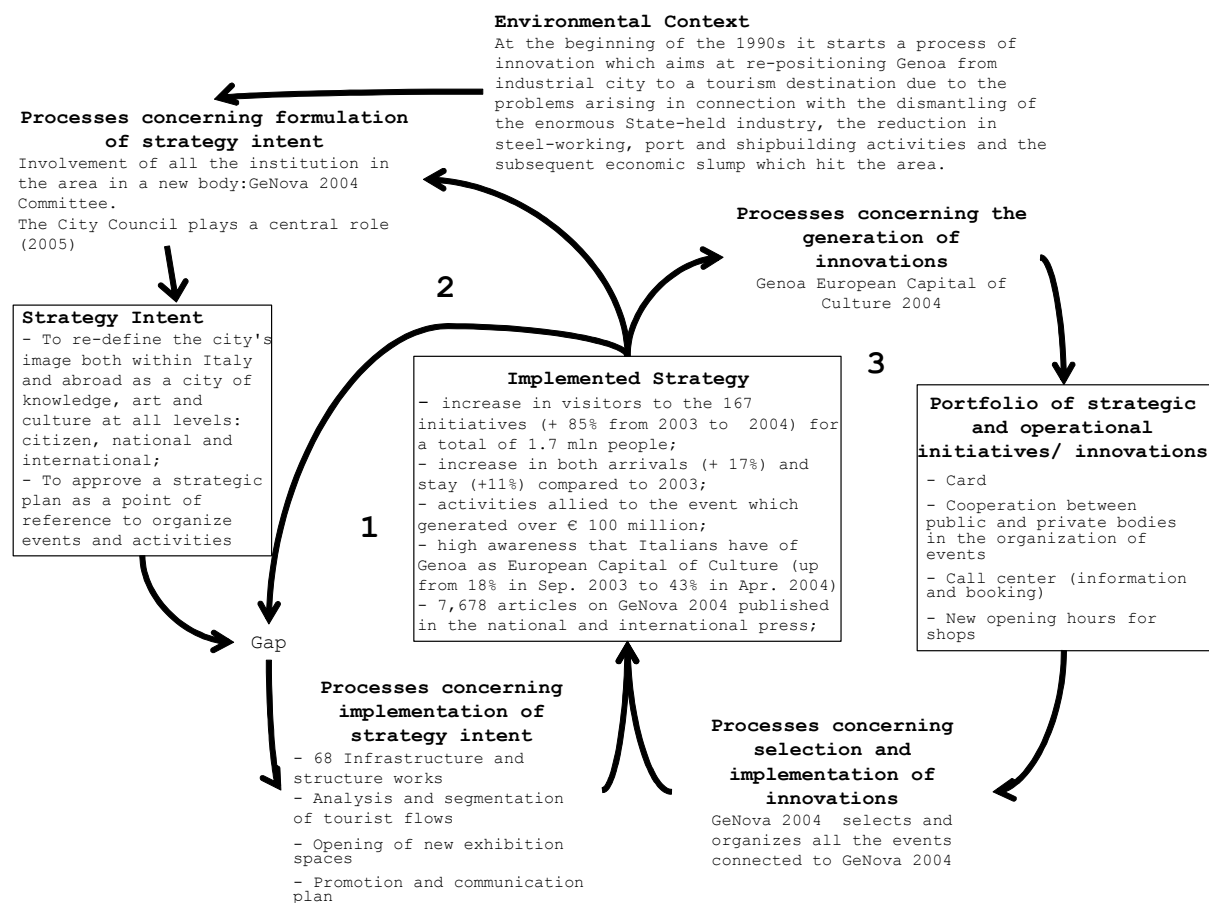
management resources required to achieve these aims. The third circuit allows the district's potential for innovation to be accomplished. It is at this level that the staging of large-scale events takes place, and provided that they are coherent with the positioning being aimed for, such events can provide an excellent opportunity to speed up the repositioning process and achieve aims which would be impossible without such a platform.

The Management of Mega-Events and Repositioning of the Destination

Genoa: European Capital of Culture 2004

Figure 2 shows the process of dynamic strategy assessment applied to the case of Genoa.

Figure 2: The Process of Dynamic Strategy Assessment of Genoa in 2004



The *environmental context* of the city of Genoa at the beginning of the 1990s included a number of critical elements which could essentially be traced back to problems arising in connection with the dismantling of the enormous State-held industry from the capital city of the Liguria region, the reduction in steel-working, port and shipbuilding activities and the subsequent economic slump which hit the area. The city saw tourism as a natural consequence of its being a commercial port and an industrial centre, and thus had never set out policies to promote its development. Between 1990 and 2001 a process of renovation of the destination got underway,

and was linked to the organisation of a number of large-scale events: the football World Cup in 1990, the Columbus 500th anniversary celebrations in 1992 and the G8 Summit Meeting in 2001. Such initiatives are not part of a strategic plan for the city, and they do not produce significant results in terms of sustainable growth in long-term tourist flows or value for the players involved. They do represent, however, a starting point from which to build up a new image of the city as a tourist destination, they facilitate the start of initiatives to renovate both central and suburban areas and leave behind facilities and services which can be used for future events.

In order to be able to speak about a real process of formulation of a *strategy intent* for the city it was necessary to wait for the end of 2001, when a promotion platform was set up which included representatives of the City Council, the Province and the Chamber of Commerce, who were joined by the Regional Promotion Agency in 2003. In 2002 this platform approved the strategic plan of the Genoa City Council as well as a Report outlining plans for the period 2003-2005. A central role in achieving the strategic aims set forth in these plans was given to the event named GeNova European Capital of Culture 2004. The aims can be summarised as follows:

- To re-define the city's image both within Italy and abroad as a city of knowledge, art and culture in addition to being a port and industrial centre;
- To promote a positive, attractive perception of Genoa at all levels: citizen, national and international;
- To improve the welcome given to visitors and promote the provision of facilities and services.

Managerial action aimed at accomplishing the strategy intent can be ascribed to:

- activity involving the communication and gathering of consensus on the strategy among those players working in the destination, citizens, sponsors and players external to the area such as travel agencies, tour operators, transport companies, etc. This type of communication took place by means of press, TV and radio campaigns at local, national and international level, billboard advertising, participating in foreign events (25 trade fairs, 8 workshops, 2 media tours, 21 presentations, 6 cultural events), events in Italy (8 trade fairs, 8 stands in shopping centres, 7 educational tours). The weak point in all this activity was a lack of involvement of those involved in tourism in the broad sense in the city (restaurateurs, hoteliers, entertainment centre managers) and a strong concentration of the activities concerning the formulation and execution of the strategy on public entities, the City Council in particular;

- infrastructure works (re-paving of parts of the city centre, creation of pedestrian areas, etc) and structural works (restoration and enhancement of monuments, historical buildings and museums, and opening of new exhibition space) which changed the image of the city and opened certain attractions which had previously been closed to the public. Initiatives of this type will continue, in accordance with the restoration plan for the city funded under the Urban II European project to the tune of 10.7 million Euro to be allocated in the period 2000-2006;
- undertaking an analysis and segmentation of tourist flows into the city as well as an assessment of packages offered by foreign tour operators with the aim of identifying potential growth areas;
- segmentation of the local tourism market into congress, school trip and leisure related, and defining a priority client profile;

- development of new activities connected with welcoming guests to the city (e.g. call centres and information points) and provision of printed material;
- management of promotion and communication activities in the city by one body, leading to a reduction in the average cost of initiatives and greater incisiveness.

On another point, the planning of new, integrated forms of offering was not as successful as it might have been.

A series of *strategic and operative actions and innovations* connected with Genoa, European Capital of Culture 2004 (Hughes, Allen and Wasik, 2003) were undertaken alongside and intertwined with the aforementioned initiatives. This event provided an opportunity to set up a new, dedicated body to manage initiatives, i.e. the GeNova 2004 Committee, including representatives of all the institutions in the area (City Council, Province, Liguria Region, Genoa University, Chamber of Commerce and Port Authority). Representatives of the Ministry for Monuments, Fine Arts and Cultural Activities also attend Committee meetings. The Committee is responsible for co-ordinating the structural work carried out by the individual Bodies which own the property which has been developed, planning events and cultural initiatives, communication, promotion and fundraising.

In addition, the event provided an opportunity to set up a series of operative innovations such as a Card which gives access to public transport services and exhibitions connected with the event, a call centre providing information and hotel booking, new opening hours for shops with the aim of enticing visitors to prolong their stay and increase the level of service offered, co-ordination in planning and in the calendar of events.

At the end of 2004 the *strategy implemented* showed the following results:

- a consistent increase in visitors to the 167 initiatives open to the public (+ 85% from 2003 to 2004) amounting to a total of 1.7 million people;
- a significant increase in both arrivals (+ 17%) and stay (+11%) compared to 2003;
- activities allied to the event which generated over € 100 million;
- strengthening of the image of Genoa as a city of culture which has "revved up the engines of change", documented by the levels of awareness that Italians have of Genoa as headquarters of the initiative entitled "European Capital of Culture (up from 18% in September 2003 to 42.8% in April 2004)
- raised general awareness of Genoa thanks to the 7,678 articles on GeNova 2004 published in the national and international press;
- improved infrastructure and facilities in the city.

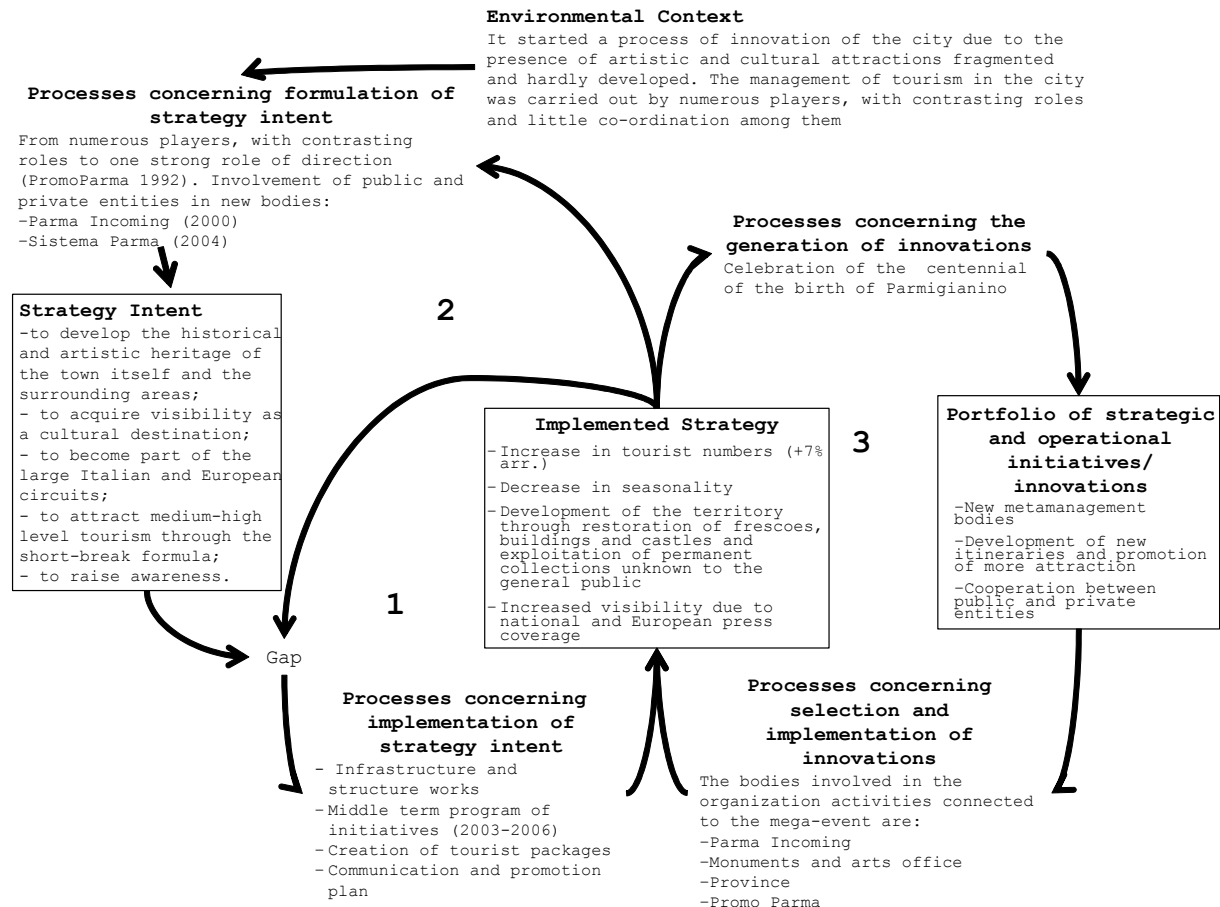
By achieving these results the event contributes significantly to the repositioning of the city in terms of image, increased international awareness and improvement in city facilities thanks to the 68 initiatives undertaken to renovate areas and facilities in the city centre.

Starting from 2005, the planning of cultural events will revert back to the City Council. As well as hosting large exhibitions such as the ones on Japanese posters and on 19th century paintings, the offering will centre on the celebration of the bicentennial of the birth in Genoa of Giuseppe Mazzini. This initiative is a result of the stated intention of the public administration to continue the repositioning activity, aiming to root the historical and cultural events in the tradition of the city.

Parma and Parmigianino

Figure 3 shows the process of dynamic strategy analysis in the case of Parma.

Figure 3: The Process of Dynamic Strategy Assessment of Parma in 2004



In the mid-nineties the *environmental context* of the town of Parma was characterised by the presence of numerous artistic and cultural attractions (situated in the surrounding towns and townlands), highly fragmented and hardly developed at all as part of the tourist offering provided by the city. In certain cases there were monuments or natural resources which required restoration or structural work in order to be opened to the public, in others it was a question of buildings, castles, churches, museums, theatres or natural parks of great artistic or cultural value managed by different entities who carried out uncoordinated promotional activities with poor results. Management of tourism in the city was carried out by numerous players, with strongly contrasting roles and very little co-ordination among them: the Region, responsible for directing and formulating policy for local tourism, the Province, having a role to play in promoting and developing the territory of Parma and the surrounding areas, the Town Council with the task of promoting the city and providing information to tourists, Promo Parma, a consortium of public and private players whose function is to promote the town's tourist offering, ParmaTravel, an on-line accommodation booking network and Fondazione Teatro Regio, set up to manage the town's theatre and the planning of musical events.

The destination needed, therefore, to address the above-mentioned critical aspects by means of a repositioning strategy. This need was felt to be particularly urgent by certain categories of business people in the town (most specifically traders and hoteliers who were members of PromoParma, the tourist promotion consortium in operation since 1992) and by the Town Council and the Province who began to outline a *strategy intent* whose basic aims can be summarised as follows:

- to develop the important historical and artistic heritage of the town itself and the surrounding areas;
- to acquire visibility as a cultural destination;
- to become part of the large Italian and European circuits;
- to attract medium-high level tourism through the short-break formula;
- to raise awareness among the citizens of the area's potential.

The anniversary of the birth of Parmigianino, one of the masters of European mannerism and a native of Parma, provided an excellent springboard for such repositioning and became the stimulus behind a series of *strategic and operative actions and innovations* which would bring benefit to the destination in the medium term. The idea of an exhibition centred on the figure of Parmigianino came to light in 2000, in 2001 approval for the initiative was given by the Ministry for Culture, State funding was allocated and a National Committee was set up to organise the event. 2002 saw the start of the operative planning and external promotion phase, which included attending trade fairs, organising educationals for the press and press conferences throughout Europe. Before the event itself a scientific congress was organised on the subject of the exhibition and the proceedings as well as catalogues were published. Promotion through the press and commercialisation of the event began in January 2003 and continued throughout the exhibition (March-May 2003). Parallel to the event itself, tourist itineraries to and in the surrounding areas were organised and actively promoted, giving visibility to a number of minor attractions (castles, buildings and nature parks) in addition to itineraries inside the town which took in attractions which may not have been well-known to the general public.

A number of public and private entities connected with the town and the surrounding area took part in the selection and development of the initiatives combined with the exhibition, with major roles being played by PromoParma, Parma Incoming, the Province and *Sovrintendenza* (a supervisory body for monuments and Fine Arts).

The overall investment for setting up this event amounted to 4.2 million Euro, subdivided into 2.5 million Euro for the exhibition (of which 1.25 million Euro was State funding and 1.25 million Euro provided by the Province, the Town Council and a number of private sponsors) and 1.7 million Euro of public funding (from the Region, Town Council and Province) to be dedicated to the setting up of itineraries in the surrounding areas.

The event therefore became the starting point of a series of initiatives involving a large number of cultural, artistic and tourist attractions in the town and the outlying areas and became the driving force behind a broader development strategy for Parma as a cultural tourism destination (*implemented strategy*) which, at the end of 2003, at the close of the exhibition, had generated the following results:

1. An increase in tourist numbers (+7% arriving in the town, compared to the previous year; +1.5% arriving in the surrounding towns; +6.9% staying in the surrounding towns)
2. The new itineraries meant that tourists were arriving at various time of the year, thus avoiding seasonal limitations;

3. Development of the territory through restoration of frescoes, buildings and castles and exploitation of permanent collections unknown to the general public before the Parmigianino exhibition;
4. Increased visibility due to national and European press coverage and appreciation of the artistic merit of the exhibition.

The event therefore provided an invaluable stimulus on two different levels towards strengthening the strategic governance activities undertaken by the destination.

In the first place it favoured the setting up of new destination management entities. The first of these was Parma Incoming, a tour operator owned by the hoteliers association and the traders association and specialised in promoting the town and surrounding areas, set up in 2001 for the purposes of managing incoming tourism in a professional manner (promotion and commercialisation of the town). In addition, the Parmigianino experience also offered an incentive to create a body to co-ordinate and agree upon strategies for the town which included representatives of the main public and private entities. Thus Sistema Parma came into being in 2004, an association encompassing members from the Province, Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, University, 53 institutions, the Trade Fair, companies, consortia and professional associations, with the aim of promoting co-ordinated, synergetic action to improve the province's competitiveness.

Thanks to the aforementioned event it has been possible to accomplish the repositioning of the town and close the gap between the objectives set at the beginning of the 1990s and the positioning of the town prior to the exhibition.

An interesting aspect to be underlined is the learning process which derived from the activity carried out in managing the event and which led to the formulation of a programme of initiatives over a period of time ranging from September 2003 to the end of 2006 for the purposes of ensuring that the results achieved in 2003 would be sustained in the years to come.

Conclusions

In the two cases analyzed events represented and continue to represent an important instrument within a broader process aimed at developing the territory. Moreover, the organisation of large-scale events markedly reduced the gap between strategy intent and implemented strategy.

From the study of these cases there emerge certain crucial conditions required to make an event an instrument to increase the competitive performance of the destination in the long term. A first condition is the existence of a clear destination strategy in which the event is included in a coherent manner. In both cases described above, the event contributed to the accomplishment of a previously formulated strategic plan, thus ensuring that action and initiatives are aimed at improving the overall performance of the destination, are shared and are not limited to the short term (circuit 3).

A second condition is the requirement that there be coherence between the event and the heritage of traditions and attractions of the destination, in order to formulate an integrated offering which involves a large number of attractions in the territory. This means achieving an increase in the allied activities generated by the event through the fact that visitors tend to stay in the area for longer periods, as well as creating the conditions for a broader potential offering

to be provided, all the while ensuring that the destination and a large number of players in the area reap the benefits deriving from the initiatives (circuit 3). This condition has been fully accomplished in the case of Parma, which has seen a significant increase in the average stay of tourists, and this is particularly marked with regard to the itineraries proposed around the province. In the case of Genoa, however, which has restricted its offering to the city attractions, the potential of value creation of the event have been more limited than in Parma's.

A third required is that the organisers of the events have to be local players to make the know-how developed a skill of the city, available for future initiatives.

In particular, in successful experiences the event creates new type of coordination among the different categories of players in the destination and produces new metamangement bodies which couch the strategy intent (circuit 1) and guide its development also after the conclusion of the event (circuit 2). According to this aspect, the two cases are different.

Parma's strategy required the setting up of new destination management entities which have now become permanent. Genoa, on the other hand, will cease to benefit from the Genova 2004 activity and committee as of 2005, and the responsibility for the planning of cultural events will revert to the City Council. However, the planning guidelines set out in the strategic plan will remain valid.

Parma's experience highlighted the collaboration of both public and private entities, while in Genoa hoteliers, restaurateurs and traders were not involved in the initiative. For Genoa, this might compromise the sustainability in the long term of the results due to the event.

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