

# ***Event Management, A Flourishing Business in Creative Industries***

## **Theme: Communication Among Creative Industries**

By: Dedi Rumawan Erlandia

The development of media in Indonesia has brought important changes in people's life. People nowadays can easily enjoy various events from the countries all over the world. The presence of internet has made people get any information in a split second. However, this is not enough to make many people satisfied because they want to see their beloved idols or favorites directly. Events are the media that provide programs where people can see the products directly.

Event management has become a business area which has been developing quite rapidly in the country. More and more people are interested in pursuing this creative business. Unfortunately, not many of them who have started this business field are able to survive and thrive. The main factors that have hampered are lack of knowledge and experience, easily give up, not pay serious attention to details, and the absence of creative promotion.

Communication skills is required to succeed in event management business because it involves lobbying, negotiating, and promoting. Fikom graduates have big opportunities to succeed in this business area. They have to be volunteers in big events first to gain knowledge, experience and networks before deciding to pursue this business seriously

Running business on event management is risky, but there are still many people interested. It is because this business will give many advantages if it is managed professionally. The benefits of running this business are financial benefits, having challenging job, giving satisfaction, getting experience and knowledge, experiencing wide social interaction, pouring out idealism and giving a chance to create history.

Key words:

**Event Management, Creative Industry, Promotion, Networks, Business**

## **Introduction**

The development of today's business world is getting interesting. Along with an increasing number of media, both electronic and print, a wide range of information comes without being able to be blocked. The presence of internet has made people get any information in a split second. The world seems borderless. The public can access any information required from all over the world in a very short time.

In Indonesia, the development of media has brought 'radical' changes. People can enjoy various events from the country and from other parts of the world through electronic, included internet and print media. People can easily watch football games, music concert, films, and many more. However, this is not enough to make people satisfied. There is a dream of many people to see their beloved idols or favorites directly. Media are only "window shops" that show a wide range of products, services or goods, to the public. Events are the media that provide programs where people can "touch" directly with those products. Therefore, we can hear or see events almost everyday, at regional, national or international levels.

Nowadays, event management has become a business area which has been developing quite rapidly in the country. More and more people are interested in pursuing this creative business. With so many companies often hold events, it is automatically required the parties that can manage this field professionally. These opportunities are answered by the people through establishing business organizations specializing in managing events. Almost every week, even every day, especially in big cities, we can see many kinds of activities that have promotion nuances involving event organizers' services. They design and actuate the activities so that the events can be held successfully. Even, there are some organizers that create special events such as seminars, music concerts, football competitos, etc., then propose them to the companies to get sponsorships or sell tickets to the people. The business people specialized in managing events are often called event organizer.

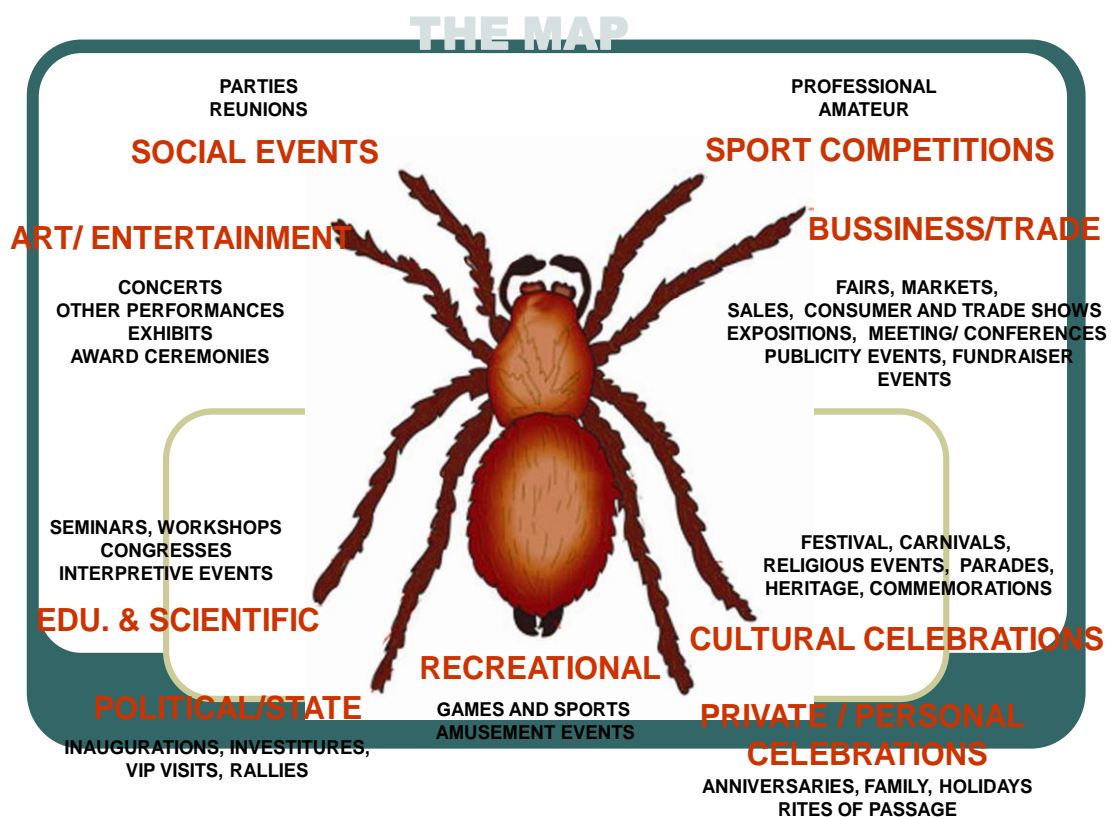
The term 'event organizer' is quite popular in the society these days. Noor (2009: 7) defines an event as 'an activity held to commemorate the important things throughout the life of human beings individually or in groups that are bound by custom, culture, tradition and religion which are organized for specific purposes, involving the community held on certain time. And, what is event organizer? Yuningsih (2003:7) defines event organizer as, "the person/group of people together through the job division organize events, occasions, or particular moments." While Rogers and Rogers cited by Adhirianti (2003:7) defines it as, "an organization (system) which is run by a group of individuals who work together in accordance with the division of tasks that has been arranged in a defined organizational structure in order to achieve a certain goal." From the definition above, it can be concluded that the event organizer consists of a group of people, division of tasks and goals. It means the event organizer is a teamwork which work hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder to reach the goal. Juanda (2007) emphasized that there was no superman in managing event, but super team. It means the success of an event depends on the quality of the team, not just a person.

Suseno (2005:26) classifies event organizer into two categories, namely EOs that are

hired by other parties and EOs seeking their own income. The first category of EOs, is usually required by a company or organization that has event, such as product launching, anniversary, or gathering with a common standard fee ranges from 10 to 20 % of the total cost of event implementation. Meanwhile the second category of EOs, they usually design an event and then proposes it to various parties. This category is called promoter and creator. In practice, many event organizers are categorized as both consultant and contractor, as well as a promoter or a creator.

## Event Management Business Prospect

As explained earlier, job field engaged in organizing various events at this time has been more wide open and become new promising jobs. Companies or institutions that will hold a big event usually require the services of an event organizer. This is the opportunity for event organizers to take advantages. In practice, the event organizer will employ skilled employees that needed through outsourcing system. It means a grand event will automatically open many job vacancies and will hire many employees. Subono and Zelebhour cited by Suseno (2005:27) has asserted that business in event management field has good prospects. Grant in Nadeak (2003: xii ) has given reasons why this business has a bright future. According to Grant, this is because the society is now entering an era of after image where market calls for the existence of an interactive relationship than just eye relationship that are typically seen in magazines, newspapers or television.



**Picture 1: Event Management Business Fields**

Source: Republic of Entertainment

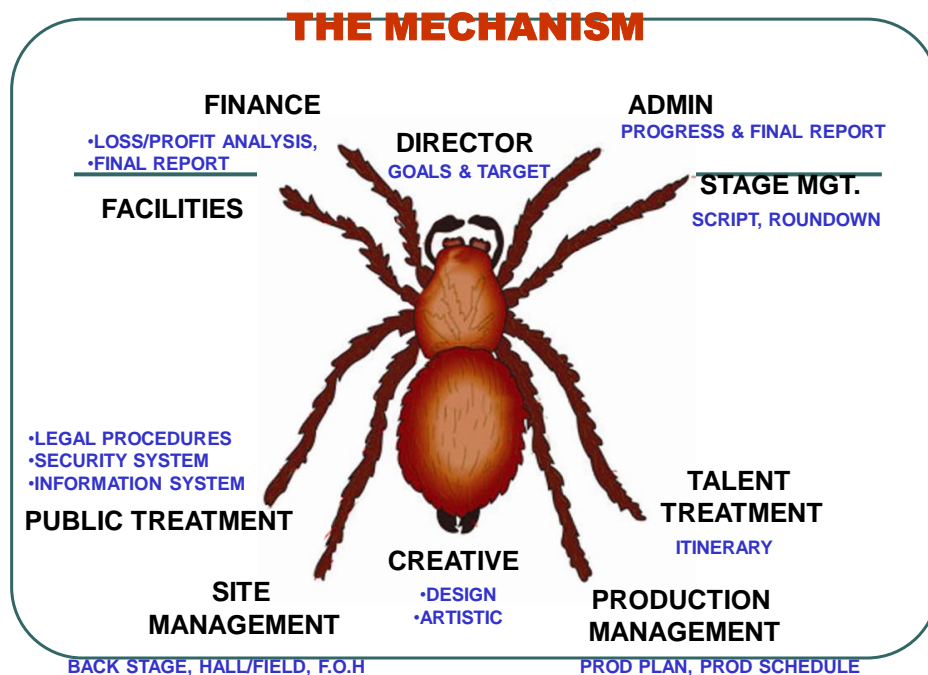
So, what areas that can be managed by event organizers? Suseno (2005:14 ) classifies job fields that could be done by businessmen who are engaged in managing events, namely:

1. Sports: Professional Match, Competition, Exhibitions, etc.
2. Arts and Culture: Show/Profit-Oriented Performances, Show/Non Profit Performances, Institutional/Private, Contest/Festival, Exhibition/Appreciation, etc.
3. Speech Programs: Discussion, Seminar, Workshop, Talk-show, Dialog, Variety Show, Presentations, etc.
4. Exhibitions: Trade Commodities Exhibition, Art Exhibition, etc.
5. Personal: Wedding Party, Birthday Party, Thanks-giving, Farewell Party, Private Anniversary, etc.

Event Organizer can design and organize events from small level like limited discussion until spectacular level such as international music concert or olympic games.

### **To Be Successful in Running Event Management Business**

Event management is a creative business that requires the totality of work and seriousness. Organizing events, particularly those requiring high cost, needs careful and professional management. A grand event usually involves various stakeholders, such as governments, sponsors, media, spectators, and other institutions concerned. The failure in holding a big event will have strong impact on the credibility of the organizer as well as the parties that hired the organizers and the parties related. One of the parties that will be affected by the failure of an event is the sponsor. Therefore, it is understandable why the sponsors are very selective in choosing the event organizers to be supported. Therefore, the event organizers should run all the events under their responsibilities very carefully and seriously to make all parties related satisfied.



**Picture 2: Work Mechanism in Event Management Business**

*Source: Republic of Entertainment*

Hafiz (2007: 5-13) gives a simple formula which should be done by people running the event business, namely: 1). Observe (Amati). The event organizers should diligently observe events running around them, both small events and big events. They should learn how an EO organizes its events and know who are involved in it. 2). Assess (Kaji). After observing the events, the event organizer then should examine in detail the advantages and disadvantages of an event organized by other EO. Learn the factors that make an event successful or failed. Record and compare with other similar events. 3). Target. The next step is finding complete information about the target to be achieved in an event. The target could be related to the number of sponsors, visitor satisfaction, etc. 4). Imagination. Furthermore, the organizers should develop their imagination freely without being limited by large and small cost or the other factors. 5). Focus. The last step, the organizers must focus on the interests of funders / sponsors and spectators, because the event is held for them, not for the benefit of event organizers. By doing those steps, an event organizer can learn how the event has been run, know its strengths and weakness. So, the EO can run their own events based on the knowledge they've got. Adhirianti ( 2003:14 ) adds strategic tips for a person or group doing business in the field of event management. She explained that an EO must do several to be successful in the business, namely: First, identify competitors. Recognizing competitors is important to know their strenghts and weaknesses. Juanda (2007) said that all parties engaged in the same field, event organizers, are business partners. Recognizing strenghts and weaknesses of fellow partners is important to give each other positive feedback for the mutual future progress. Second, identify the complementary & Suppliers. Event Organizer should be able to build and develop a wide networking with

a variety of parties, which will support the success in running this business. EO practitioners, Linda (2012), stressed the importance of networking in a business that specializes in event management. According to her, the EO should prioritize their activities to develop link or networking. People who are interested in being EOs must have good relationship with many people from various walks of life. Making a big event certainly requires the support of many stakeholders, including the private sectors, government, and society as a whole. Suseno (2006:104-108 ) notes some parties as partners of a event organizer below, namely :

Business Partners of an Event Organizer (Suppliers, Agents, Institutions, etc.)		
1. Event Venue	11. Digital Print	21. Clothing Rental
2. Accomodation	12. Photo Documentation	22. Equipment, Music and Art Rental
3. Sound System and Light	13. Video & Multimedia	23. Ticket Sales Agent
4. Electric Power Generation	14. Catering or Restaurant	24. Government Agencies & Police
5. Stage	15. Transportation	25. Media Journalists
6. Equipment	16. Attractions	26. Lawyers
7. Decoration	17. Mass Media	27. Insurance
8. Fireworks	18. Restaurant/Cafes	28. Fire Brigade
9. Promotion Service Bureau	19. HR & Artist Agent	29. Health Team
10. Creative Design Service Bureau	20. Security Agents	30. Sponsors
		31. Etc. .

Third, identify the technology. Technology is an important tool in planning and designing events. In addition, the technology will help EO to obtain important and up-to-date information quickly. Through the internet, EO can access the required data by organization from different parts of all over the world. Fourth, recognize environment. Environment is a factor that will affect the event. By recognizing the environment, EO can plan an event that will be held properly. So, before organizing an event, it needs in-depth analysis of the environment in which an event will be held, such as the target market, the procedures, the security, etc.



**Picture 3: Joint-Event Fikom Unpad with Trans Corporation**  
 Source: Trans TV

Event Organizing practitioners, Suseno (2005:19) explains important requirements that need to be considered by the individual or people to pursue this field, namely as follows: Working with high totality; Thinking creatively and innovatively; High sensitivity; Ability to communicate, negotiate, dialogue; Confidence; Ability to make a planning/concept; Ability to analyze cost/financial; Ability to cooperate; Developing artistic imagination; Ability to make an evaluation, and High discipline. Isaac (2000) gave more advice, the organizers must have knowledge of the functions and roles of a crowd controller, such as roles and responsibilities, communication and clients, operational procedures, managing performance, managing conflict, emergency first aid, crowd control operations, law and practice, emergency procedures, access control, securing premises and property. They must also have important skills, knowledge and experience as follows: ability to work to deadlines and deal with pressure, knowledge of work breakdown structure, experience of planning projects and developing a project schedule, and knowledge of risk management activities.

From the explanation above, we can take some important notes that the event organizer must have to run this creative business successfully. The EO must have the ability and willingness to conduct a research & analysis, design creative & interesting events, develop and maintain networking, communicate with people from different walks of life, keep the commitment, enhance knowledge & eager to get new experience, pay serious attention to details, manage time carefully, manage money wisely, get finders

and sponsors, manage human & capital resources well, and market events to get good responses.

## Discussion

The business prospects in the field of event management are still wide open. The business which is relatively a new area, has attracted many young people. They set up event management business to be the media for companies to build image, promote or sell a variety of products. Unfortunately, not many of them who have started business in this field are able to survive and thrive. Kasali in Nadaek (2003 : xiii ) said, "Event business is a business that seems glamorous, but actually full of risks, rich with lots of details. Work demands perfection and sharpness of the eyes. Thus, although looks very tempting, not many people dare to enter the business field." Steven underlined, "Managing events is an extremely complicated activity, with the glamorous exhibit and the fun hospitality on one hand, and the rigors of the logistics and the myriad details on the other." Kasali and Steven's opinions are very appropriate because it would be fatal if the event is managed unprofessionally. Thing that often happens is that the expense exceeds the limit, the number of sponsors do not reach the target, ticket sales are far from expectations, and the quality of the event is disappointing. This is a nightmare to be avoided by an event organizer.



**Picture 4: Talkshow with Eben (Burgerkill) and Reza (Independent Network)**  
Source: Fikom Student

Kasali and Steven's views above can be described as follows: Firstly, the event management business is full of risks. In running this business, the EO will be in touch with various parties so that in case of failure, the organizers must prepare to lose the trust from the parties. Oftentimes, the organizer has to make up the losses because of the audience who damage vehicles and public facilities, as happened in The Rolling Stones concert and the first concert of Metallica in Jakarta. And worse, the committee are detained for being negligent which have caused death, such as in the concert of Sheilla



On 7 and Unggu Band. Incidents that befell the audience of Ungu Band in Salatiga that claimed 10 people is a dark picture of an event that is managed unprofessionally. The audience that exceeded the capacity, coupled with a lack of anticipation, caused fatal incidents. Dozens of people were injured and 10 people were killed because they were jostling to get out of the venue after the show was over. This incident is very tragic and alarming. Dozens of people spread out on the ground hopelessly when trying to amuse themselves and meet their idol.

Secondly, business in this field is complicated and rich with many details. As Suseno said (2006 : 19), speaking about EO is talking about details and hard work. So, do not ever dream to become an event organizer if you do not like the details. A very professional EO will understand this. Prudence, seriousness, careful calculation and strong commitment are very fundamental in running this business. An event could fall apart just because the organizers forgot to order Genset to anticipate electricity blackout or short circuit. Events involving school students could fail because the event is coincided with the exam. A product launching can be embarrassing because the announcement written on billboard is wrong. Meskauskas (2007) suggests to avoid errors with details. The checklist system is required because it provides a step-by-step guide to organize and execute a special event .



**Picture 5: Reading Campaign**

Source: Fikom Students

Thirdly, this business requires the perfection of work. To make a successful event, it requires the skills of management and creativity. It is important to reduce the risk of property loss or other damages. An EO should be able to make a plan A, B, C, or even plan D. Such planning is necessary to anticipate the problems that might come out beyond the calculation of the committee. In the field, it frequently emerges the problems beyond expectations. EO's task is to minimize these risks. Therefore, thorough good preparation during pre event, appropriate management during executing event, evaluation and accountability of post-event are absolute to do. Oftentimes, maximum preparation and careful calculation are not able to save an event due to several things beyond the control of the organizers such as riots, bombings, fires or earthquakes. No wonder that the international event organizer like Java Musikindo has insured all its events. Noor (2009) wrote some factors that usually make-an event fail, as follows: poor in planning the event, managing event not good, poor visitor management, human error and wrong instructions, unsafe event environment, extreme weather such as heavy rain, storms, and earthquakes, legality problem between EO and other parties, unsupporting economic condition, poor safety and security system, the wrong layout of the design, the poor control over the quality of service having been set, the attitude of humans, for example, demonstration and sabotage, the use of technology not supported by the right experts.

Fourth, business in event management field requires 'sharp eyesight.' An EO should be able to see the opportunities. To find these opportunities, event organizer must have extensive social relations and access the necessary information from variety of sources. The organizer should have the ability to know 'golden opportunities' and be brave to execute. Without doing so, the EO will be difficult to develop and succeed in running this business.

Fifth, being committed. Fitriani (2006), a marketing manager in one of the big companies that often sponsors a variety of events once told about her experience related to commitment with sponsor. She said if the event organizer infringed initial commitment with the sponsor, under normal conditions, when holding an event, it turns out what is running on the field is not in accordance with the concept offered in the proposal, then usually the sponsor will not believe the EO anymore or be blacklisted. Even more dangerous, if the black-list notes informed to other companies because the sponsor feels 'cheated.' In these circumstances, 'death' of EO is only a matter of time. There have been many event organizers which can only hold one event, and then disappear. This is what should be understood by the event organizer that the concept of **win-win solution** with other parties is important in order to maintain the support and good relations. Grey et al., (2003:3 ) reveals that currently, many organizations still see that the search of sponsors only the activity of a fundraising. According to him, sponsorship has now turned into a form of cooperation of marketing partnership between the event organizers and companies (sponsors). Therefore, the EO should strive to accommodate the interests of the sponsors if willing to gain support in the long term. Basically, a event organizer must be committed to all stakeholders if they want to have trust in the long run. Trust from stakeholders is the important factor to succeed in this business field.

Suseno (2005: 19) suggests, to be successful in this business, an event organizer must

equip themselves by having having good relationship with various parties, has a persistent attitude to get funders/sponsors, has the capability of creative and innovative in terms of designing the event or program, leaving positive impression for all parties, sensitive to the situation and the conditions that occur in society and open up unlimited horizons and be able to realize the satisfaction of all parties.



**Picture 6: Campaign Activities on Ardan Radio**

Source: Fikom Students

With a series of demands above, then why more and more people are interested to run in this business? Many reasons why the event management business is increasingly showing its development. From interviews with activists in event management field and the writer's observation, the reasons have been revealed. First, the financial benefits. Income that can be obtained by EO could be doubled, even tripled depending on its skills in seeking support and creativity in developing ideas. Profits of billions of rupiahs earned by Blackrock Entertainment when holding Metallica concert in Jakarta recently is one of the examples. The EO which has name and credibility, such as Java Musikindo can earn large amount of profits after having held an event.



**Picture 7: METALLICA concert in Jakarta**

Source: Private Document

Second, the challenge. Risks faced by EO in holding an event is considered as a challenge by the 'brave'. There are always different challenges in each event held. A show such as Miss World Competition or Metal Music Concert is very risky but also challenging. The event has raised pros and cons among people. Third, satisfaction. Not only financial benefits gained, success in holding an event will also provide tremendous inner satisfaction to the organizers/EO. When the concept designed earlier can be implemented successfully, it gives great satisfaction. Fourth, experience and knowledge. The activists in this field must always access information from a variety of sources. The more events held, the more information that can be obtained, and the more knowledge can be absorbed. And the more frequent in managing events, the more abundant experience can be got.



**Picture 8: Discussion about *Creative Event* in KickFest**

**Source: Fikom Student**

Fifth, social interaction. An EO requires to associate with the wide variety of circles and parties. Networks that are created and developed by EO can help socialize the programs and get support. This field provides ample opportunity to know and meet important people such as officials and well-known artists. Sixth, idealism. Event is a place where an EO can pour out their passion and idealism. An EO can design an event that suits his convictions, his hobby and his desire to align the needs of each market. An organizer who loves rock music can invite rock stars that have many fans in the country. Social activists can hold an event that is in line with their mission. Seventh, entertainment. Event Organizer engaged in the field of entertainment, besides entertaining people, they also can entertain themselves. Managing the football game between MU and Persib will give opportunities to meet the football stars like Ronney, Pogba dan Ibra. Finally, a chance to create history. Events which are big, creative, innovative and able to invite a lot of audience, such as Soundrenalin, JavaJazz, Kick Fest, World Music Festival, Dago Festival, and Woodstock, will always be remembered and embedded in people's minds. People will remember and talk about the events because they feel amazed. These events have become the history in the event management areas.

With a series of benefits explained above, although full risks and oftentimes exhausting, nowadays, more and more people are interested in running this field of business seriously and professionally, especially those who are dynamic and love challenges. Event management and sponsorship are the promotion tools that have to be developed in communication studies.

Thank you very much.

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