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Internationalization pattern of creative-cultural events: Two cases from Canada[☆]

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ABSTRACT

This paper characterizes the internationalization of creative-cultural events through in-depth, longitudinal and ethnographic case-studies of two typical events. It develops four families of propositions based on the extant theory and tests them against their corresponding aspects of the two case-studies. This comparative examination indicates varying levels of supports; and also points to significant differences from traditional patterns of internationalizations processes. This paper's contributions are in identifying differences in such events' internationalization pattern and suggesting theoretical explanation for them. A combination of firm-specific advantage (e.g., creative and cultural) and the event's home location-specific advantages offer a theoretical approach as they attract both the viewers and creative service-providers from the rest of the world to the home of these events. The paper explores the implication for further theoretical research, management of such events and public policy formulations.

1. Introduction and economic impact

The socio-economic impact of creative-cultural industries is increasing at a rapid pace, largely due to their re-orientation from local to international and their corresponding international activities. Traditionally, the focus of cultural industry has been mainly local; but this focus has gradually changed in recent years. The industry has adopted more creativity and innovativeness to attract more international viewers by emphasizing its increasing international orientation in the past two-to-three decades. The increased global competition for international viewers and globalization (Cowen, 2009; Millar, Choi, & Chen, 2005) have exerted increasing pressures for adopting higher global performance standards, more artistic creativity, and technological innovations, including those assisted by the information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Garnham, 2005). The higher adoption of ICTs has also assisted the creative-cultural industries to attract both the local and global viewers and join the growing global creative industry.

Although the impact of cultural events (also called the artistic or creative events) on the cultural dimension of local life has been relatively clear, their economic impact, and the sources of such impact, are not properly highlighted. However, the industry's economic impact in

terms of fostering growth in the regional (or national) economy, creating employment, wealth- and income-generation have neither been viewed as important, nor have been fully examined. As a result, creative-cultural events have gained increased global competitiveness; but the dynamics of transition from mainly local to international orientation or the consequences of their internationalization are neither well-researched nor sufficiently-documented.

1.1. The economic impact

The statistics presented in Tables 1 and 2 point to the general impact of the creative-cultural events (CCEs) or industry. It is noteworthy that substantive international components are involved in such events and contribute to these events' significant impacts. According to Statistic Canada, for example, the direct and indirect contribution of Canada's creative and cultural industries in 2007 amounted to more than \$84.6 billion, or approximately 7.4% of the Canadian GDP (Conference Board, 2008). As shown in Table 1, this impact is not limited to Canada alone as other countries have also benefited.¹ Except for recessionary periods, such economic impacts have been steadily growing (See Table 2). However, there is a paucity of information in the management literature on how culturally-creative activities are designed, staged and

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¹ The paucity of statistics about the contribution of the industry world-wide is an indication of how such contributions are not fully recognized.

Table 1
Growing Impact of Creative Cultural Industries in Selected Countries.*

Countries	Contributions of Creative Cultural Sector to:	
	To Country's GDP	To the Actual or Share of Employment as a% of Total Employment
Argentina	Approx. 4.1%	Approx. 3.5%
Brazil (1994 & 1998)	0.8% & 6.7%	0.8% & 5%
Canada	7.4% of GDP (approximately \$84.6 billions)	1.1 million jobs (direct, indirect and induced impact)
Colombia	Increasing from 2.01% (1999)	27,724 jobs in three sectors: publishing, phonography, and filmmaking.
Chile (Average 1990s–2000)	Approx. 2%–1.8%	Approx. 2.7%
Ecuador (2001)	1.79%	–
United States (1997 & 2001)	0.002%–7.75%	5.9% (2001)
Paraguay (1995–1999)	Approx. 1% (1995–1999 Average)	3.3% (1992)
Uruguay (1997)	6%	4.9%
Venezuela (1997–2000 & 2001)	2.3%–3% in audiovisual and telecommunications sectors (taken as representative of all cultural industries)	35,329 in four sectors (graphic arts, radio, advertising, and filmmaking)

* Source: Respective Countries' National Statistics.

Table 2
Economic Footprint of Canada's Culture Industries – Total GDP Impact by Industry (2002 \$ millions except where otherwise indicated).
Sources: The Conference Board of Canada; Statistics Canada.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total Cultural GDP	41,160	42,556	43,760	44,882	46,082
as a per percent of total GDP	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
Read GDP	77,057	77,785	79,859	82,881	84,651
as a per cent of total GDP	7.6	7.4	7.4	7.5	7.4
Primary sector	2516	2617	2737	2818	2926
Manufacturing	8316	8494	8782	9222	9275
Construction	1533	1841	2096	2319	2,505
Commercial services	50,057	50,605	52,237	54,237	55,409
Government services	14,635	14,228	14,006	14,285	14,535
Employment (000s)	1,049	1,057	1,074	1,102	1,123
as a per cent of total employment	7.2	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.1

accomplish their economic objectives, especially with international components.

This paper's contribution is in identifying the wide gap in the extant literature, examining the internationalization processes of creative-cultural events, and those of the industry, based on two carefully selected ethnographic, in-depth and longitudinal case-studies that well-represent a typical creative-cultural events. Accordingly, the paper's main research questions are:

- i) What is a typical process and pattern of internationalization in creative-cultural events (or industry)?
- ii) How does the industry's internationalization pattern compare with the traditional internationalization patterns in other industries? And,

1.2. The structure of this paper

Following this introduction, a review of the literature addressing different aspects of the cultural and creative events and the formulation of four sets of propositions will be presented. The methodology presents the logic of practice-theory interactions guiding the selectin and development of two in-depth and longitudinal case studies. The highlights of the two real-life and on-going examples of creative-cultural events are presented next. They serve to explore particular characteristics of such events. The conclusion and implications point out the similarities and differences of the observed internationalization patterns, as well as highlighting the pertinent implications for further research, management and policy-formulations.

2. Literature review and formation of propositions

The extant literature suggests that the nature of creative and cultural events is complex and dynamic, as briefly hinted in the introduction. In favour of time and space, this literature review, in four segments, will only focus on topics pertinent to creative-cultural events in order to derive corresponding propositions at the end of each discussion segment. This structure ensures a strict coherence between the extant literature and the theoretically based propositions.

2.1. The general characteristic of creative-cultural industries: the interactions between creative and cultural components

Generally, cultural industries are derived from, and are likely to be, the manifestations of local cultural traditions, which would not change rapidly; but evolve slowly over time (Meyer, Skaggs, Nair, & Cohen, 2015). However, the dynamism of creativity can play a central role in keeping a culture vibrant (Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008). Evans (2009) suggests that most creative people are embedded in their local culture and draw from their own traditional cultural values to initiate creative events that are capable of attracting viewers and invigorating their traditional values. Amabile (1996, 1998) for example, holds that socio-cultural environments have profound impacts on creativity; but she finds creativity as a problematic concept within a cultural context. Creativity is neither compatible with slow-moving traditions, nor with the rigid schedule of such events. In his "creative destruction" concept, Schumpeter (1934) defined creativity as a new combination of factor-inputs that results in new objects (e.g., goods and services) substituting, and even replacing, their older counterparts. This definition suggests that older familiar concepts (ideas or values) might inspire creative people to conceive creative, innovative, or new ideas or things. These new variants are usually appealing to viewers seeking newness grounded in the cultural traditions. Guttenberg, for example, was inspired by the early version of his printing press in the crude manual die-punches that were already in use in manual reproductions of images, which would point to the conceptual (or functional) relationship between the newly created thing(s) and their older counterparts (Gruber & Davis, 1988). However, not all innovators see such relationship; nor do they take the trouble of creating a new (or a better) version when they perceive them, especially when the relationships violate their traditional expectation and values. In contrast, the creative members of a cultural community value the creative aspects culminating in the creative change, which improves upon revitalize the older cultural practices eventually.

A community's traditional socio-cultural way-of-life, manifested in

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