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**SUBJECT: ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**A POLITICAL APPROACH TO RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: CASE STUDY OF STORSJöYRAN FESTIVAL**

**Critical Analysis :**

The decision of a person to visit a festival, and his/her experience at the festival (as described in the introduction),is influenced by a number of different actors taking part in marketing and developing the festival. This study has gone some way towards understanding the dynamic political processes going on when these actors collaborate. A metaphor, the political market square (PSQ), was introduced, resulting in an analysis of the marketing actors interest's,conflicts and power.

The PSQ is a metaphor for describing and understanding a dynamically changing project network. The metaphor illustrates the fact that actors have open,although sometimes to a degree controlled, access into the PSQ. Actions,activities and interactions between actors in the PSQ are regarded as opportunistic and political, resulting in both long and short term relationships. Entries and exits between the PSQ and a wider network result in a continuous change of participants in the PSQ.

The PSQ metaphor is a contrast to the relationship marketing perspective, which also is about marketing seen as relationships , networks and interactions (cf. Gummesson,1997,1998). However,relationship marketing is mainly normative and prescribes stable , long term and harmonic relationships. Relationship marketing, seen from the perspective of the PSQ metaphor, instead , describes political interactions between actors in an open project network, resulting in change dynamics.

The analysis of case study of the Yran festival in Sweden showed that actors had partly mutual and partly opposing interests. Interactions between actors in the market square were collaborative, although often characterized by conflicts that were resolved by opportunistic power games. The festival organizer held the strongest power position,along with the municipality,and controlled the boundaries of the PSQ. Gate keeping, negotiation, coalition building and building of trust were important political processes in the PSQ. These processes changed actors' relative power positions and controlled access into the PSQ.

Political processes and open access resulted in a changing power structure. The turbulence gave rise to marketing activities aimed at new, or broader, market segments and renewal of the festive product. At the same time, the identity held in common by actors in the PSQ stabilized the PSQ, leading to more long term and harmonic relationships. Identity building was, thus, a political process controlling actions in the PSQ, which in turn, led to increased stability.

To conclude,changing and stabilizing processes exist within the PSQ at the same time. Change is a dynamic process caused by interactions between actors , and not so much a rational decision process accomplished by a focal actor. The consequences of the dynamics are not given. Every action performed has a collective aspect, which can give rise to unexpected changes of the PSQ, which,in turn, has consequences for the future development of the Festival. Thus, all interactions in a PSQ shape the future development of a festival.