Developing a theoretical model for innovation: a critical evaluation of breakthrough capabilities necessary for expansion of a small wedding event venue in Truro, Cornwall: a study based on Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model.

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BA (Hons) Events Management

April 2017
DECLARATION

“I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated”.

Signed: [Signature]

Name: Laura Badcock

April 2017
ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the breakthrough capabilities required for a wedding event venue in Truro, Cornwall, to penetrate a gap in the market. The literature review identified the importance of an organisation gaining a competitive advantage. The study critically evaluated Lynch’s (2006) Hierarchy of Resources model and was supported by SWOT analysis, Porter’s (1980) Generic Strategies and Porter’s (1980) Five Forces models. All these models were then combined and integrated to form a conceptual framework to be able to provide the maximum potential for the case study to achieve a competitive advantage within the newly identified industry.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to be able to identify where the demand lies and the resources needed to breakthrough within the market. Through the primary research, the preliminary data collected discovered that there is a demand for music and party event venues in Truro, Cornwall. The interview process involved interviews with two industry professionals to gain rich and in-depth responses. The interviews identified the breakthrough capabilities required to penetrate the newly identified market. From gathering this data, the final model was developed from the conceptual framework to make it specific to the chosen case study.

The study made significant contributions to theory, methods and practice and concluded with the recognition of limitations and scope for further research. The hypothesis has been met and the researcher achieved the aim of the study.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Introduction to the Study

The purpose of this study is to develop a model, which recognises the key breakthrough capabilities required by an events company in Truro, Cornwall to penetrate a specific new gap in the market identified through market research. The model is developed from Lynch’s (2006) Hierarchy of Resources, and identifies the resources needed for market penetration. Thus, Lynch’s model is applied to the events company, in the context of a general SWOT analysis to gain an understanding of the organisation’s current core resources. The model is adapted to suit the newly identified market, providing a theoretical basis for the future breakthrough resources required to penetrate this new market. The researcher concentrates attention solely on labour aspects as there is no access to financial data and the venue, being a relatively new build, is not looking to expand its capacity.

In addition to completing a critical evaluation of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources, the study examines the use of other competitive advantage models to support Lynch. Each model provides a unique insight into what gives a company competitive advantage. The models include; SWOT Analysis, Porter’s (1980) Three Generic Strategies and Porter’s (1980) Five Forces model. Applying each model to this case study contributes to the overall analysis and they are incorporated in the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework is tested, critically evaluated and adapted, as necessary, following an in-depth discussion of the primary data collected. It is important for more than one model to be utilised in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the results.

The research focuses on a single case study to ascertain the specific resources needed to fulfil the market identified by the participants of the survey. To achieve this, the population of Truro is surveyed and, over 100 completed questionnaires are used to identify whether there is a gap in the market, and if so, what it is. Identifying the specific opportunity allows the interviewees to be more precise in identifying specific breakthrough capabilities related to the new market.

Following the survey, an interview with a representative from the event company chosen for this case study provides expert guidance on what capabilities may be
required, specific to their venue. Another interview is conducted with a representative from a substitute organisation, which provides similar services. This allows for the creation of a more robust model that identifies resources from not only the chosen case study, but also from a substitute competitor’s perspective. Thus some triangulation is obtained by introducing two perspectives. Contrasting and comparing strategies and approaches enrich the final model.

Methodological triangulation and contrasting organisational perspectives are used to increase validity and reliability of the proposed breakthrough capabilities.

1.2 The Chosen Case Study

The company is a small wedding events venue on the outskirts of Truro, Cornwall. It is situated in a quiet location surrounded by Cornish countryside. The company

*is a working farm, weddings and events venue, nestled in an idyllic hidden valley near Truro, Cornwall*

Figure 1 taken from the website from anonymous Source 1 (2017)

The company has two main revenue sources; the events venue and a working farm. The principle element of the events venue is a converted barn however it does have other facilities such as a kitchen, bridal suite and bed and breakfast (B&B) rooms. The venue is a very popular wedding venue due to the range and quality of facilities it provides. However, it also hosts monthly feast-nights to showcase its culinary specialities.

*“Our events venues offers guests the opportunity to immerse themselves in these beautiful surroundings, and experience the hospitality of a working organic farm”*

Figure 2 taken from the website from anonymous Source 1 (2017)

The unique selling point (USP) of the venue involves the values it portrays. The organisation focuses mainly on the quality of both service and catering. This is supported by the fact that they serve their own home-grown produce and farm reared cattle to their customers. The venue offers a very rustic and organic atmosphere
associated with the organisation’s other source of income; the organic farm. This country-feel is also enriched by the vast landscape surrounding the converted barn, allowing the organisation to enhance the organic ambience. The facilities are also rustic and use natural materials to convey the values embraced by the owners which is also portrayed through their website.

“A bumpy track, lined with old oak trees and ancient Cornish hedgerows, leads guests through 100 acres of rolling pasture and sheltered meadows to our family farmhouse; the heart of the farm”
Figure 3 taken from the website from anonymous Source 1 (2017)

Consequently, the business focuses on a niche market. The organisation attracts boutique weddings due to its unique and narrow market appeal. However, the organisation can cater for many different wedding themes. The niche aspects, combined with the ‘quality’ USP, allow the organisation to be more competitive with prices, whilst providing an opportunity to charge more for services. The narrow market that this company caters for, provides it with a competitive advantage as you cannot get the same level of service, with the same facilities, at any other substitute venue in the area.

1.3 Experience
The researcher has had previous experience working at the venue selected for this case study and is knowledgeable about the organisation’s operation. In terms of the substitute organisation, the researcher has worked there seasonally from 2012 to 2017 and has extensive knowledge of its organisational strategy. The contacts developed through work experience at both organisations, helped to guarantee the completion of this research. Having lived, worked and grown up near to Truro, the researcher possesses extensive knowledge of hospitality facilities available in the area, and where best to collect the data for the questionnaires.

The researcher has previous experience in collecting primary data in online surveys. This experience is useful when designing the questions and analysing hard data.
1.4 Dissertation Aim
The aim of this research project is to identify a gap in the market within Truro, Cornwall and critically evaluate Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model with a particular focus on labour issues, in order to create a model for innovation and development for a wedding event venue in Cornwall, highlighting opportunities to promote competitive advantage.

1.5 Dissertation Objectives
1. To critically evaluate the literature on the following models: Porter’s Five Forces, Porter’s Three Generic Strategies and Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources in order to create a conceptual framework for this study.
2. To develop a Research Approach suited to test the conceptual framework. A mixed method approach will be used to strengthen the outcomes of this study.
3. To analyse and evaluate survey and interview data to gain an understanding of potential new markets for the Cornish event venue and to evaluate Lynch’s Resource Hierarchy model in order to understand how the model can be used to identify key labour breakthrough capabilities that are required to achieve market penetration.
4. To summarise the main findings and contributions, and discuss the limitations of this study while making recommendations for further research.

1.6 Summary
This introductory chapter identifies the reasons for conducting this study and the aims and objectives of the dissertation. The business at the centre of this case study is not identified but its current market position is outlined in detail. Additionally, the previous experience of the researcher within the industry and data collecting has been acknowledged.

In the next chapter, the researcher will critically evaluate the literature on Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model, supported by an evaluation of other competitive models that are concerned with competitive advantage.
# CHAPTER 2

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

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2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter defined the focus of this study as developing competitive advantage in a wedding event venue in Truro, Cornwall.

This chapter aims to critically evaluate Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources Model supported by other key strategic concepts, tools and models as they might apply to this venue. The aim is to identify the breakthrough capabilities needed to enter and develop new markets. An in-depth use of SWOT analysis supported by Porter’s Five Forces model and a consideration of Porter’s Three Generic Strategies aim to create a viable conceptual framework to inform the research proposal.

2.2 Entrepreneur Perspective

“Entrepreneurs are individuals who are involved in the start-up of a business” (Gartner and Bellamy, 2008, p6). Their key roles are to plan, organise and operate and so turn vision into reality (Kaplan and Warren, 2007). In this particular business area, entrepreneurs usually identify a venue suited to maximising competitive advantage. They must consider a range of internal capabilities that best fit the external environment before entering a market.

2.3 Market Research

The necessity for clear and unbiased market research is vital to create an accurate study of consumer needs. The data collection phase of market research is usually the most prone to error due to several major problems that arise in surveys, including respondent bias or dishonesty and participants refusing to cooperate (Kotler et al. 2009). Survey questions can often be unintentionally ambiguous. It is the role of the researcher to spot and redesign such questions during the piloting stage to improve the accuracy of the finalised questionnaire. However, it is likely for such a question to slip through causing the questions not to be answered, and therefore research objectives not being met (Brace, 2013). An effective questionnaire will be clear and will thus contribute to research with the inclusion of relevant information (Brace, 2013).
Market research encompasses various activities that allow consumers to identify their needs within the market. This provides consumers with a voice and presents an opportunity for organisations to capitalise on this information, consequently fulfilling the current demand (Schwarzkopf, 2009). It is vital for firms to recognise and meet consumer demand effectively to maximise competitive advantage. Market research must be employed to understand consumer needs and how they can be met (Kotler et al. 2009).

2.4 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is an acronym which consists of ‘Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats’ (Bennett, 1999). Pettinger (1996, p60) suggests that

“the purpose of conducting a SWOT analysis is to help organisations to learn, to clarify issues, to identify preferred and likely directions and to conduct a general and quick analysis of their current position”.

SWOT analysis is used to identify the fit between the organisations strategy and its environment by minimising threats and weaknesses and highlighting strengths and opportunities (Haberberg and Rieple, 2001). SWOT analysis (Figure 4) can be split into two sections; the internal and the external environment. Opportunities and threats concern the external environment of the organisation whereas strengths and weaknesses exist within the organisation (Bennett, 1999).

Figure 4: SWOT analysis

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Factor</th>
<th>Internal (usually static)</th>
<th>External (usually dynamic)</th>
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<td>Positive</td>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>Opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Weakness</td>
<td>Threat</td>
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(Haberberg and Rieple, 2001, p95)
Strengths are effective competences of the organisation (Pettinger, 1996). Weaknesses refer to the competences that need improvement (Pettinger, 1996). Organisations should reduce weaknesses to a minimum. Opportunities represent gaps in the market (Pettinger, 1996). Threats refer to adverse macroeconomic conditions or strong competition. They can increase through complacency and lack of strategic attention (Pettinger, 1996).

2.5 Importance of Gaining a Competitive Advantage

Hatonen and Eriksson (2009) describe competitive advantage as the multitude of characteristics that enable a company to provide better services than their competition. The aim of competitive advantage is to “establish a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition” (Porter, 1985, p1).

Understanding competition is essential when developing a market strategy. To maintain a sustainable competitive advantage, it is vital to know and understand the strategies used by competitors (Proctor, 2000) and to gather Competitive Intelligence (Malhotra et al. 2012) about rivals’ prices, products or services to gain competitive advantage.

Developing competitive advantage can effectively defend an organisation against its competitors (Porter, 1985). However, competitive advantage is only a temporary concept as organisations are constantly adapting to overcome competition (Porter, 2008). Building competitive advantage is key to success or failure (Porter, 2004). To gain a competitive advantage, organisations must distinguish a clear strategy, by positioning themselves in a market where they hold the greatest advantage or where it is difficult for others to compete with them.

“The goal of a competitive strategy for a business unit in an industry is to find a position in the industry where the company can best defend itself against these competitive forces or can influence them in its favour”

(Porter, 1980, p4).

2.6 Porter’s Generic Strategies Model

“Porter suggested that the most fundamental choices facing any business are scope of the markets that it attempts to serve and
how it attempts to compete in these chosen markets” (Macmillian and Tampoe, 2000, p142).

This is covered in Porter’s Generic Strategies and Porter’s Five Forces models. The generic strategies approach allows firms to respond to the external competitive market forces (Lynch et al. 2000). The model has two approaches; broad and narrow scope. A broad scope attacks the market as a whole whereas a narrow scope only attacks a particular area of the market (Macmillian and Tampoe, 2000).

**Figure 5: Porter’s Generic Strategies Model**

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Porter’s Generic Strategies model (Figure 5) consists of three main areas; cost leadership, differentiation and focus (Macmillian and Tampoe, 2000). Cost leadership is beneficial to a company because a low yield can increase the amount of return and the competitive position it holds (Porter, 1998). It operates to reduce the cost of production below others within the industry. Differentiation is the act of creating a product or service which is perceived as unique by customers and this can increase margins significantly. “Differentiation implies a difference in the perception by clients of the product, whereas focus implies a difference in target market” (Macmillian and Tampoe, 2000, p143). Focus narrows the scope and this splits into cost focus or differentiation focus.

The study uses Porter’s Generic Strategies model to support Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model to maximise competitive advantage and identify what capabilities are
required to do so. Each model is essential for gaining a more holistic understanding of how to target new markets and what capabilities and resources enable organisations to achieve this. The models are also essential to match capabilities to the external environment.

2.7 Porter’s Five Forces model

When evaluating the opportunities for competitive advantage, one model that conceptualises and grasps the concept efficiently is Porter’s Five Forces model (Figure 6). Porter’s model is a key tool in implementing a competitive strategy. It allows organisations to identify the attractiveness of a sector or industry in terms of competitive forces (Johnson et al. 2008). The ultimate function of this model is to explain the sustainability of profits against bargaining and competition; both direct and indirect (Porter, 1991).

Firms can pinpoint critical factors that make them competitive in the industry as well as identifying any strategic innovations that would increase (Porter, 2004).

Figure 6: Porter’s Five Forces model

\(\text{Potential entrants} \quad \text{Suppliers} \quad \text{Competitive rivalry} \quad \text{Buyers} \quad \text{Substitutes}\)

\(\text{Threat of entry} \quad \text{Bargaining power} \quad \text{Bargaining power} \quad \text{Threat of substitutes}\)

(Johnson et al. 2011, p57)
“Bargaining power enables stronger firms to gain favourable exchange terms from others” (Crook and Combs, 2007, p548). Buyer Bargaining Power recognises the level of control that consumers hold. Buyers exert considerable pressure on organisations to secure lower prices or better services (Pitts and Lei, 1996). Powerful buyers will have more choice on where to purchase their goods/services and how much they cost. Both the consumer and the organisation will compete for power and dictate price and quality (Porter, 1980).

Supplier Bargaining Power recognises how much control the suppliers have when determining the cost of their resources. Porter (2004) suggests that if suppliers withhold most of the of power, they in turn decide the final cost, as opposed to other organisations within the industry. In terms of the chosen company, the supplier power cannot yet be determined because it depends on the identified market. If this is a niche market, it is likely that the supplier will hold the power due to having few suppliers providing the desired product/service. Whereas if the market is not specific, there will be more choice for the organisation, thus lowering the suppliers power.

“Substitutes are products or services that offer a similar benefit to an industry’s products or services, but by a different focus” (Johnson et al. 2011, p57). Essentially substitutes offer an alternative product/service to your organisation, however in doing so they limit the potential of an industry by indicating a price standard (Minzberg et al. 1995). Porter (2004) suggests that substitutes set a bench mark for the cost of the service which the consumer follows to identify whether it’s a suitable price.

“There are new entrants to an industry bring new capacity, the desire to gain market share, and often substantial resources” (Porter, 1979, p138). If the threat of entry is great, it is riskier for existing organisations due to the potential for new competitors to enter the market (Johnson et al. 2015). To stay ahead of new competitors and hold a competitive advantage, the organisation must segregate themselves in one of two ways; differentiating their product/service or offering a lower cost for their product/service (Porter, 1991). This is the position the chosen company would take when expanding their capabilities as they penetrate the new market, being classed as a new entrant.
Direct rivals are the organisations who aim to sell similar products/services to the same consumer group (Johnson et al. 2015). Existing organisations are already well established, and because of their existing client base new entrants find them difficult to compete with. Existing rivals determine

“the extent to which firms already in an industry will compete away the value they create for buyers among themselves, passing it on to buyers in lower prices or dissipating it in higher costs of competing”

(Porter, 2004, p5).

Porter’s Five Forces model will support this study by facilitating a more holistic understanding of the external environment. Understanding and regular monitoring of the external environment will allow the chosen company to tailor their operational and marketing strategy.

2.8 Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model

Porter’s Five Forces model may recognise the external influences that the chosen organisation will face, however it does not distinguish the differences between the chosen company’s present and future markets. Additionally, it does not determine the capabilities required in the new market. For the chosen organisation to be successful it is beneficial for them to apply Lynch’s model to develop breakthrough strategies. It is essential that organisations develop their strategies to gain optimal use of their resources and, in turn, be competitive in the market (Lynch, 2015). An organisation will have a greater possibility of gaining a competitive advantage if they utilise their potential opportunities (Thompson and Martin, 2005). Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model identifies possible approaches to do so. The model (Figure 7) is made up of four sections and is used to determine the need for resources and competences. “The distinguishing feature of the higher levels is an increased likelihood of sustainable competitive advantage” (Lynch, 2006, p808). Lynch recognised the necessity for this particular model when acknowledging that the increase of resources will help an organisation gain an advantage in the market. The varied recourses available enable a firm to implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness (Pettigrew et al. 2006).
The section of the model which is most critical for competitive advantage is the breakthrough resources. Whilst breakthrough resources are difficult to develop, they enable an organisation to one up their competition (Lynch, 2006). Essentially, breakthrough resources make an organisation standout from the crowd by providing a product/service that no or few other organisations can provide, which in turn makes them competitive against the rest of the industry. This is an integral level of the model, and one that the researcher will be concentrating on.

There are other forms of resources that help organisations gain a competitive advantage in addition to breakthrough capabilities. Core resources, for instance, are unique to the organisation. Their usefulness is supported by Lynch who states that “the precise combination that will deliver competitive advantage is totally dependent on the unique recourse structure of each organisation” (2009, p150). Additionally, we have base resources. Base resources are the competitive properties that are sourced from within a firm such as IT and secretarial skills (Lynch, 2006). The base resources section is common to most organisations, although it is useful to be sourced from inside of the firm (Lynch, 2006). Base resources are important aspects for the day-to-day running of the organisation and still contribute to gaining a competitive advantage. Finally, we have the peripheral resources, which are needed most by organisations, such as advertising,
transport and catering. These resources need to deliver the basic requirements that all organisations require. Although they can only deliver a small amount of competitive advantage, peripheral resources are still vital to any organisation (Lynch, 2006).

Although Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model is useful in determining what resources an organisation needs to maximise competitive advantage possible, it is a generic model. Consequently, the model has been adapted to fit the chosen company. The adaptations are deliberately vague to accommodate a range of potential market gaps. A more specific adaptation can be found in the results section.

Figure 8: Adaption of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model

In Figure 8, the peripheral resources have been adapted to suit the chosen company and the potential market/s they may pursue. The chosen company must update their legal requirements to suit new markets in the form of risk assessments, which must accommodate a range of events. The base resources were adapted to recognise staff requirements and the quality of the goods and services provided. The organisation chosen for this study is relatively quiet during their off peak season so will need to source more staff members to accommodate the new requirements. In terms of goods and services, the organisers will need to source any required resources to fulfil the requirements necessary. A core resource identified from the adapted model is the venue. The size and location of the venue will be determined when a gap is identified.
Although the model has been adapted to suit this case study, there are additional implications to consider. Figure 8 shows what the chosen company looks like positioned in Lynch’s model and what resources they must need to enter a new market. The model can now be split in two to distinguish the difference between present and future resources. Furthermore, the second adaptation of the model includes an idea of possible current breakthrough capabilities, to determine the possible resources needed to ensure that they stay competitive above others in the industry (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Second Adaption of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model

The model has been adapted to recognise the different facilities and resources required when breaking into a different market. The conceptualisation compares both what is needed and what they already have in terms of resources. The right side of the framework is current and the left side is development. The concept will be finalised once a clear gap in the market is identified.

This study intends to use this conceptual framework that identifies current capabilities aimed at sustaining competitive advantage. Lynch’s model has been used to focus on breakthrough capabilities needed in the new market. The conceptual framework brings together the strengths of strategic models to focus on the best opportunity for gaining a competitive advantage. These varied approaches offer an opportunity to consider how competitive advantage is gained using key breakthrough resources.
2.9 Conceptual Framework

Various aspects of each model are now brought together in a conceptual framework. Porter’s Five Forces model accommodates the external components of strategy. Porter’s Generic Strategies model covers strategic scope and pricing. Additionally, Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model identifies the internal resources an organisation needs to gain an advantage over its competitors. To enter any new market, organisations should apply different strategic models to the organisation to develop a deeper understanding of the external forces, the resources required to fill gaps in the market to achieve competitive advantage. A final conceptual framework can now be envisaged (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows how the models can work together to allow an organisation the best opportunity to gain a competitive advantage. The SWOT box
enables organisations to examine the good and bad areas of the internal and external aspects of their company. It is important to determine a link between the models for the chosen company to achieve industry advantage. The Hierarchy of Resources model is split into two and the present half is positioned in the weaknesses section due to the fact that they don’t currently have the capability to break into another market. The future section only includes the breakthrough resources section of Lynch’s model as they are the identified breakthrough capabilities required to penetrate into the new market. These resources will be identified through data collection. Porter’s Five Forces model has been positioned in both opportunities and threats because both focus on the external environment. Weak forces represent opportunities that are gaps in the market, while strong forces represent threats. Porter’s Generic Strategies fit at the interface of opportunities and strengths. This is to symbolise how strengths must match opportunities. To turn the threats into opportunities, market research must identify any potential gaps in the market. The new markets will be identified through market research where it is important that the breakthrough resources match the new opportunities identified. Applying this conceptual framework should indicate the best possibility of gaining a competitive advantage in new and existing markets.

2.10 Summary
The significance of valid and effective market research is key to competitive advantage. SWOT analysis identifies both the good and bad areas of the internal and external aspects of an organisation. Then, Porter’s Generic Strategies model offers the means of implementing a competitive strategy. Additionally, an evaluation of the strength of each of the Five Forces will identify gaps in the market. Critically, the adaption of Lynch’s model focusing particularly on breakthrough resources completes the conceptual framework.

In the next chapter the researcher will construct a research approach to test the conceptual framework and so achieve the aims and objectives of the study, which involves creating a model specifically aimed at developing the Truro based wedding venue that is the subject of this study. The conceptual framework will also inform the structure of the results and discussion.
# CHAPTER 3

## RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

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3.1 Introduction

This deductive study aims to construct a model to investigate how a wedding venue in Truro, Cornwall can gain a competitive advantage by considering new opportunities in alternative markets.

This chapter is structured according to the Four Key Elements of Social Research (Figure 11), proposed by Crotty (1998, p4).

Figure 11: The Four Elements of Social Research

This approach will help to achieve the aims and objectives of the study. It identifies how the primary research is going to be undertaken. The researcher will summarise the methods of data collection necessary to achieve the research aims of this study including; data collection, sampling, data analysis and the research instruments that will be required to carry out this study. The researcher will also discuss validity, reliability and the ethical issues.
3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of “knowledge and justification” (Audi, 2003, p1). The ultimate function of epistemology is to “clarify what the conception of knowledge involves, how it is applied, and to explain why it has the features it does” (Rescher, 2003, p1). The main epistemological question being; “What is required of true belief to convert it into knowledge?” (Everson, 1990, p4).

Converting this knowledge can be done by way of objective or subjective viewpoints. An objective opinion is a numerical view. Objectivism is “the belief that certain things, especially moral truths, exist independently of human knowledge or perception of them.” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017). Brotherson (2015) notes that it is important to increase the amount of objectivity to reduce the amount of bias on the research. “There is an inverse relationship between objectivity and subjectivity” (Brotherson, 2015, p10).

Subjectivism “does not come from interplay between subject and object, but is imposed on the object by the subject” (Crotty 1998, p9). A subjective opinion looks at what you feel personally. Calcagno et al. (2010) states that to be subjective, an individual preference must be given. This technique is usually provided using qualitative methods as it allows the participants to provide a viewpoint based on their individual opinion.

The researcher is pragmatic about the use of qualitative and quantitative techniques and so this study uses a mixed methods approach. Both research methods have been adopted to strengthen the study.

Quantitative research aims to determine how one thing affects another in a population, by quantifying the relationships between these variables (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). The quantitative research involves a survey to gather data from a large number of respondents to identify gaps in the market. The results will be analysed using graphs and charts to highlight the gaps. It is important not only to complete a mass of data, but a wide range of data to ensure diverse results (Baggio and Klobas, 2011).
Qualitative research is associated with an interpretivist approach (Goldkuhl, 2012, p1). “Qualitative data are based on individual perceptions and responses and are often obtained through informal and in-depth interviews” (Bowdin et al. 2006, p636). This method, used alongside quantitative data, means the rich interviews data will supply in-depth understanding based on opinions expertise to strengthen the results of the study.

3.3 Theoretical Perspective

It is important to understand the theoretical aspects of this study to explain how they provide grounds for logic. Interpretivism is the lens that influences the choice of qualitative methods most frequently (Goldkuhl, 2012). It is “the view that interpretation is involved in determining what mental states and contents one has” (Molder, 2010, p14). Interpretivism is one of the epistemological approaches used in this research project, the other is positivism. Positivism “entails an ontology of an ordered universe made up of atomistic, discrete and observable events” (Crotty, 1998, p11). It influences quantitative methods of research. A positivist perspective is the view emphasised in the Enlightenment period (Crotty, 1998). However, since both views are embraced in this study, the researcher adopts a pragmatist viewpoint.

A pragmatist is someone who believes in a balance of both interpretivism and positivism. “Pragmatism is concerned with action and change and the interplay between knowledge and action” (Goldkuhl, 2012, p2). This method is used for the different research approaches entering the world, not just observing the world (Goldkuhl, 2012). Both the positivist and interpretivist approaches are important. Consequently, both qualitative and quantitative deemed legitimate to test the hypothesis in this enquiry.

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 Soft Data

Methodology incorporates the techniques of analysing the data collected. It is a methodology that is used when answering different types of questions (Johnstone, 2008). In this case, discourse analysis is employed to analyse the interviews efficiently. Discourse analysis is the study of language (Salkie, 1995). It allows language to be examined and sectioned in a thematic way to enable a detailed analysis (Salkie, 1995).
“Discourse analysis focuses typically on the analytical process in a relatively explicit way” (Johnstone, 2008, p4). In this study, discourse analysis is used to examine the interviews in detail. The transcripts are colour coded per a thematic analysis. By analysing the data, the structure and function of language can be fully examined (Johnstone, 2008).

3.4.2 Hard Data
Survey data will be inserted into graphs, pie charts and tables. These are useful visual tools for interpreting results and can identify common trends and popular answers, whilst highlighting anomalies (Martin and Bridmon, 2012). Bar graphs and pie charts are appropriate when addressing a single variable (Hendricks, 2011) associated with closed questions featured in the questionnaire. Questionnaires are simple to analyse using graphs and tables as the questions provided are the same and, therefore, the answers can be grouped.

3.5 Methods

3.5.1 Questionnaires
“The questionnaire is the medium of communication between the researcher and the subject” (Brace, 2008, p4). During the primary research, questionnaires have been created to identify gaps in the market within Truro. They have been given to the population of Truro, including surrounding towns, as they are the most knowledgeable about the current needs within the area. Questionnaires are useful as they can be given to a large cohort with minimal cost and time involved. However, the more required, the higher the cost. The researcher is attempting to achieve either one focus or a few varied foci to discuss within the interviews.

3.5.2 Interviews
Interviews are the most appropriate method of collecting in-depth primary data for this study. Semi-structured interviews are “where the interviewer exercises greater direction over the interview while allowing the interviewee’s opinions to emerge as he or she responds to the questions of the researcher” (Saunders et al. 2012, p375). The researcher is interviewing two expert event professionals separately; one from the chosen company and one from the substitute organisation, to elicit the most reliable
responses. Both representatives are experienced within the field as it is essential that the data gathered from the interviews is of sufficient detail to warrant effective analysis. The interviews will allow the researcher to understand the industry’s views on the breakthrough resources required for the chosen company to penetrate a new events market. This market or markets will have been identified as desirable by the public survey.

3.5.3 Sampling Strategy

“Sampling is the process by which researchers select a representative subset or part of the total population that can be studied for their topic so that they will be able to draw conclusions regarding the entire population”

(Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008, p89)

It involves gathering participants who live in or around the town of Truro during the off peak season, to find a local indication of thoughts and opinions. Sampling allows an entire population’s characteristics to be categorised into a smaller group (Brotherson, 2008). From the many techniques available, random sampling has been chosen for the questionnaires due to the feasibility and availability of resources. Although the sample is random, the researcher has ensured that all participants are knowledgeable to a degree on the needs of Truro before completing the survey.

In terms of the qualitative research, the sampling strategy was purposive. This is to ensure that the interviews asked the right people to gain the required answers. The researcher ensured that both the interviewees were vital members of staff and passionate about their organisation to encourage respectable results.

3.5.4 Sampling Size

The sample size is dependent on the level of precision required (Brotherson, 2015). The questionnaires only seek to identify one main point – off-peak season gaps in the market for a small events venue. 100 questionnaires were distributed to gain a diverse understanding of what the population of Truro desire. This sample size allows for this to happen.
In terms of the qualitative research, the interview questions are based on one organisation, which remains anonymous. The researcher decided to complete two interviews, one with the owner of the case study and the other with the manager at a substitute business. With regards to the contrasting business, it isn’t a direct rival but a substitute. Therefore, only two interviews were conducted with industry experts to ensure sufficient examples and comment are provided and to gain adequate insight.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

3.6.1 Reliability

“Reliability is essentially about consistency” (Adams et al. 2007, p235). It is essential to ensure that the data collected is reliable to be able to have confidence in the results. To ensure reliability, the instrument must measure the same subjects under the same conditions each time (Adams et al. 2007). To minimise the possibility of unreliable data, only clearly phrased questions are used. Piloting was undertaken to ensure this. The questionnaire responses were gathered on different occasions in the same area, allowing a diverse response.

As well as using well-constructed questions in the quantitative research, they were also used in the qualitative method. The researcher piloted the questions to confirm they were understandable. The researcher ensured that the interviewees possessed a great deal of knowledge into the organisation to gain reliable responses.

3.6.2 Validity

Validity measures the accuracy of the concept it is expected to measure (Babbie, 2013). It measures whether the question being asked has been answered. “Validity is a very general concept, which must be specified to be of practical use” (Ader and Mellenberegh, 1999, p325). An issue which may occur when completing the questionnaire could be one of understanding the question. If a participant misinterprets the questions, then the results will be invalid (Alasuutari, 1998). Another support in place to secure the validity was that the research process was the same for all questionnaires and remained consistent through the data collection period.
To reduce the level of invalidity in the interviews, the researcher has put together well-constructed and clear questions. All questions used have been piloted to reduce the risk of collecting invalid data. Both the interviewees are experienced in their job role and have a passion for making their organisation as competitive advantage.

3.7 Triangulation

By surveying men and women, young and old, a degree of data triangulation (Seale, 2004) was achieved. A certain amount of triangulation was also achieved by interviewing two industry experts employed in rival firms.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

The researcher has sole responsibility for all the ethical issues faced when presenting the research. Ethical approval (Appendix A) was agreed by Cardiff Metropolitan University where it was important to adhere to specified regulations to ensure the research conducted was ethically sound. All participants and organisations remained anonymous to deliver confidentiality and privacy from any data used. Only the interviewees’ occupations will be disclosed during the study. The researcher made sure to notify a family member of their whereabouts at all time during the research process and conducted all research in a safe environment. The questionnaire requires participants to be over 18. Since overt research was carried out, the researcher faced minimal ethical issues during the research process.

3.8.1 Overt Technique

This study employed wholly overt techniques. Being “done or shown openly” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016) which allows the participants to know what the data is going to be used for, before completing the interview and survey.

3.9 Summary

The chapter was based on detailed application of Crotty’s (1998, p4) model in underpinning the research. The researcher argued that a pragmatic view was appropriate, as complimentary qualitative and quantitative information would strengthen the findings. The mixture of hard and soft data combining objective and
subjective realities aims at rigor testing the conceptual framework. Discourse analysis was undertaken in evaluating the interview data, since it allows the selection of important themes to categorise information. Suggestions were made to reduce potential ethical issues emerging as part of this study and consideration was given to the collection of reliable and valid data.

The next chapter presents and discusses the findings of the primary research. The researcher will compare the results with the proposed conceptual framework (Figure 10) to test the original hypothesis and propose a final model.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH ANALYSIS

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4.1 Introduction

From conducting the literature review, themes have emerged in the deductive data analysis. The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis and discussion of the data generated through the qualitative and quantitative research. The questionnaire data will be broken down, commented on and later backed up by the interview data. Both research methods will be applied to Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model. The conceptual framework will be tested and potentially adapted from the research collected which will provide a basis for the chosen case study to follow.

4.2 Survey Participants Background Information

The questionnaire (Appendix B) first acknowledged the gender, age and ethnicity of the participants to understand their background. This information was collected to recognise how diverse the sample was and highlight any potential biases. The data for the survey was collected in the town centre of Truro to reduce the risk for biases. The participants who completed the survey ranged in age allowing diverse results to be collected. However, a majority was present as 78% of the participants were females. This could have been due to the location of the preliminary data collection and therefore causes an unintended bias to the results.

The ethnicity of the questionnaires also holds a bias. The questionnaire results identified that 91% of the participants were white. This has not created a multicultural response in the results which does not encourage diversity in the data collection. However, this is a population matter currently in Cornwall where ethnicity is not a balanced mix. Therefore, although it is not diverse, it is an accurate representation of the population of Truro.

Another question within the survey that helped the researcher identify participant’s characteristics and background was the recognition of what classes and events they enjoy attending. This helped to understand participant’s hobbies and interests. Also, recognition of a popular hobby or interest could prove useful for the case study as a market for future penetration. The results from the survey found out that the activities and events that were most popular among participants are; music events (63%), life
stage events (62%), Christmas events (56%), fitness classes (55%) and farmers, food and social events (52%). These results demonstrate what the population of Truro enjoys and helps the researcher develop a basic understanding of the needs and resources desired within the town. These areas may reflect a current gap in the market.

4.3 Gap in the Market
As previously mentioned, the aim of the questionnaires is to identify if there is a gap in the event market in Truro, Cornwall, and if so, what the gap is. The researcher distributed 114 questionnaires to the population of Truro. The results were put into a graph (Chart 1) to make it easier to distinguish the different answers given. A total of 58% of the participants answered yes to having a gap in the market. A further 38% said they weren’t sure and only 4% said there was no gap in the market. These results prove that there is a gap in the event venue market in Truro.

Chart 1: Graph Acknowledging the Gap in the Market

Q6 - Do you think there is a current gap in the event venue market in Truro?

The results (Chart 1) show that the majority of participants believe there is a demand in the event venue market. However, these results do not identify what the gap is. The questionnaire went on to examine this in further detail.
The next question asked within the survey was if there was a particular need for anything within the event venue market in Truro. Having the majority of the participants already acknowledge that there is a gap within the market, it is now important to understand where this gap is. The results (Chart 2) came to 57% identifying the need for a music events venue and 48% identifying the need for a party venue.

Chart 2: Graph Acknowledging the Potential Needs in Truro.

Q8 - Do you think there is a need for any of the following in Truro?

The questionnaire has allowed a gap to be identified and explored further in order to fulfil the needs brought to attention in the survey. The chosen gaps provide a link between the characteristics and hobbies from the participants who were involved and an area which needs fulfilling.

By identifying a new market, if the chosen organisation were to move into this market, they are allowing themselves the best possibility of gaining a competitive advantage. This is because, the questionnaires have identified an area of the events industry which
is currently not being utilised by events organisations. The chosen case study can now look to capitalise on this information thus increasing their competitive ability against rivals. In this case, the gap which has been identified is music and party venues. By fulfilling this gap, the case study will instantly gain competitive advantage over rivals who do not offer this service. In line with the aims of this study, the breakthrough resources and capabilities required to penetrate into this market must be identified.

The literature revealed that gaining a competitive advantage is essential for any organisation, especially when planning to penetrate into a new market. The questionnaires have identified that there is an area of improvement for events organisations in Truro. With little or no competitors and a demand for the service, exploiting the new market will help the organisation gain a competitive advantage with relative ease. Having identified this, methods of implementation and evaluating the internal and external environment were explored.

4.4 Interview Process

When completing the interviews, it was important to identify the gap in the market first to be able to ask the right questions. The data from the questionnaires had to be analysed first to ask more market specific questions and therefore receive more accurate results. The interviews (Appendix C and D) provided an insightful and in-depth understanding of the two organisations and how they run. They also provided additional knowledge into the events industry, giving the researcher a grasp on how their organisation gains a competitive advantage.

4.4.1 The Interviewees

In order to gain the most accurate results for the study, the researcher interviewed two respected staff members who have sufficient expertise into this area to ensure sufficient detail was provided in the answers. The representative for the case study was the owner who had been in his current role for a total of 6 years at this organisation. He had previously worked in marketing at an events company “where we used to run lots of campaigns for blue chip brands” (Interviewee 1) and is educated to a degree level. This candidate was very experienced in the industry and was very passionate about his
business and the message he portrays to consumers. On the other hand, the interviewee from the substitute organisation was very dissimilar. The substitute organisation interviewee was younger and new to her current position. She had recently been promoted and had “been in this role for 2 months” (Interviewee 2). She focused mostly on hitting targets and providing the best possible profits to please the owner. Because of this approach to business, the responses she gave were very short and to the point which could be a reflection of her strategic approach. Both interviewees had different approaches to the running of their organisations and this was portrayed in the way in which they answered the questions.

The representative from the case study focused mainly on portraying the message and spending time to think of well thought out responses which answered the questions in detail. Whereas, the interviewee from the substitute organisation responded quickly and briefly using minimal detail to answer the questions. This portrays a lot about the organisations and how they approach tasks. For example, the substitute organisation’s response was quick and brief, suggesting that their approach to events are hurried and that time is money. Conversely, the approach from the case study who offered detail and passion suggests their events would be concise and planned with enthusiasm and time.

4.4.1 Comparison of the Organisations Interviewed

From talking to the owner of the case study, the researcher has a much more in-depth understanding of the message of the organisation and their aims for the future. It was clear during the interview that the owner has a lot of passion and invests heavily into the organisation to make it successful. The owner and all employees at the case study ensure that, with every consumer, they “build that relationship and really sell them the vision” (Interviewee 1). By doing this, they are distinguishing themselves from the others in the market by providing a personal service. Thus positioning themselves at the top against competitors.

Also, because of their strategic approach, they are not focused on hitting targets, which is different to the substitute organisation. The case study is more concerned with
delivering quality produce and service to all that attend. This is shown in his interview as he mentioned that “it’s the whole experience from when they step foot onto the farm and first meet you and you show them around” (Interviewee 1). It is important to the case study that all who attend “experience Venue 1” (Interviewee 1) whether they are there for a short or long period of time. “We’re a family business, our view is very much about providing something we’re really, really proud of over profit” (Interviewee 1).

Whereas, the substitute organisation is much more concerned with hitting monetary targets and expanding the business on a profitable level. They are not as concerned with giving the people what they want but giving the people what they will pay most for. This can be suggested by the mass use of offers to entice customers. “As well as offers in our restaurant, we do offers in our rooms to generate more income” (Interviewee 2). Their differing strategic approaches were significant throughout the study.

The difference may be due to the fact that the case study is a family run organisation which has “been going 230 years” (Interviewee 1). For the substitute organisation, although it is owned by the same family through generations, it is part of an estate. The substitute organisation is only a single part of the owner’s family owned enterprise (Source 3, 2012). Each aspect of the estate is run by different managers, meaning they are more focused on achieving the profit targets. This would contribute to the differences in strategies.

The venue selected as a case study currently utilises their USP to gain them a competitive advantage. They have two main USP’s; one which “lies within the story that we’ve got behind us” (Interviewee 1). This allows them to sell their values and ethical standpoint to potential customers who will buy into this story. The other USP of the chosen venue is “the fact that we produce all our own produce that we use” (Interviewee 1). These allow them to differentiate themselves and provide a desire to visit their particular venue. Thus creating a competitive advantage. The substitute organisation offers a different USP. This lies within their location. The substitute organisation is positioned on the edge of Mounts bay overlooking the island fortress of
Attraction 1 (Source 2, 2017). Although different, both organisations utilise their USP’s to gain a competitive advantage within the industry.

Because their USP’s are different, it means that they seek competitive advantage in different ways. For example, the chosen venue provides a competitive advantage in the level of service they provide which correlates to the message that they portray and the strategic approach they stand by. In other words, the service is so high due to the fact that all employees portray the same passion for the story of the business. “I think the competitive advantage lies within the story that we’ve got behind us” (Interviewee 1). The level of service is also partly because of the staff members who portray this story and passion to the customers. “we’re able to recruit the top people, we feel, within the industry and that in turn gives a fantastic experience to our customers” (Interviewee 1). However, the substitute organisation gains competitive advantage solely through their USP. Because they already hold an advantage in the industry, they do not need to offer additional services or a certain level of service to attract consumers. “Due to our USP we hold competitive advantage all year around” (Interviewee 2). This shows a differentiation of the two organisations approach to gaining a competitive advantage.

Both the chosen case study and the substitute organisation attack their markets but they do so using different approaches. They are both highly branded and offer a quality service but in different ways, both of which are methods included in relationship marketing. “Relationship marketing is as much about keeping customers as it is about getting them in the first place” (Christopher et al. 1991, p1). The venue chosen for this case study is attacking the market using an ethical standpoint whereas the substitute organisation is using their geographical position. Both methods are successful and effective to achieve a competitive advantage.

Although the organisations were different, they held similarities too. One of these is the number of events held each year. Through the interviews, it was understood that the chosen case study holds around 75 events per year whereas the substitute holds around 50. Since the substitute organisation has other sources of income, it is not as focused on putting on a certain number of events. Therefore, although the number of events are
similar, they have different strategic intention. This suggests that the substitute organisation plans events as an extra source of income. Whereas it is the main source of income for the chosen case study which suggests that more involvement is needed to make it as successful as possible. At the present, the chosen case study “definitely don’t have the skillset at the moment” (Interviewee 1) to successfully fulfil the identified market gap.

4.5 Breakthrough Resources

The most valuable information that came from the interviews were the breakthrough resources, because this helps meet the aims of the study. Both of the interviewees were asked the same questions (Appendix E) which related to their organisation. This was to be able to use both answers when recognising the resources needed when penetrating into the music and party venue market. The researcher identified themes emerging from the discourse analysis in the form of breakthrough resources.

It was recognised throughout the interview process that an entrepreneurial vision is an integral breakthrough resource when moving into the music and party events market. It is essential for a company’s owner or manager to have a vision to expand and continue developing the company to make it successful and competitive. Currently, the entrepreneurial vision is held within the food industry as the case study is “very much a food venue first and foremost” (Interviewee 1). Because of this, the owner mentioned that “we do a lot of weddings so we need to make sure the balance of stuff is leaning towards food outside of that” (Interviewee 1). From this interview, the researcher realised that a vision from the owner or manager is essential when penetrating into a new market. This is because if there is no driving force from the organisation’s focal influence to develop, then changes will not be made. This is seen to be the most important capability due it being the first step for organisational expansion.

Another aspect that has been identified as a breakthrough resource through the interview process is technical experience. The owner from the chosen organisation identified technical experience as one of the breakthrough resources needed for that particular venue to penetrate the music and party events markets. He identified that
“you need to understand the sort of engineering side of it” (Interviewee 1). This would be classed as a breakthrough resource as it is a desired capability. It is not necessarily needed to move into a new market but it is desired and, if possessed, could result in an organisation achieving a competitive advantage. Thus supporting its placement and necessity as a breakthrough resource within the model.

The researcher identified another breakthrough capability when looking at the themes emerging from the discourse analysis on the interviews. This was production expertise. The owner of the substitute organisation was certain that effective production of any event is imperative. “Does the music sound and look good?” (Interviewee 1). These are important factors to consider when planning music and party events. Organisations would benefit from gaining experience in event production as they provide the organisation with the necessary skills in what lighting to use and how to dress a room to make it suit a particular theme. It would be an advantage for an organisation to possess production “expertise to kind of coordinate the event” (Interview 1). This ensures everything runs smoothly which would be considered a breakthrough capability because not many event venues provide this service.

Marketing is an important aspect of any business. The owner of the case study acknowledged the importance of marketing throughout the interview. “Everything needs to be sort of communicated and the conversation you have with your customer needs to be ongoing” (Interviewee 1). Marketing itself can provide an organisation with a competitive advantage however it was noticed that the level of expertise in marketing, specifically to music and party events, is what can give an organisation the edge. Although the owner of the case study has an in-depth understanding due to previously working in a marketing background, there is no previous expertise within or relating to the music and party events industry. To do this, the chosen case study could gain more events specific marketing expertise and “invest more in PR and spread the word further afield” (Interviewee 1). Providing industry specific marketing expertise will allow the case study to have the maximum opportunity for gaining competitive advantage.
Another important breakthrough resource when expanding into the music and party events market is Social Experience. The owner of the chosen case study suggested that the experience currently being provided by the staff members is high. “The sort of experience I think we deliver fairly well” (Interviewee 1). Although a high level of experience is currently being provided to customers at weddings, this will not necessarily be transparent through the new markets. In order to achieve a high level of service and deliver a quality social experience, the case study must understand what it is that customers desire. He also recognises that in order to enter into a new market, staff members must be good at “understanding what customers want at the moment” (Interviewee 1). It has already been recognised that there is a current gap in the music and party events markets, therefore, it is essential that the case study continue to provide the same high level of service in these markets to continue achieving a competitive advantage.

The final breakthrough resource identified as necessary when expanding into the music and party events venue is Networking. It is important for staff members to have a good number of contacts when preparing to penetrate into a new market. The owner of the case study recognised that “having people who are able to provide contacts” is a beneficial aspect of a business and can provide an organisation with a competitive edge. Networking provides benefits for the organisation. “If we were to jump into music for example, we’d want to make sure we’re talking to someone in the team who’s’ able to learn before we embark on it” (Interviewee 1). It is not essential for the organisations staff to network in order to provide a successful business within the music and party events sector, however, if it was in place it would provide the organisation with an advantage over its competitors. This supports the importance of social experience and its use as a breakthrough capability.

Throughout the discourse analysis, the researcher noticed different themes emerging from the interview transcripts. It was important to gain a background into the organisations current events and strategies for gaining a competitive advantage. The resources identified as necessary for an organisation to penetrate into the music or
party venue market can be transferred into the adapted model of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources to make a final adaption on the resources required.

4.6 The New Hierarchy of Resources Model
The conceptual framework (Figure 10) used the literature to create a new model for identifying the breakthrough resources needed for a wedding events venue in Truro, Cornwall to establish a new desired market. The gaps in the market and key breakthrough resources have previously been acknowledged through the use of questionnaires and interviews. This allows the researcher to create a final model by applying the research found to Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model. Filling in the gaps in this model allows the aim of the study to be fulfilled.

It was identified during the interview process what the key resources are and how they could be developed to offer the case study competitive advantage. Throughout the interviews with both the case study and the substitute organisation, the researcher asked what key resources would be needed for an organisation to fulfil the music and party events markets and what they would require to fill this market as an organisation. When interviewing the substitute organisation, it was recognised that the resources needed would be different to those of the chosen case study. The representative of the substitute organisation recognised in the interview that “we already have all of the resources and capabilities required” (Interviewee 2). In terms of the case study, they identified more resources needed. This lead to the conclusion that the recourses needed for the chosen case study to expand are; Entrepreneurial Vision, Technical Experience, Production Expertise, Marketing Expertise, Social Experience, and Networking. These have all been entered into Lynch’s model.

Throughout the research carried out, the researcher has been able to fill in the previous gaps stated in the conceptual framework. One of which was the breakthrough resources needed for the chosen case study to penetrate into a new market. The researcher has transferred the identified breakthrough resources into Lynch’s model to create a visual representation of the research (Figure 12).
Figure 12: Essential Break-Through Capabilities needed to Break into the Newly Identified Market

The resources identified have been listed in order of importance, allowing the organisation to identify the resource they need to successfully penetrate the gaps in the market. This visual representation signifies the capabilities needed for the chosen organisation to not only penetrate into the new markets, but also achieve a competitive advantage within the industry. It is important that all of these capabilities are accomplished for the business to become as successful as possible.

Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model is based around the varied levels of resources needed for an organisation to gain competitive advantage. The researcher has used market research to find a gap in the market and the breakthrough resources needed to penetrate into this market and thus gain a competitive advantage. Along with resources, the researcher identified that staff competencies are needed to successfully achieve a competitive advantage. Therefore, Lynch’s original model does not directly fit as both
resources and competencies are suggested to provide competitive advantage. It is understood that the combination of both resources and competencies are known as capabilities. This provides reasoning for resources being renamed capabilities.

It was identified through the literature review that breakthrough resources increase an organisation's ability to gain competitive advantage within their field. As it is important to have an advantage within your industry, the case study must apply these breakthrough resources to have a competitive edge within the music and party events market. If all of these breakthrough resources are not used in conjunction with each other, they will not possess the same power as they would if they were combined. Therefore, if the case study fails to apply all of these resources when entering the new identified markets, they will leave themselves with the lowest opportunity of gaining a strong advantage against their competitors.

By completing a visual representation of the breakthrough capabilities required, it can be seen how they fit within Lynch’s original model. Also, it allows the researcher to transfer this into the final model to make this specific to the chosen case study.

4.7 The Final Model
When applying the research undertaken to the original conceptual framework (Figure 10), it is important to understand how the research has developed or adapted the model. The resources that have been identified have been implemented into Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model. However, because of developments throughout the project, the model has also been altered to suit these advancements and to allow a specific model to be applied to the case study (Figure 13).
Figure 13: The Final Model

4.7.1 Strengths Section
The market research identified different breakthrough resources that are required for the case study to penetrate into the music and party events sector. These included; Entrepreneurial Vision, Technical Experience, Production Expertise, Marketing Expertise, Social Experience and Networking. All of these breakthrough resources were identified through the interview process and provide a path for the chosen case study to follow when entering the music and party events market. The breakthrough resources were recognised as a development of the markets discovered through the questionnaires. Therefore, these breakthrough resources are specific to the music and party events sector only.
As mentioned within the literature review, the strengths of an organisation will allow them to gain a competitive advantage. By positioning the breakthrough resources within the strengths section of the model, it is allowing the case study the best opportunity to gain a competitive advantage. These breakthrough resources create a distinguishable difference against others within the market which will, in turn, allow the organisation to become more successful. This is a strength as it allows the case study to penetrate a new market and expand or utilise their existing facilities and resources. This could make them more attractive and successful by strengthening their business concept.

The model is continually changing to allow the organisation to keep expanding their resources and utilising their facilities. This is beneficial for the organisation as it offers a more current view on the internal and external environments allowing them to be responsive to the impacts within the industry and the venue itself. The breakthrough capabilities, within the strengths section of the model, recognises the future capabilities of the company. Once these breakthrough capabilities have all been met, they will no longer be classed as a breakthrough. Therefore, they will no longer be positioned in this strength section and will transfer into a core capability within the weaknesses section. As a result, the organisation is continually changing, which allows the chosen case study to repeatedly expand and develop.

4.7.2 Weaknesses Section
A development throughout the market research was the recognition of the importance of breakthrough capabilities. It was identified within the literature review that it is necessary for all organisations to have their own breakthrough resources so that they can have a competitive advantage within their field. In terms of the chosen case study, they must fulfil the music and party events related breakthrough capabilities acknowledged within the strengths section, otherwise they are not providing the best opportunity for achieving a competitive advantage. This point has been highlighted in the weaknesses section due to the importance of transferring your weaknesses into strengths to produce a more competitive and successful business. The present weaknesses of this case study is that they do not possess the breakthrough resources required to enter the music and party events markets. To enter the new markets, they
should look to develop the breakthrough resources identified through the market research. If the chosen organisation fails to achieve this, the resources will remain a weakness, preventing them from entering new markets and gaining a competitive advantage.

The questionnaire identified the markets in demand. It is necessary for the case study to take this into consideration to expand in the future and increase their competitive advantage over rivals. Interestingly, the owner acknowledged “I know we’re here in the market but not necessarily the aspiration is” (Interviewee 1). This suggests that they are not utilising their current resources and therefore not maximising their potential revenue streams. This means that this is an area of weakness for them as they are not utilising the potential for expansion and competitive advantage. Essentially, the case study’s weakness is that they are currently stagnant within the market. They are only providing a service and not willing to expand which could have a colossal effect on the business in the future. Customers want new things and a business needs to be ever-changing. “You can’t just rely on people just wanting to come back three times a year and assume they’re going to do that. You sort of need to give them a reason to come” (Interviewee 1). As they are not currently willing to enter the new markets identified from the surveys, the organisation is not meeting their full potential which is therefore a weakness. The case study is not exploiting the information provided about the market research to gain a stronger competitive advantage.

4.7.3 Opportunities Section
It is important for any organisation to identify their threats and transfer them into opportunities. This has been done by the use of market research to understand a sample of the populations opinions and what is needed so that the market can be fulfilled. The market research identified a gap in the music and party events industry which provides a potential opportunity for the case study to penetrate a new market. These potential business ventures were identified as a result of the market research which allows the case study the opportunity for expansion and development. In doing this, they are allowing themselves to gain stronger business prospects and a more reliable source of income. Additionally, the market research is weakening the five forces as a new market
is being identified. The weaker environment will contribute to the case study’s position within the market. This will allow the organisation to achieve a competitive advantage within this market as they have a weaker competitive external environment. However, if the organisation fails to enter the music and party events market, they are ignoring the opinions of the population of Truro, Cornwall and, are therefore not maximising the opportunities offered.

Through the market research, it was identified that the chosen organisation applies the differentiation focus method in Porter’s Generic Strategies model as they are currently in a niche market. To highlight this in the model, a circle has been placed around the selected pathways to clearly distinguish the chosen implementation strategies. It is important for the chosen case study to understand what implementation strategies they are applying to be able to market themselves effectively and produce events which portray their message. If the organisation fails to do this, they are not marketing to the right audience and will most likely fail to achieve a competitive advantage. The generic strategies model has been put in place to allow organisations to match their opportunities to their strengths. The opportunities section provides a possibility for expansion in the market which was identified through market research.

For this particular case study, the niche is the organisation’s culture and vision, not the industry it is currently positioned in. “We could do more events but it’s important to provide the quality rather than the quantity service” (Interviewee 1). The gap in the market has identified a new niche for the case study to potentially penetrate into. However, the organisation’s USP is based around food, which must be the main focus of each event held. The case study aims for a balance in the type of events they hold so that “when people talk about Venue 1 they talk about the food and they talk about the farm and that’s really where we sit within the market” (Interviewee 1). The opportunities available to the chosen case study must provide the same values and USP as the organisation employs to continue and enhance the competitive advantage held.
4.7.4 Threats Section

As well as the opportunities section, the threats section also includes Porter’s Five Forces model due to focusing on the external environment. The threats focus on how the forces appear in terms of the chosen case study. The threats can be transferred into opportunities through the use of market research. This can be done by identifying what the population desire or need to be able to provide this market. This means that the case study is controlling their external threats. It is important for all organisations to reduce their potential threats and transfer them into opportunities. If the organisation fails to do this, they are not controlling their external environment which could potentially effect the operation of the business in the future. All of the five forces must be continually monitored and controlled to reduce the risk of external threats decreasing the level of competitive advantage held at the organisation.

All of Porter’s Five Forces can be applied to the chosen case study as they are all a current threat. However, the threats will be reduced through the identification and penetration of the new market which will allow the chosen case study to be better positioned in the industry and will weaken the forces within the new market. This is important as it allows the organisation to stay competitive within, both the new and existing markets.

4.8 Summary

This chapter has utilised the literature and research data to identify the breakthrough resources needed to enter the party and music events industry. The research hypothesis has been met by providing the case study with the knowledge of what breakthrough resources are needed to penetrate into the music and party event markets. A deductive approach was taken to the research in order to refine the conceptual framework, resulting in the creation of a new model (Figure 13). The advancements of the model were justified and explained in further detail with specific relation to the research undertaken.

Throughout the final chapter of this research project, conclusions will be made about the overall study and research. Contributions to method, theory and practice will be
discussed along with recommendations for further research and the limitations produced as a result of the research within this study.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

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5.1 Introduction
The aims and objectives of this research project were centred around identifying the breakthrough resources and capabilities required for a specific wedding event venue to expand and penetrate into a new a gap in the market. The researcher tested the hypothesis that the new market could be found, the breakthrough resources could be identified to fit the new market and an approach could be identified to attack the new market. To achieve the aim of this study, interviews and a survey were conducted along with an analysis of the current theory regarding gaining a competitive advantage. Although the case study venue held a competitive advantage in its current market, it was not making full use of the resources and facilities currently available to them. By conducting market research, two areas were identified as ‘gaps’ or market opportunities which the venue could develop and eventually penetrate into. One way of achieving this is to follow the adapted version of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model, to recognise what was needed for them to expand to gain an advantage into the newly recognised market. Through the creation and utilisation of the adapted version of Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model, it was possible to identify the venue’s potential breakthrough resources and capabilities that would be required to enter the newly identified market.

5.2 Contribution to Theory
The main contribution to theory is the model (Figure 13). The research undertaken identified a new market and set of breakthrough resources required for a wedding events venue in Truro, Cornwall to penetrate the newly identified market. These breakthrough resources were highlighted in the inputted version of Lynch’s (2006) Hierarchy of Resources model (Figure 12). The model (Figure 12) also identified which of Porter’s Generic Strategies was most appropriate in this new market.

Lynch’s original model was modified to focus on both an organisations resources and capabilities. Lynch’s model helps to conceptualise and generate a better understanding of the resources required by organisations to break into different markets. Therefore, the specific wedding events organisation that is the subject of the case study can use this model to see what breakthrough resources they will need to penetrate the newly recognised gaps in the market and ultimately gain a competitive advantage. One of the
strengths of the final model (Figure 13) is that it can be applied to any new market or organisation which encourages future research to explore this more and expand the current theory. However, in this research it has only been applied to the music and party venue market because these were the only areas recognised as being market opportunities in this locality. If organisations apply the same research methods as conducted in this study in other locations, they would be identifying consumers’ needs and therefore would expose opportunities for suitable venues to gain competitive advantage.

5.3 Contribution to Practice
The wedding events industry is very seasonal which allows for firms who focus on this particular market to penetrate into new markets in order to more fully utilise their current facilities. This is the case for the chosen case study venue. In order for this organisation to utilise its facilities in the off peak-season, it is necessary to acknowledge what the population of Truro, Cornwall needed or desired. Therefore, market research was undertaken which identified two main markets for the case study to penetrate into. This market research contributed to the practice. Additionally, by recognising two new potential markets for the chosen organisation to move into, it potentially prompted the chosen organisation to expand the scope of events they ran. This expansion concerned diversification and meant more opportunity to allow people to experience the venue, which was recognised as an important aspect of this organisation’s strategy. Although the interview data revealed that income was not important for this organisation, by hosting more events, the firm would increase revenue.

5.4 Contribution to Method
The researcher aimed to set up a research approach that would give niche wedding event venues a suitable tool to identify how to gain an advantage. A mixed methods approach was employed in this study through the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The use of mixed methods in this study ensured increased validity through the collection of unbiased and reliable data. The sampling methods chosen for the research methods reduced the level of unbiased and unreliable data. Localised random sampling was adopted for the survey which reduced biases in
the results, whilst purposive sampling was used in the interviewing process to ensure interviewees had enough experience and expertise to answer the questions accurately and in detail. The new Hierarchy of Resources model (Figure 12) allows event venues or other substitute organisations to acknowledge which resources are needed to fulfil a certain demand and gain a competitive advantage. Following this model will give them the best possibility of doing this. Methodologically, the survey questions and the interview topics provide a significant contribution to method.

5.5 Further Research
The data for this study related to the capabilities of a specific venue in Truro, Cornwall. Further research may involve applying the same approach to similar venues in different locations. Highly branded, niche wedding events venues and their substitutes who specialise in low cost services could be compared and contrasted.

The new Hierarchy of Resources model (Figure 12) can be applied to different organisations providing the same service within Cornwall so they can also gain competitive advantage. The final model (Figure 13) must be applied to organisations who offer a similar service and are also based in Cornwall in order to still be valid as it has good transferability. However, it is important to notice that this research focussed on the capabilities currently needed to penetrate the music and party venue market. Organisations must be aware of any changes to in the industry to adapt their services and ensure they are catering to the current needs of the chosen market.

The research can also be replicated by the same organisation following entry into the specific markets mentioned above. Further market research will allow them to identify additional markets, which may emerge as opportunities to gain greater competitive advantage.

5.6 Limitations
A limitation of this research is the gender imbalance associated with the questionnaires. The questionnaires were 78% female participants which could have affected the results. For example, bias results could have identified a market that was attractive for women
but not necessarily for men. Future research should aim to collect an equal sample of males and females to ensure the results are reliable and valid.

Another limitation with the study would be the number of questionnaires collected. The researcher gathered a total of 114 questionnaires from the population of Truro, Cornwall, however if more had been collected then the results may have altered. By extending the survey, the results could have widened the range of identifiable new markets as perceived by Truro’s population. Increasing the number of respondents could also apply to the number of interviewees questioned. By conducting more than two interviews, the results may have proved more reliable. If the researcher were to conduct more interviews from other substitutes within the same area, the required capabilities previously identified may have been different. This is because a greater sample size may have resulted in more diverse responses and enriched findings. Conducting more interviews may have produced richer, more reliable data and therefore a more robust model. Time constraints associated with an undergraduate dissertation prevented a more extensive survey and interview data being collected.

5.7 Summary
The researcher explored the chosen case study through its niche, characteristics and differentiated values generating further research into the importance of organisations gaining a competitive advantage and what is required to do so. The different theories and models that were critically evaluated led to the development of a suitable conceptual framework. Lynch’s Hierarchy of Resources model was critically examined and then adapted to suite the case study selected. The research was revealing, showing gaps for the case study venue to penetrate, providing the required resources and capabilities are present, as identified. The interviews identified the capabilities required in order to expand by penetrating the new market. The model (Figure 13) contextualises the breakthrough capabilities required to gain a competitive advantage in the music or party venue sector.
CHAPTER SIX

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Accessed on: 03/04/17


CHAPTER SEVEN

APPENDIX
APPENDIX A – Approved Ethics Application

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

DEVOLED ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION SUMMARY

Student Name: Laura Badoock  Student Number: ST20058112
Module Name: Dissertation  Module Number: HLT6009
Programme Name: Events Management  Supervisor Name: Alan White

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<th>Supervisor Signature:</th>
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First Submission [X] Resubmission [ ]

Date: 28.11.16

For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:

Panel Members

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<th>Signature</th>
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Module leader, Chair:  

Supervisor: Alan White

CSM Ethics Committee Representative:

Date: 28.11.16  Date of Reassessment: 

Outcome:

Project Approved [X]
Reference number issued: 2016D0108

Chair’s Action [ ]
Application not Approved [ ]

Comments for projects not fully approved:

Remove questionnaire from P.I.S.
Repeat questionnaire introduction.

Application for ethics approval December 2016
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

The original to be retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader.

In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document *Ethics application guidance notes* will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

PLEASE NOTE:
Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

**PART ONE**

<table>
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<th>Laura Badcock</th>
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<td>Alan White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
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<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:*
| **CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice based not involving human participants (eg curatorial, practice audit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory projects in professional practice (eg Initial Teacher Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required.

If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form.

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project:

The project will look primarily at the how a small wedding events venue in Cornwall can develop and breakthrough into different target markets in the off peak season. This will result in the student gaining knowledge and insight on how the venue can expand in order to gain a better quality service for their stakeholders. This is important as it explains how the venue can utilise their resources and therefore gain a higher amount of income. The student will complete this project in order to benefit both the stakeholders and the surrounding community by filling a potential gap in the market. The student will develop a theoretical model which will be adapted in order to apply to the chosen venue and its current market position. The student will use both primary and secondary research in order to achieve the specified aim and objectives and modify the model accurately.

**DECLARATION:**

I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework.

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

**STUDENTS:** I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of the applicant:</th>
<th>Date: 06/12/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY**

Name of supervisor: Alan White  
Date: 06/12/16

Signature of supervisor:
### CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
### APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

**Research Ethics Committee use only**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision reached:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project approved</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project approved in principle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision deferred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project not approved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project rejected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Project reference number:** Click here to enter text: **2016 NO18**

**Name:** Click here to enter text: **RITCHIE**

**Date:** Click here to enter a date: **27/11/15**

**Signature:**

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:
Click here to enter text:

---

**PART TWO**

#### A RESEARCH DESIGN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project?</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used$^1$</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project**

**Questionnaires:**
- The researcher aims to collect around 200 completed questionnaires to ensure the validity of the study and gain a large amount of data.
- The researcher will hand out questionnaires in Truro, Cornwall to ensure they all live in the town or surrounding areas.
- The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

**Sample:**
- The sample for the first set of questionnaires will be random sampling as the researcher will ask any who is over the age of 18 and lives in or in a surrounding town of Truro to complete the questionnaire. The convenience sample will be completed for the second section of questionnaires in order to meet the demand shown in the first section.
- More participants may be recruited by asking participants for recommendations who may be appropriate for the study, known as the Snowballing Technique.

**Semi-structured Interviews:**
- Open ended questions to collect qualitative information.
- Freedom of response will allow the researcher to gain options and thoughts of the participant.
- The researcher intends to have a face-to-face interview with two event professionals; one from the venue itself and one from a substitute venue around the surrounding area.
- Contact with the businesses is scheduled to take place in November/December and the interviews are forecasted to take place in January.
- Each interview will be recorded and will take an estimated 30 minutes.

---

$^1$ An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here

---

Application for ethics approval December 2015
Sample:
- All interviewees will be collected from either the venue itself or substitute venues in the surrounding area.
- They will be recruited by the personal connections with the researcher.

Participants:
- The types of samples chosen are to guarantee no discrimination against age, gender, race, disability etc.
- All participants will be over the age of 18.
- All the information given by all of the participants will be anonymous and they have the right to withdraw their data at any time.
- The researcher will only record age, gender and ethnicity of the participant.

Analysis:
- The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires will be analysed on Microsoft Excel by creating graphs, tables and charts.
- The qualitative data from the interviews will be analysed through topical/thematic discourse analysis. Interviews will be transcribed and the transcripts read and re-read and data colour coded by themes.

Consent:
- Completion of consent forms will be required from all participants in the interviews before they take part in the study.
- The consent forms will be stored in a password protected computer to ensure maximum security and once the study is complete the document will be deleted.

A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research? No
A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research
N/A
A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications? No
A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them
N/A

B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE
B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?

The researcher has had previous experience in creating and analysing questionnaires with the use of Qualtrics when completing market research for an event in university. In addition, the researcher has completed a variety of secondary research techniques for various university assignments.

B2 Student project only
What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?

Dr Alan White has a wide variety of experience in quantitative and qualitative research.

C POTENTIAL RISKS
C1 What potential risks do you foresee?

Questionnaires
Face-to-face questionnaires may present risk to the researcher:
- Questions may be inappropriate and cause offence to participants.
- Questions containing personal information which would breach the participants’ confidentiality.
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

- Disorderly or aggressive behaviour.

**Semi Structured Interviews**
- Cancellation of the interview by either researcher or participant.
- Questions holding personal information which would breach participants' confidentiality.
- Questions may be inappropriate and cause offence to participants.
- Participants may get anxious about the information they have disclosed which may result in anger to the researcher.

**C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?**

**Questionnaires**
- The researcher will be in a safe environment and will be sensitive when approaching potential participants.
- The researcher will ensure that all questions are sensible and appropriate to ask participants.
- A consent form and project description will be provided with the questionnaire for the participants to read to ensure they are aware of their participation.
- The participants will be informed that they can withdraw their involvement at any time.
- The researcher will ensure that a minimal number of questions require personal information to be shared.

**Semi Structured Interviews**
- The researcher will confirm date of interview with participant and ensure the time doesn't clash with any other responsibilities.
- The interviews will be anonymous so any personal information received will not be identified.
- The researcher will ensure that a minimal number of questions require personal information to be shared.
- The participant will be able to withdraw their involvement from the interview at any point with no penalty.
- A participation information sheet and a consent form will be sent to the interviewee to ensure they are aware of any topics up for discussion.

When submitting your application you **MUST** attach a copy of the following:
- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)

An exemplar information sheet and participant consent form are available from the Research section of the Cardiff Met website.
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Summary

The purpose of this research project is to identify how a small wedding events venue in Cornwall can breakthrough into different markets during the off-peak season in order to expand their capabilities and resources and provide a better quality of service for their stakeholders. Your participation will enable the collection of data which will form part of a study being undertaken at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate as you fit the profile of the population being studied; that is that you are over 18 years old and either live in or in the surrounding towns of Truro, Cornwall, or are/was previously an experienced event professional. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Project Risks

The research involves the completion of a questionnaire and semi-structured interview which will be recorded for later analysis. The student is not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you; this study is only concerned with identifying a gap in the market and potential breakthrough resources to accommodate the identified market. The student does not think that there are any significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the case study at any time.

How we protect your privacy

All the information you provide will be held in confidence. The student has taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location. When the study is finished and analysed, the documentation used will be destroyed except the signed consent form which will be held securely in the university repository for 5 years. The recording of the interview will also be held securely in a confidential, password protected environment and then destroyed after the project is complete.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project, please contact:
Laura Badcock, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: g20058612@cardiffmet.outlook.ac.uk

Application for ethics approval December 2016
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:

Participant name:

Title of Project: Breakthrough resources into wedding events development in Truro.

Name of Researcher: Laura Badcock

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [ ]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [ ]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [ ]

4. I agree to the interview being recorded [ ]

Yes No

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications [ ]

6. I would like my organisations' name to be anonymised in all publications [ ]

Signature of Participant ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Name of person taking consent ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Signature of person taking consent ___________________________

Application for ethics approval December 2016
# SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Discussed</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask participant for approval to use recording systems and to sign and acknowledge the consent form.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Background questions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Role at organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Length of employment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss experience:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How many events do you hold here annually?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there a specific type of event you plan the most?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In your opinion, what is the most challenging part of your job role?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have any experience in any other areas of events?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The company:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the company currently doing in the off peak season to keep the venue competitive?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How does the venue generate revenue in the off peak season?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are these methods effective?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a possibility for other methods of generating revenue in the off peak season?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the company have the staff capabilities to provide these services?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gap in the market:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary research showed a gap in the market in... What knowledge do you have into this particular market?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it necessary to have extensive knowledge into this market in order to provide the service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What resources and capabilities are needed for any venue need to provide this service?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this venue have the capabilities to host this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this venue have the resources to provide this service to people?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What resources and capabilities would the company need in order to host these events?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future for the venue:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it a possibility that this venue could provide this service in the future?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the required resources and capabilities is this something that this venue would consider hosting?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTIONNAIRE

Identifying a gap in the market in Truro, Cornwall to discover breakthrough capabilities for a small wedding venue during off peak season.

The purpose of this research is to collect primary information in relation to identifying a current gap in the market in Truro which a small wedding event venue can utilise. The questionnaire is anonymous and all information given will be treated confidentially. If you would prefer not to take part in this project, then I thank you for your time. However, if you are happy to participate then please complete the following questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation.

1. Gender
   [ ] Male  [ ] Female  [ ] Prefer not to say

2. Age
   [ ] 18-25  [ ] 26-35  [ ] 36-45  [ ] 46-55  [ ] 56-65  [ ] 66+  [ ] Prefer not to say

3. Ethnicity
   [ ] White  [ ] Mixed  [ ] Asian  [ ] Black  [ ] Other Ethnic Group  [ ] Prefer not to say

4. For what reasons might you and your friends hire a venue with seating capacity for 160 guests in Truro?

5. What events/classes do you enjoy attending? (Please tick all that apply)
   [ ] Fitness classes – please provide an example
   [ ] Sports and social clubs – please provide an example
   [ ] Life stage events (e.g. weddings, birthdays, partnership events) – please provide an example
   [ ] Farmers/food/social events – please provide an example
   [ ] Mother and toddler events – please provide an example
   [ ] Music events – please provide an example
   [ ] Christmas events – please provide an example
   [ ] Business/charity events – please provide an example
None of the above

Other

If other, please specify

Do you think there is a current gap in the event venue market in Truro?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] Not sure

If yes, where do you think the gap is? Location/Size/Facilities. Please explain why

Do you think there is a need for any of the following in Truro? (Please tick all that apply)

[ ] Post christening reception venue
[ ] Mother and toddler/toddler music sessions
[ ] Farmers/Food markets
[ ] Yoga/Platies clubs
[ ] Party venue
[ ] Cooking/wine tasting classes
[ ] Large society and club meeting venue
[ ] Music events venue
[ ] Business meetings/Christmas party venue
[ ] I don’t think there is a current need for anything in Truro
[ ] Other

If other, please specify.

If you have selected any options, please explain why.

Thank you for your time.
EMAIL TO AN ORGANISATION

Hello Owner of wedding event venue,

My name is Laura Badcock, I am a third year Events Management student from Cardiff Metropolitan University. gave me your email address. I worked at for for a couple of days in summer 2015.

My dissertation project concerns competitive advantage in events venues in Cornwall and I thought would be the perfect place. I was wondering if you would mind me using your business as a case study for my project? The company itself and interviewees will be kept completely anonymous and participation would be entirely voluntary. I would need an interview from either yourself or one of your experienced employees lasting approximately 30 minutes.

My study concerns how event venues in Cornwall utilise their capabilities and resources in the off peak season and any potential ways of breaking into different markets. All information gathered will be confidential and used solely for the project. I would be happy to make the results available to you when the projects complete if you wish to see them.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated and if you have any queries regarding the project please don’t hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hear from you soon.

Thank you for your time

Laura Badcock

07879813383
CONFIRMATION OF PARTICIPATION

Hi Laura

Sorry for the delay coming back to you

We'd love to help. I'm completely flat out at the mo but should be able to have a chat next week if that helps?

Thanks Owner of Wedding Event Venue
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Summary
The purpose of this research project is to identify how a small wedding events venue in Cornwall can breakthrough into different markets during the off-peak season in order to expand their capabilities and resources and provide a better quality of service for their stakeholders. Your participation will enable the collection of data which will form part of a study being undertaken at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?
You have been asked to participate as you fit the profile of the population being studied; that is that you are over 18 years old and either live in or in the surrounding towns of Truro, Cornwall, or are/was previously an experienced event professional. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

Project Risks
The research involves the completion of a questionnaire and semi structured interview which will be recorded for later analysis. The student is not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you; this study is only concerned with identifying a gap in the market and potential breakthrough resources to accommodate the identified market. The student does not think that there are any significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the case study at any time.

How we protect your privacy
All the information you provide will be held in confidence. The student has taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location. When the study is finished and analysed, the documentation used will be destroyed except the signed consent form which will be held securely in the university repository for 5 years. The recording of the interview will also be held securely in a confidential, password protected environment and then destroyed after the project is complete.

YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project, please contact:
Laura Badcock, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: st20058112@cardiffmet.outlook.ac.uk
QUESTIONNAIRE

Identifying a gap in the market in Truro, Cornwall to discover breakthrough capabilities for a small wedding events venue during off peak season

The purpose of this research is to collect primary information in relation to identifying a current gap in the market in Truro which a small wedding event venue can utilise. The questionnaire is anonymous and all information given will be treated confidentially. If you would prefer not to take part in this project, then I thank you for your time. However, if you are happy to participate then please complete the following questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation.

1. Gender
   [ ] Male       [ ] Female       [ ] Prefer not to say

2. Age
   [ ] 18-25       [ ] 26-35       [ ] 36-45       [ ] 46-55       [ ] 56-65       [ ] 66+
   [ ] Prefer not to say

3. Ethnicity
   [ ] White       [ ] Mixed       [ ] Asian       [ ] Black       [ ] Other Ethnic Group
   [ ] Prefer not to say

4. For what reasons might you and your friends hire a venue with seating capacity for 160 guests in Truro?

5. What events/classes do you enjoy attending? (Please tick all that apply)
   [ ] Fitness classes – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Sports and social clubs – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Life stage events (e.g. weddings, birthdays, partnership events) – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Farmers/food/social events – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Mother and toddler events – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Music events – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Christmas events – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] Business/charity events – please provide an example ________________________________
   [ ] None of the above
   [ ] Other
   If other, please specify
6. Do you think there is a current gap in the event venue market in Truro?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] Not sure
If yes, where do you think the gap is? Location/Size/Facilities. Please explain why

7. Do you think there is a need for any of the following in Truro? (Please tick all that apply)

[ ] Post christening reception venue
[ ] Mother and toddler/toddler music sessions
[ ] Farmers/Food markets
[ ] Yoga/pilates clubs
[ ] Party venue
[ ] Cooking/wine tasting classes
[ ] Large society and club meeting venue
[ ] Music events venue
[ ] Business meetings/Christmas party venue
[ ] I don’t think there is a current need for anything in Truro
[ ] Other
If other, please specify.

If you have selected any options, please explain why.

Thank you for your time.
L: Thank you for taking your time to participate in this interview.
S: That’s alright.

L: Can I just confirm that you approve to being recorded?
S: Absolutely, that’s fine.

L: And you have signed the consent form?
S: Yes, I have.

**Background into participant:**

L: What is your age?
S: 39.

L: What is your present job role at this organisation?
S: The owner I suppose. I think that’s the best title. Or the director or partner – something like that.

L: How long have you been employed in this role at this organisation?
S: I moved down six and a half years ago and the farm at the time was just a farm. But we opened, well started as a new venture, in 2013 so that would be three and a half/four years.

L: What key qualifications and experience do you have to perform this particular role?
S: Well I did a leisure marketing degree, so that’s very much a big part of my role now. Then after university, I spent 12 years in an events business where we used to run lots of campaigns for lots of blue chip brands. So I use quite a lot of that down here.
Participant’s experience:

L: How many events do hold here annually? It can be a rough estimate.
S: About 75.

L: Is there a time of the year where you find that you hold more events or is it equal throughout the year?
S: There’s a weighting towards the summer perhaps not as much as other businesses. We will do 2 events every week through the summer but that would extend, probably from April through to the end of October. And then through November and February we would do at least one a week so it doesn’t drop off completely. But a lot of our, we offer a planning service as well, the wedding planning largely, so a lot of our time through the winter is spent doing that. So whilst there isn’t an event happening, there’s preparation for the following season taking place.

L: What affect does seasonality of demand have on the running of the organisation? Staff/facilities/finance/management etc.
S: No, I guess that does dictate in terms of employment. So a lot of our people are part time. We have a full time team, so we now employ 7 full time which is a big jump from where we started. But people who are involved specifically at the events bit, front of house or bar staff, they would be just employed as and when. So it would be great if we had more consistency throughout the year but, were able to offer quite a few hours to people but it’s not consistent throughout the whole season.

L: What variety of different types of events do you hold at this venue?
S: We do a lot of weddings, workshops (which are usually third parties coming in – we provide the venue, space and a bit of co-ordination. They supply the people), feast nights (which are dinners effectively. So we sell tickets, 114 people come for dinner and we provide the whole event for them). We’ve got a couple of other things launching this year, so we’ve got off-site events. Taking the Venue 1 experience and going to other farms, and trying to connect people to producers all over Cornwall and we’ve got a big, I suppose festival style
event taking place in October which is called a 1000 mouths. And the idea is we’re taking our best bullock of the year and inviting a 1000 people to come and eat it with us. So it’s a bit more of a festival feel. Its double the size of a feast night.

L: Is there a specific type of event you plan the more than others?
You mentioned that you hold a lot of... events? Do you have any experience or expertise in any other area of events?

S: Well at the moment there’s a lot more weddings than there is anything else and that is purely because we’ve invested a huge amount of money, it’s a very obvious target. It’s a market which once you’re involved in the wedding industry, lots of people find you so demand outstrips supply really. We have to turn people away. We could do more events but it’s important to provide the quality rather than the quantity service so we limit ourselves to two events a week whereas other venues may do 3 or 4. But we took the decision to make sure that every wedding is an extended stay so they feel relaxed, they don’t feel rushed and sort of slightly cheated in their experience. So to that end we’re doing 55 weddings this year which is still an awful lot, but there are venues out there doing 100. So we try to spread them out throughout the year so this year we have had 2 already, 2 in February, and we’ve got our last is 22nd December although we’ve only got 2 in February, 1 in March, and then April to October is 6, 7 or 8. And then a couple in November and 1 in December so it does fluctuate but it is year round.

L: In your opinion, what is the most challenging type of event that you run?

S: Well they all present different challenges. I mean I think the level of service you need to apply when operating the wedding market is huge and it’s the whole experience from when they step foot onto the farm and first meet you and you show them around and you need to build that relationship and really sell them the vision I suppose through to the actual execution on the day where the expectation is really high. So naturally that’s something we’re really good at and the feedback we get is fantastic. I think just as challenging is taking a
customer who’s paying £35 for a ticket and having a short window of opportunity to experience Venue 1. You know it could be peeing down with rain you know. It is a challenge to feed 140 people at the same time and make them all feel that they are getting the quality. But then the new events that we are doing are probably stretching ourselves even further. So having 1000 people when we normally have 100 is a big jump so that’s going to be a new challenge. I think we’re definitely set to try and challenge ourselves and move things on each year anyway. It’s important business to try and do that.

L: In your opinion, what is the most challenging part of your job role?
S: Well I have a, as you’ve seen this morning, it’s a very varied job. So my main responsibility, I suppose, is to drive the business forward and make sure we’re going things well, improving things all the time, and appealing to the right sort of markets. There’s a bit of a cross over between operations and marketing which is my background so yeah it’s really the variety. So lots of people may want to be talking to me or asking me questions at the same time so balancing that with actually running the farm and having family life as well. It’s the balance of all of it which is the biggest challenge.

The company:

L: What is the company currently doing in the off peak season to keep the venue operational and competitive?
S: We still put on events, it’s probably half the number we do in the summer but it’s still enough to keep us ticking over. But also it’s the prep that we’re doing so whereas our main wedding season kicks off in April, there’s still a lot of bride and grooms who need their menus designed, suppliers need to come and visit us and enquire and there’s lots of obviously admin and organising that takes place throughout the winter in preparation for the new year. So, whilst it’s when people sort of take their annual leave and so on as well, people are still busy the majority of the time.
L: How does the venue generate revenue in the off peak season? Are these activities effective in adding value to the business?

S: We’re quite lucky in that we still have a few weddings. Obviously a wedding in the winter is cheaper than a wedding in the summer so there is a sort of seasonal pricing structure so that obviously helps. We also designed the venue to be a really beautiful wedding venue as well in that we’ve got sort of covered space, we’ve got the lovely roaring fires and actually the dark evenings can make for a really romantic sort of setting. So I guess planning for a year round venue started when we designed the place to make sure that it was a lovely cosy place. It wasn’t just reliant on sunshine because that would be a dangerous game in Cornwall. So yeah, it’s a combination of stuff like that and obviously having the pricing so that its attractive. It’s about 60% of the price to get married in the winter versus the summer. And then obviously we make that up with the feast nights which are pretty popular as well. So we are able to keep ticking along but also, being a young business the whole site is evolving and we use that winter time to do that as well.

L: Is there a possibility for other methods of generating revenue in the off peak season? If so, what are they?

S: Yeah because we’ve been developing the site each year, we’ve not had to focus on it but in the future, yeah we’d definitely look for more business during the winter. We’re very luck in the way in which we market ourselves, weddings are obviously booked a long time in advance so, you know that could be 2 years or between 12 months and 2 years. So with that in mind, you’ve got that guaranteed business to work around and then things like the feasts or workshops or the festival or whatever, they fit in the gaps around the weddings so it’s quite a fortunate business really in that you’ve got these. You’re not opening the door and waiting, hoping that someone’s going to come in and having to react when they don’t. It’s very much we’re in charge of our own destiny.
L: To what extent does the company have the staff capabilities to provide these services?
   Not asked – answered in other questions/answers.

L: What current resources/capabilities does this venue have?
S: A cracking team so I’ve obviously got from an events, you know a management standpoint but the experts in the sort of customers you know customer interaction and knowledge within hospitality and cooking lies with the people within the team. Again because we’re quite fortunate in that we’re not, you know, reactionary. We know what business we’ve got lying ahead, we’re able to invest a bit more in our staff. We’re a family business, our view is very much about providing something we’re really, really proud of over profit. So we’re prepared to pay probably better than others because I know the hospitality industry hasn’t got a great reputation for that, particularly in Cornwall. That means we’re able to recruit the top people, we feel, within the industry and that in turn gives a fantastic experience to our customers who then pass that on and come back and so on. So the expertise within the team is strong and its building.

L: To what extent does this company currently have competitive advantage over its rivals?
   For both in season and out of season?
S: I think the competitive advantage lies within the story that we’ve got behind us. So the fact that it is a family business, the fact that it’s been going for 230 years and it was on its knees 6/7 years ago. So there’s a lot about diversification and how ethical we are as a business. The fact that we’re just normal people giving it a go I think and are very visible within the events and so on. And the fact that we produce all our own produce that we use. We’re in the heart of a farm and 80% of what we produce on the farm now is consumed down here and that’s a big part of it. So you can’t really go to a pub and talk to the guy who’s raised the beef that you’re just eating and that’s kind of, that connection is really important.
L: What you think this company needs to do in order to maintain or increase competitive advantage?

S: Yeah, I think it’s very easy when you’re a new business to be the new ones. There’s a lot of excitement being new and you can only be new for so long. Then they’ll be other people doing stuff that’s newer. And there’s always a crowd of people within Cornwall particularly, which is a small market, who will follow the new stuff. That’s the exciting end of the hospitality industry. So once you’ve been going a couple of years, you have to, I think, invest more in PR and spread the word further afield. We need to kind of, not reinvent ourselves but, things like the farm gate feast and off site events or 1000 mouths. We need to be doing new stuff so there’s lots of positive PR around the day-to-day stuff that we’re doing or if it’s a new kitchen or if it’s a new shed. You know everything needs to be sort of communicated and the conversation you have with your customer needs to be ongoing. You can’t rely on people just wanting to come back 3 times a year and assume they’re going to do that. You sort of need to give them a reason to come so it’s looking for angles for that really.

**Gap in the market:**

L: I recently surveyed some of the population of Truro and I found that 58% of the participants that completed the questionnaire believe that there is a current gap in the events market and a further 39% were not sure. 57% of Truro residents wanted more music events and 49% identified a need for another party venue.

L: What knowledge, if any, do you have into these particular markets?

S: Not a lot. We’re very much a food venue first and foremost. We do put on music at the events. I agree, I mean I think there’s, when you look at the bands that come down to Exeter, or bands or DJs or whatever, there is a bit of a gap here and I would say nightlife in general is probably not thriving. And it’s tough because there’s lots of good people doing lots of good things but it’s not a really cohesive hub I suppose. Truro is not the destination it could be and I think people have tried lots of things and we’re obviously 4 miles outside Truro
and doing quite well. There’s lots of people doing lots of good things but without that sort of hub in the centre, it’s tough for the people in the sort of party, nightlife sort of scene. We get lots of demand for party requests. We do a lot of weddings and we want to make sure the balance of stuff we do, so when people talk about Venue 1 they talk about the food and they talk about the farm and that’s really where we sit within the market. And obviously we do a lot of weddings so we need to make sure the balance of stuff is leaning towards food outside of that. So we don’t particularly want to be, you know we’ll do some parties but we don’t particularly want to do lots of them because there’s plenty of parties going on when it comes to a wedding so it’s quite nice to focus on the food the rest of the time. But that said, if the right artist, and if it was going to be food and music, it is something we could look at doing in the future definitely.

L: Is it necessary to have extensive knowledge of these markets to provide the service?

S: Yes, I think it is always important to have someone in your team who knows what they’re doing. I mean we obviously know how to run a venue. But having people who are able to either provide contacts. The details are really important and we’ve cardinally found that with food. You learn a lot as you go and I think the service you offer improves with that. If we were to jump into music for example, we’d want to make sure we’re talking to someone in the team who’s’ able to learn before we embark on it or bring expertise in.

L: What resources and capabilities are needed for a venue to be able to provide this service?  
For both the music events and for the party venue?

S: Probably contact base, you need to understand the sort of engineering side of it; does the music sound good and look good. I think there’s probably people within the sort of technical side of it but also understanding what customers want at the moment. And I’m 39, I’m not in touch necessarily. So yeah there’s awareness of the right style, the right band’s names, who are realistic to
attract. And then there’s the technical side of it and the marketing and the sort of experience I think we deliver fairly well. But yeah, certainly don’t have the skillset at the moment.

L: Does this venue have the capabilities to host these?
Not asked – answered in other questions/answers.

L: Does this venue have the resources to provide this service to people?
Not asked – answered in other questions/answers.

L: What resources and capabilities would the company need in order to host music events?
Not asked – answered in other questions/answers.

L: What would you estimate the costs and other implications to be of increasing your capabilities to run such event?
S: I have absolutely no idea. I guess there’s people out there you just have to get quotes for; day rates and so on. I would imagine you’re probably going to spend £500 on resources and technical stuff to hire equipment for a night and then a similar amount for expertise to kind of coordinate the event. That would be my guess.

L: Do you agree that there are such gaps in the market?
S: Judging by the amount of demand we’ve had, I think there is the need for someone doing this. I think there are lots of hotels, there’s not necessarily something, I know we’re here in the market but not necessarily the aspiration is. But there is certainly a venue, in a nice spot that provides exclusive access and decent size facilities and so on. I think there’s definitely scope for something locally, without a doubt.

L: Have you considered these or other possible gaps that you could fill? What are they?

1. Business, club, society meetings
2. Education events
3. Product shows and conventions
4. Other

S: Yeah, it’s not a massive priority because we want to be serving food to people who care about the food more than the boos really. That’s kind of where we want to be.

Future for the venue:

L: Is it a possibility that this venue could provide this service in the future?
S: Yeah, it is possible. I think capacity is an issue at the moment in terms of number of events we can do but in the future there’s less of a limit I think.

L: Thank you for your time.
S: No worries, thank you.
APPENDIX D – Interview 2 Transcript

TRANSCRIPT – INTERVIEW 2

L: Thank you for taking your time to participate in this interview.

L: Can I confirm that you have signed the consent form?
E: Yeah I have.

L: And you are ok to being recorded?
E: Yes.

Background into participant:

L: What is your age?
E: 23.

L: What is your present job role at this organisation?
E: A Senior Manager.

L: How long have you been employed in this role at this organisation?
E: I’ve been in this role for 2 months.

L: What key qualifications and experience do you have to perform this particular role?
E: I have experience here at this organisation for 3 years. I started off as a server, and then went to trainee assistant manager. Now I have become a senior manager.

Participant’s experience:

L: How many events do hold here annually? It can be a rough estimate.
E: Probably about 45-50 functions a year.
L: Is there a time of the year where you find that you hold more events or is it equal throughout the year?
E: Probably between January and June is mainly our busy season.

L: What affect does seasonality of demand have on the running of the organisation? Staff/facilities/finance/management etc.
E: We have access to staff all year around for the running of the organisation and the facilities, financial requirements and management are already in place all year around.

L: What variety of different types of events do you hold at this venue?
E: We hold cream teas, weddings, birthday parties, wakes, a few shoot dinners and business events.

L: Is there a specific type of event you plan the more than others?
   You mentioned that you hold a lot of... events? Do you have any experience or expertise in any other area of events?
E: Yeah, cream teas and wakes mainly.

L: In your opinion, what is the most challenging type of event that you run?
E: It would have to be weddings because they are so demanding.

L: In your opinion, what is the most challenging part of your job role?
E: Doing rotas and always maintaining a good level of customer service.

The company:

L: What is the company currently doing in the off peak season to keep the venue operational and competitive?
E: Due to our USP we already hold a competitive advantage.

L: How does the venue generate revenue in the off peak season?
   Are these activities effective in adding value to the business?
E: Our main source of income is the restaurant so we create offers and deals in the off peak season to maintain interest. Yes, these methods are very effective.
L: Is there a possibility for other methods of generating revenue in the off peak season?
   If so, what are they?
E: As well as offers in our restaurant, we do offers in our rooms too to generate more income.

L: To what extent does the company have the staff capabilities to provide these services?
E: We have staff all year round so can provide most services asked for.

L: What current resources/capabilities does this venue have?
E: We have our beach bar which is also our private function room, we have 10 rooms, a kitchen and a seating capacity of 310.

L: To what extent does this company currently have competitive advantage over its rivals?
   For both in season and out of season?
E: Due to our USP we hold a competitive advantage all year around.

L: What you think this company needs to do in order to maintain or increase competitive advantage?
E: This is not really applied to us as we hold a competitive advantage due to our USP.

*Gap in the market:*

L: I recently surveyed some of the population of Truro and I found that 58% of the participants that completed the questionnaire believe that there is a current gap in the events market and a further 39% were not sure. 57% of Truro residents wanted more music events and 49% identified a need for another party venue.
L: What knowledge, if any, do you have into these particular markets?
E: I have experience and planning, implementing and running music and party events at this venue.

L: Is it necessary to have extensive knowledge of these markets to provide the service?
E: No, personally I don’t think so.

L: What resources and capabilities are needed for a venue to be able to provide this service, both the music events and for the party venue?
E: For music, you would need electric, the room, staff on the bar, lighting and toilets. The same would be needed for a party as well as having extra staff in the kitchen.

L: Does this venue have the capabilities to host these?
E: Yes, we have all of these capabilities required.

L: Does this venue have the resources to provide this service to people?
E: Yes, we have all of these resources required.

L: What resources and capabilities would the company need in order to host music events?
E: We already have all the resources and capabilities required.

L: What would you estimate the costs and other implications to be of increasing your capabilities to run such event?
E: We already have all the facilities and staff required so the cost implications would be low.

L: Do you agree that there are such gaps in the market?
E: Yes, I believe that there are plenty of gaps in the market, especially music and party events.
L: Have you considered these or other possible gaps that you could fill? What are they?

   1. Business, club, society meetings
   2. Education events
   3. Product shows and conventions
   4. Other _______________________

E: Yes, we are currently planning on fulfilling a gap in the business industry by hosting more business functions in our venue.

**Future for the venue:**

L: Is it a possibility that this venue could provide this service in the future?

E: Yeah, we would definitely look at fulfilling these markets.

L: Thank you for your time.

E: No problem.
APPENDIX E – Interview Questions

Questions for Interviews

Thank you for taking your time to participate in this interview.

Ask participant for approval to use recording systems and to sign and acknowledge the consent form.

**Background into participant:**

What is your age?

What is your present job role at this organisation?

How long have you been employed in this role at this organisation?

What key qualifications and experience do you have to perform this particular role?

**Participant’s experience:**

How many events do you hold here annually? It can be a rough estimate.

Is there a time of the year where you find that you hold more events or is it equal throughout the year?

What affect does seasonality of demand have on the running of the organisation?

Staff/facilities/finance/management etc.

What variety of different types of events do you hold at this venue?

Is there a specific type of event you plan the more than others?

You mentioned that you hold a lot of... events? Do you have any experience or expertise in any other area of events?

In your opinion, what is the most challenging type of event that you run?

In your opinion, what is the most challenging part of your job role?
**The company:**

What is the company currently doing in the off peak season to keep the venue operational and competitive?

How does the venue generate revenue in the off peak season?
   
   Are these activities effective in adding value to the business?

Is there a possibility for other methods of generating revenue in the off peak season?
   
   If so, what are they?

To what extent does the company have the staff capabilities to provide these services?

What current resources/capabilities does this venue have?

To what extent does this company currently have competitive advantage over its rivals?
   
   In season?
   
   Out of season?

What you think this company needs to do in order to maintain or increase competitive advantage?

**Gap in the market:**

I recently surveyed some of the population of Truro and I found that 58% of the participants that completed the questionnaire believe that there is a current gap in the events market and a further 39% were not sure. 57% of Truro residents wanted more music events and 49% identified a need for another party venue.

What knowledge, if any, do you have into these particular markets?

Is it necessary to have extensive knowledge of these markets to provide the service?

What resources and capabilities are needed for a venue to be able to provide this service?
   
   For the music events?
For the party venue?

Does this venue have the capabilities to host these?

Does this venue have the resources to provide this service to people?

What resources and capabilities would the company need in order to host music events?

What would you estimate the costs and other implications to be of increasing your capabilities to run such event?

Do you agree that there are such gaps in the market?

Have you considered these or other possible gaps that you could fill? What are they?

1. Business, club, society meetings
2. Education events
3. Product shows and conventions
4. Other __________________________

**Future for the venue:**

Is it a possibility that this venue could provide this service in the future?

Thank you for your time.