

## Case Study Analysis of the Brooklyn Film Festival

### Case Study Analysis Part 1 – Environmental Scan

#### I. **Economic Scan**

The Brooklyn Film Festival is an organization that runs an annual and highly-competitive film festival, spanning over a period of ten days, screening independent films to an audience of over 10,000 people. Contributed income, especially through corporate sources, is vital for this organization. Though this organization charges its audience for tickets, the Brooklyn Film Festival is a not-for-profit organization, with the goal of screening both New York based and international films to facilitate a public forum around film and culture in the Brooklyn area. The Brooklyn Film Festival is sponsored by many corporate organizations, including companies like Yelp, WNYC and Windmill Studios NYC. In return for the corporate sponsorship funding, the BFF provides advertisement opportunities to give the sponsors' brands maximum visibility for its audience.

The festival charges its audience \$100 for a Full Festival Pass that allows access to all of the events and screenings, \$30 for a 4 Pack Pass that allows for the screening of 4 films, and also a Single Program Ticket for \$12 or \$10 for students and senior citizens, which allows access to one film screening. Because there is a great deal of expense involved in organizing this event, as well as the \$50,000 - \$80,000 awarded in prizes to the winning films, tickets manage to cover the costs and do not produce a considerable profit for the organization. Also, much of the labour involved with organizing the event is dependent on volunteers.

Surveying this organization's economic past and present reveals that its general financial health has been significantly improving over the years. Since its inception in 1998, the organization has substantially expanded beyond the boundaries of its Brooklyn base, into the international scene. The great popularity of the festival has brought it more money to award its exceptional participants and attract more competitive filmmakers from all across the world.

Another economic factor that influences the organization's situation is the price of the venues, which relate to the prices of living in Brooklyn. The location of the venues will, to a large degree, determine the price. For example, showing in Bushwick would be much cheaper, though likely unattractive for much of this festival's target audience. It is important to balance venue desirability with its price.

## **II. Demographic Scan**

The Brooklyn Film Festival attracts and is catered to an audience of students, young 'trend-setting' professionals, especially indie-filmmakers, and professionals working in the arts. The ten-day event is internationally renowned and attracts not only Brooklyn residents and New Yorkers, but also people from all around the world. However, it is safe to say that its primary audience is the residents of Brooklyn and New York City. Though there has not been a demographic study of the participants and attendees of the Brooklyn Film Festival, the borough of Brooklyn is renowned for its thriving young artists scene. The age demographic for the organization is estimated to be males and females of 20 – 35 years old. The economic status of the audience is estimated to be middle-class.

A person's cultivation of interest in independent films, which would attract them to attend the festival, is likely to depend upon an arts or liberal arts post-secondary education. Likewise, the volunteers for the festival are likely to be students of an art or film centric education. As Brooklyn is a greatly multicultural borough of New York, its attendants would likely also be of a wide range of ethnic heritage.

### **III. Cultural Scan**

The general culture of the organization's team is so to speak, 'indie', reflecting Brooklyn culture in general. The organizers are people with alternative and cultivated artistic taste, who have been or are filmmakers themselves and have great experience and knowledge of the entertainment industry.

The local cultural elements or social values that encourage participation in the Brooklyn Film Festival are to a great degree the 'cultural capital' derived from something described as 'Brooklyn'. Like New York City, the idea of Brooklyn is itself an internationally recognized brand with distinct and quickly recognizable aesthetic and cultural qualities. This is why this international film festival held in Brooklyn – as opposed to the Art of Brooklyn Film Festival, which only features Brooklyn-based filmmakers – deliberately maintains this local reference in its title. As it was previously titled as the Brooklyn International Film Festival, it had reverted back to being the Brooklyn Film Festival, for this reason.

The attendance numbers for this festival largely depend on the degree of leisure of its target demographic. The leisure trends that influence the organization depend on national economic stability and in turn, people having disposable money and time to attend this event. To a degree, the Brooklyn Film Festival is a part of the tourism and leisure industry. Its status as a tourist attraction makes it important to cultivate the festival's international image through promotions and advertisements.

Popular culture elements that influence the artistic offerings of the organization are especially apparent in the "2014 Brooklyn Film Festival Trailer", which features people in 'Brooklyn-like' scenarios offering intriguing 'Brooklyn-type' pitches for film-plots. The trailer concludes with the words, "There are some things you can only see in BRKLYN" (0:39). The acronym BRKLYN reflects the popular culture trend of the online social networking and the Internet culture in general, which is popular with contemporary youth. Acronyms signify an engagement with current technologies, such as cellphone texting, 'apps' and platforms like Twitter and Facebook. The popularity of

these technologies compounded with society's obsession with youth-culture, causes this association to benefit the Brooklyn Film Festival by giving it a fresh and current quality.

#### **IV. Other Environmental Elements**

The great amount of festivals that happen every year in and around the vicinity of Brooklyn create a competitive pressure on this organization. There is a need to differentiate it from other similar organizations that base their brand image on the Brooklyn brand, like the Art of Brooklyn Film Festival. Also, other international film festivals like the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) run the risk of overshadowing the BFF in the amount of media and celebrity attention that it receives. BFF pertains to the local and international scenes, and has to compete on both of these planes.