'If you want to change behaviours, you need to be ready to change yours.'

———   **The way we create events is broken!**

JULIUS SOLARIS

EDITOR OF EVENT MANAGER BLOG

I was attending an industry event a few days ago. The event planner of one of the most well known Business-to-Business events worldwide was speaking. The event in question is probably the go to, best practice reference in the industry.

I was struck by something that the speaker said: "We have no way of measuring the direct impact of this event in terms of sales. If you have a way to do it, I would love to see you afterwards". Wait, what?

One of the best events in Business-to-Business has no way to measure direct ROI? And the presentation actually started with the speaker saying how the main objective of the event was the bottom line!

ABOUT ME

Julius Solaris the editor of Event Manager Blog. Started in 2007, Event Manager Blog is the number one blog worldwide for event professionals, covering topics such as event planning, social media for events, event technology, event trends, event inspiration but also destination management marketing, meeting planning. He has been named one of 25 most inflluential individuals in the Meeting Industry in 2015 by Successful Meetings Magazine. He is the author of the Annual Event Trends Report, Social Media for Events, The Event App Bible , The Good Event Registration Guide and Engaging Events.

Many, many sources cite events as the go to tool for marketing, motivation and changing behaviours. When you look at your marketing mix for instance, events are constantly the most effective channel for brands. Yet the investment does not match the hype. The money put behind events is not as significant as the budget dedicated to other tools. Why is that?

If you work in events, like we do, I am sure you recognize the feeling that you are doing something amazing for the people around you, but you cannot quantify the impact or carefully measure the results. This is because the way we create events is broken. This is how important this book is.

In an industry where experience is preferred to education, we have let 'the way it's always been done' prevail over the 'why' we plan events in certain ways. The Event Design Handbook is shifting the focus of the conversation to what matters.

The authors have embarked in one of the most challenging tasks we have ever witnessed in the industry: changing the way we create events to offer better value for our attendees, partners, sponsors, bosses and for ourselves.

THE STORY
OF THIS BOOK

This is Event Design—a uniquely powerful approach to systematically deconstruct and then reconstruct the success or failure of an event with a team of invested people. We have reduced the process of Event Design to one multi-faceted tool, fitting onto one piece of paper, that allows you to sketch all aspects of your event with your team. It is designed so that everyone can contribute, discuss, and debate the best possible way to design an event for its maximum possible impact. This tool is the Event Canvas. Using it, you and your event team can make magic.

Did you judge this book by it's cover?

Well you're in for a surprise.

Like books, many events suffer from the syndrome of being judged by its cover. All pump and circumstance from the outside and once you are in, you wonder what the fuss was all about. As a matter of fact, many events are like poor theatre plays, the ones where little thought is put into the script, casting and production and most don't even have a dress rehearsal. The truth is, this book has seen the daylight because it's time for a change. It's time to shake up the feathers and start an Event Design revolution.

Events are powerful mechanisms that change behaviour of its participants. You know they are, if you had the opportunity to participate in a properly designed event.

In this book we will share with you the power of the Event Canvas as a one page story. It will allow you to deconstruct that journey, articulate the mechanics of an event and then enable you to apply that to your future events together with your team.

As soon as you flip to the next page, you'll discover the power of visual thinking on a single piece of paper.

We have written this book in a casual style so you can easily consume its content, get inspired and share it with colleagues, friends and clients.

We've been tremendously inspired by seeing Event Design teams across the globe in action whilst we developed this Event Design methodology with them and can't wait to share these experiences and insights with you.

They have become Event Pioneers who are now having courageous conversations about value, using new tools that guide their fun collaborative processes. They are now equipped to design and articulate the true value of their events.
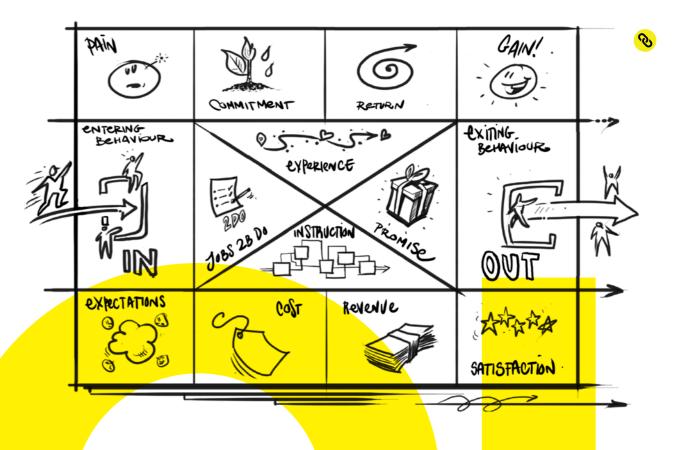
We are pleased and proud to welcome you to the Event Design handbook and the Event Canvas, so that you may systematically design innovative events. Let's design events for change, one event at a time,

Roel Frissen - Ruud Janssen - Dennis Luijer

03.

MEET THE EVENT CANVAS

Now that you've gotten a general sense of what the Event Canvas can do by learning it's intended usefulness, by seeing who it is for, and by hearing from people who have used it (which will continue throughout the book), it's time to take a closer look at the tool itself and its specific parts. Simply put, the Event Canvas is a template to support Event Design.
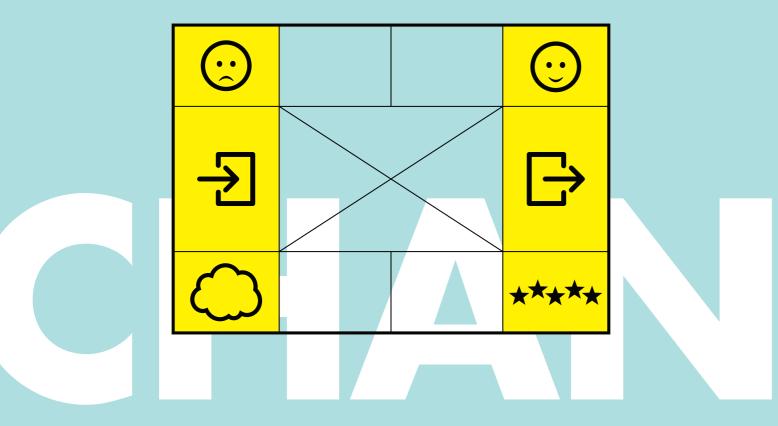
An event is one of the most powerful instruments for influencing the behaviour of the people who attend.

In that respect the Event Canvas is a template for designing the way that a person exiting an event takes action, based on what he or she experienced and learned.

In the following chapter, we'll explain in much greater detail the process of applying the Event Canvas for your project. But for now, we are just creating definitions. Let's first examine, in general, how it is applied in the Event Design process.

CHANGE

ARTICULATING THE CHANGE
IN BEHAVIOUR

THE STORY OF THIS EVENT

Consider an example of this event with 5 Stakeholders: Lee is a photographer who works freelance. His friends are all in media arts—photographers, videographers, writers, painters—and they all also work freelance. They've each had one or two jobs with big-time media outlets—Italian Vogue, the New York Times—but would like more consistent client interest. Lee is going to host a Saturday barbeque and invite his media arts friends and their highest level contacts from their recent jobs. Lee expects 40 to 50 people and has secured a popular brunch location with a big outside area. He has a sponsor:

a camera manufacturer is donating a free version of its photo-editing software through a raffle and sending two of its employees.

The 5 Stakeholders are Lee, as the event owner, his media arts friends, the media outlet representatives, the camera corporation, and the restaurant.

Let's begin with the CHANGE group, which charts the most important measure of an event: Behaviour Change.

07 COMMITMENT

Having a stake in an event always involves some level of commitment. With COMMITMENT we aim to raise our understanding of the Stakeholders' personal investment to either initiate, attend, partner in, or sponsor the event. A COMMITMENT often means that the Stakeholder is sacrificing something in order to commit.
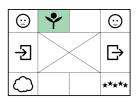
COMMITMENT is often expressed in time, energy, or time away from the office or the family. Also, the reservation or use of resources, preparation, and efforts of different kinds are examples of commitment. The artist's COMMITMENT might be, I'm giving up a Saturday for this.

Understanding these trade-offs, compromises, and opportunity costs the Stakeholder faces will provide us insight into how to create a positive experience and also helps to exceed EXPECTATIONS.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1   What is the non-monetary investment the Stakeholder makes, whether tangible or intangible?
2   What sacrifice is he/she expected to make to attend this event (time, compromise, opportunity cost)?
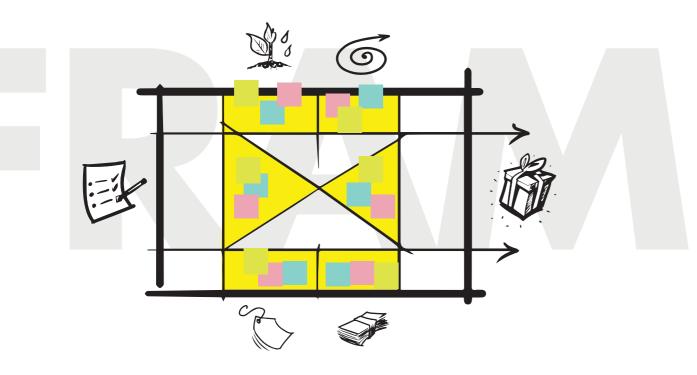3   What does he/she choose not to do or attend because of this event?

04.

APPLY
EVENT DESIGN

SABINE BONORA
HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT, MED-EL

'The Event Canvas design process allows us to articulate
on one piece of paper the essence of the thinking of
all the stakeholders involved in the event. It creates value,
innovation, and alignment of everyone involved from idea,
to design, to execution, and to evaluation.
After redesigning our pinnacle event, we've adopted it
as the de facto working method for all our events.'

BOUNDARY BOX, JOBS, AND PROMISE

Continue filling out sticky notes for each stakeholder following the Canvas clockwise. Start with COMMITMENT and proceed through RETURN, EXPECTATION, REVENUE, COST, and SATISFACTION, and conclude with JOBS TO BE DONE and PROMISE. Use the QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED sections in Chapter 3 to guide the team through the process.

When you have completed the analysis for all Stakeholders, you can then merge all the Event Canvasses into one master Canvas. This is where you benefit from having used one colour per stakeholder. It might be helpful to see where you can consolidate some different sticky notes (per colour) to keep the Canvas clear and accessible.

ANNALIZA B. LAXAMANA
CEO - LEAD IMPACT ASIA INC

'The Event Canvas gives you a clear perspective of your stakeholders, their objectives for the event, and how you're arriving to meet those objectives. And there's nothing more important than clarity and efficiency when doing an event.'

ELSA'S 8th BIRTHDAY PARTY

PRIVATE EVENT

CASE 01

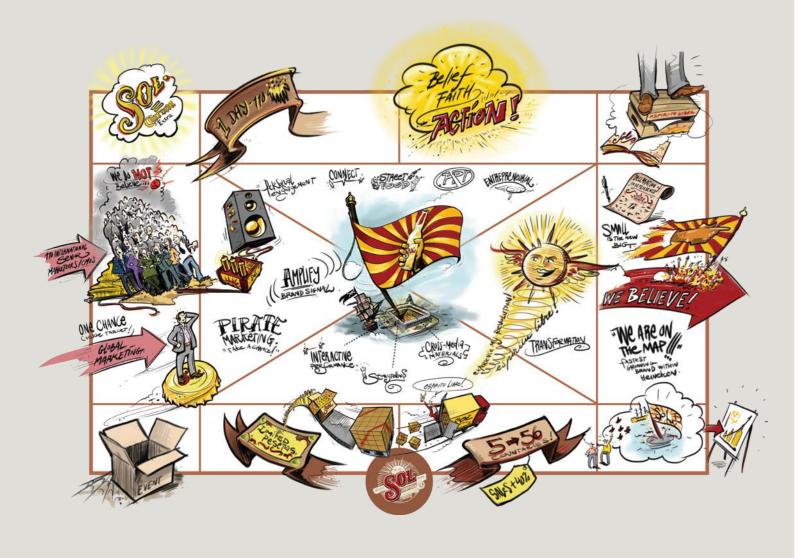**ABOUT ELSA**

How would we explain the use of the Event Canvas to our very own kids? We decided to use an event we can most probably all remember, our 8th birthday. A real-life case study told from 3 perspectives: Elsa who is turning 8, her parents, and her grandparents. Elsa's birthday is the perfect moment of celebration for the whole family and an opportunity for everyone to get together.

EVENT NARRATIVE

The desired exiting behaviour for the marketers was that they would believe in the brand. A key aspect of the Sol Independence Day was, to demonstrate their belief, the marketers needed to sign a Declaration of Independence and join the 1% of the Heineken community who believed in Sol. The Global Marketing Manager felt this was a critical step in putting his brand on the map and for it to become the fastest growing brand within Heineken.

Both Stakeholders' JOBS were to amplify the brand in their region. Reverting back to the roots of Sol was reverting back to the soul of the brand: the Mexican Revolution and Espiritu Libre, the free spirit. That Espiritu Libre was the PROMISE for the marketers and CMOs. Normally in big corporations, everything needs to be played by the rules. But Sol is an exception, and this took the form of Espiritu Libre.

As a joint PAIN, both Stakeholders felt that the brand Sol was not distinctive enough and was always referred to as 'something like Corona'. The GAIN was that the brand book of Sol allowed everyone to tell his or her own story about the brand', encouraging the marketers to take personal responsibility for it.

Everyone expected an 'inside-the-box' event in which the speakers would use Powerpoint and again direct the marketers to sell more of this particular brand. Instead, every marketer present was sharing the story about Revolution and how they were part of the transformation.

Sales went up 45% and the number of countries where Sol was served went from 5 to 56.

SO HOW DID THEY DO THAT?

The event happened on a fortress just in from the shore, and the EXPERIENCE JOURNEY consisted of a mixture of personal engagement, entrepreneurial spirit, human connection to the brand, and the feeling of a street food festival.

The INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN consisted of interactive performances, storytelling, and cross-media materials. And there were no Powerpoint slides.

This graph shows two different axes that chart the four major categories that help us answer the question, 'Why do people do the things that they do?' On the y-axis, North relates to how 'Thoughtful' people are. These types of people, when faced with a problem, would prefer to think about it, sometimes for a long period, before discussing with others.

South on the y-axis is the opposite, where the 'Talk-Full' person has a preference for talking about the same problem before thinking or processing the issue. Have you ever been faced with a 'Talk-Full' person recounting an issue in his life when you have been thinking to yourself 'Why are they telling me this?' They are telling you because it helps them process and answer their problem. They put their developing thoughts into the world to see what they get back. The process involves talking first, which helps 'Talk-Full' people think. The opposite is true of the people who fall along the North axis. They rely on thinking first before talking. Imagine a partnership or marriage where each person is an extreme example of both, will this be heaven or hell?

On the x-axis, West is related to what we call 'Concealing'. People have different levels of comfort (or preference) for what they reveal of themselves. The 'Thoughtful' person typically conceals personal information because, to them, the world is about data, process, logic, and quality. The 'Talk-Full' person typically focuses on the task at hand, getting the job done, speed, and activity.

East on the x-axis is 'Revealing'. The 'Thoughtful' person will typically express their concerns, their troubles, their needs, and their fears. Whereas 'Talk-Full' person will typically divulge information as to what could be or might be—the future and their view of the possibilities.

Plotting on these two axes reveals four very different types of individuals—we call them Logical, Empathy, Action, and Difference, or what we refer to as the LEAD model. All are valid and are what we call a 'preference'.

Thoughtful

Revealing

Concealing

Talk-full

LOGICAL

Methodical	*Overly Formal*
Systematic	*Risk-Averse*
Organised	*Inflexible*
Efficient	*Aloof*
Careful	*Cold*
Factual	*Sceptical*
Objective	*Obsessive*
Structured	*Patronising*
Conscientious	*Bureaucratic*

EMPATHY

Considerate	*Self-deprecating*
Supportive	*Stubborn*
Friendly	*Gossipy*
Caring	*Naïve*
Kind	*Sulky*
Trusting	*Gullible*
Practical	*Dithering*
Sensitive	*Smothering*
Agreeable	*Overly-emotional*

ACTION

Direct	*Loud*
Decisive	*Selfish*
Sociable	*Bullying*
Confident	*Arrogant*
Pragmatic	*Dogmatic*
Resourceful	*Aggressive*
Competitive	*Antagonistic*
Determined	*Domineering*
Extraverted	*Confrontational*

DIFFERENCE

Visionary	*Temperamental*
Expressive	*Indecisive*
Creative	*Disorganised*
Easy-going	*Unfocused*
Inquisitive	*Unpredictable*
Flexible	*Subversive*
Innovative	*Absent-minded*
Playful	*Daydreaming*
Open	*Argumentative*