

# Guidelines for Successful Event Bidding

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## **Executive Summary**

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Event bidding is a complex process of communication between two key players, the event owner and the event bidder, that comprises of five stages (1) bid feasibility, (2) bid development, (3) bid submission, (4) bid presentation, (5) and site selection.

In order to win an event bid the event bidder must try and achieve a state of 'best fit'. In order to reach a state of best fit, the event bidder must aim to exceed the event owner's specified and unspecified bid criteria relative to competing bids. This specified and unspecified bid criteria is represented as the five rings in the targeted model (figure 1).

Event bidding is not an exact science whereby success can be guaranteed by following a set formula. The event bidder must treat each new bid as being unique. However, there are a number of factors common to all successful event bids that the event bidder is encouraged to employ.

These include:

- Meeting both the specified and unspecified criteria
- Continuously adding value to the bid and the event
- Providing evidence of government support
- Demonstrating the ability to deliver the event through infrastructure, community support and previous event management experience and expertise
- Previous experience at event bidding
- Developing strong partnerships and bid leadership
- Conducting research and providing quality information
- Having figureheads to front the bid
- Making an emotional connection with the decision makers
- Providing evidence of community passion for the event
- Developing strong relationships and lobbying the decision makers.

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# 1. Introduction

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Over the past two decades in New Zealand there has been an increase in the number of individuals and organisations bidding for events. This increase in activity has resulted in a small number of people who have developed an in-depth knowledge of the event bidding process and what it takes to win a bid. Until now this knowledge has is not been readily accessible to individuals or organisations wishing to find out more about event bidding and how to ensure success. This guidebook attempts to bring this information together from those experienced in the event bidding process.

The data for this guidebook was collected from a number of sources: (1) world-wide academic literature on event bidding; (2) non academic publications such as newspaper articles, interviews, presentations, reports, information booklets, etc; (3) and interviews with New Zealand event bidders and event owners.

This guidebook is for those individuals and organisations (Regional and National Sporting Organisations, Event Managers, Sport Trusts, Territorial Local Authorities) new to event bidding and are considering getting involved.

This guidebook provides insight into (1) the main stages of the event bidding process, (2) the theory of event bidding (3) what is required to win an event bid (4) the common success factors for winning an event bid.

## ***The Essence of Event Bidding:***

Event bidding is a process of communication between the two main players; the *event owner* and the *event bidder*\*. The event owner is the entity, such as an international or national sporting organisation, which owns the rights to an event and is seeking a host to organise and run it successfully. The event bidder is an entity or organisation that is seeking to secure the rights to host an event. In most bids there is more than one event bidder resulting in a competitive bidding process.

It is important to acknowledge that the event owner has a number of different strategic objectives for their event that they hope to fulfil such as raising awareness, improving infrastructure, increasing participation, increasing revenue, etc through the hosting of a

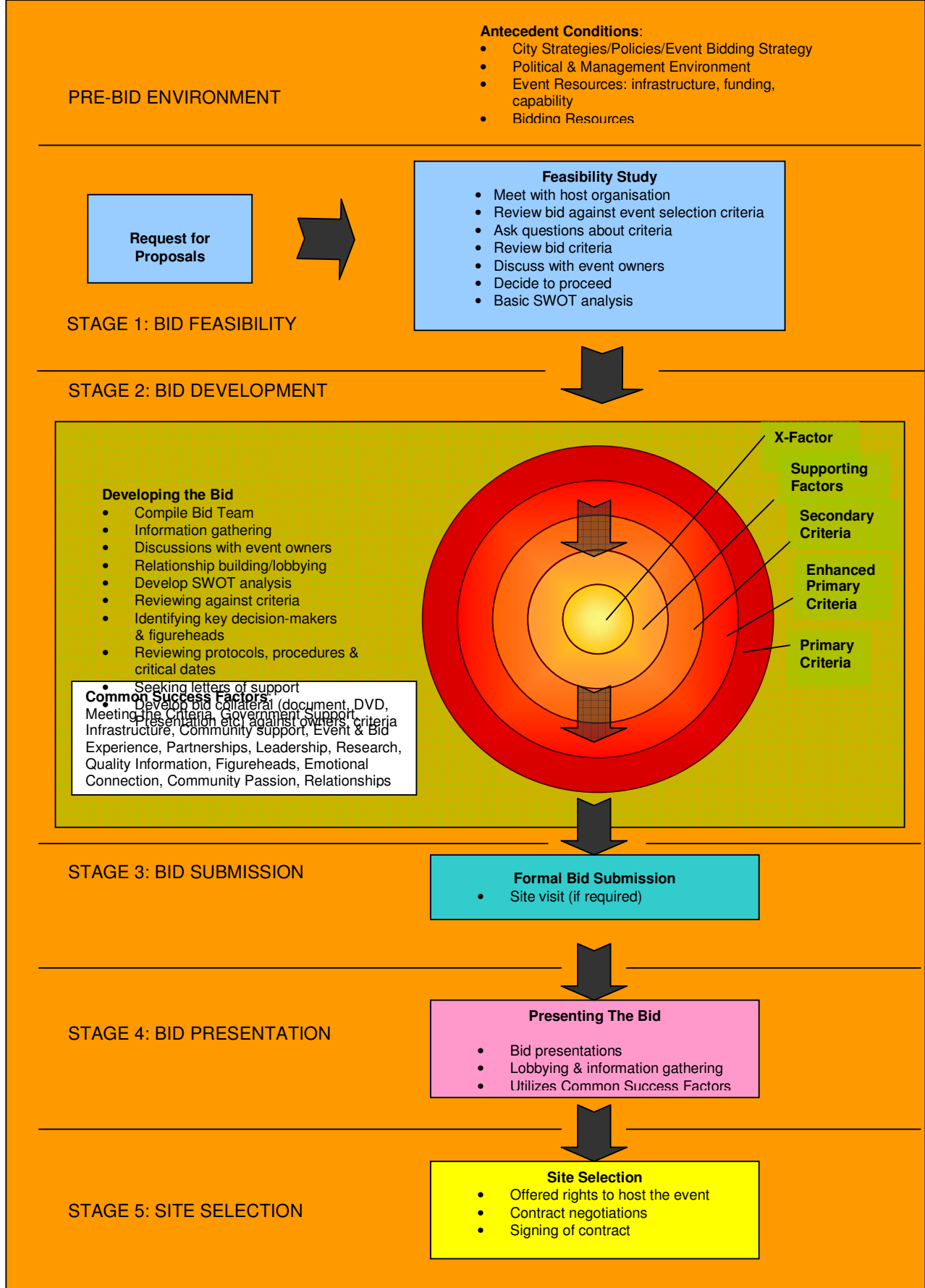
successful event. The event owner establishes a set of criteria that they think is required to run a successful event and therefore achieving their desired strategic objectives.

In the majority of cases, the desired outcome of event bidding is to win (in some cases bids are submitted purely to gain experience) and winning is secured through achieving a state of 'best fit' between the event owner's criteria (both specified and unspecified) and the event bidder's offerings relative to other competing bids. When best fit is achieved then in theory winning will follow. Best fit can be described as:

*“The desired state of the bid process where the event owner’s conscious and unconscious needs and wants are best met by an event bid relative to other competing bids.”*

In order to reach a state of best fit in a highly competitive bidding situation the event bidder must aim to exceed the specified and unspecified bid criteria relative to other event bids. This specified and unspecified bid criteria is represented as the five rings within the targeted model (Figure 1).

*\* While in most cases there is more than one organisation bidding for an event, for simplicity event bidders have been represented in the singular.*



**Figure 1 The Event Bidding Process**



## 2. The Five Stages of Event Bidding

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There are five stages (Figure 1) to the event bidding process that include (1) Bid Feasibility, (2) Bid Development, (3) Bid Submission, (4) Bid Presentation, (5) Site Selection. However, at times these stages are not clear-cut as there can often be overlap between stages during bidding activity. For example in some situations the event owners may not require a formal presentation of the bid.

### ***2.1 Stage 1: Bid Feasibility***

Hosting an event and compiling a competitive bid can be an expensive undertaking, therefore before commencing with a bid the event bidder is encouraged to undertake a bid feasibility study. The purpose of the study is to determine whether it is viable to bid for the event.

The bid feasibility stage commences when the event bidder receives requests for proposals (RFPs) from an event owner who is seeking an organisation to run their event. One of the first things that the event bidder should do is request for copies of the bid criteria if this is not included in the RFP. At a quick glance this will give the event bidder an initial understanding of what is required to host the event and whether they have the resources to submit a comprehensive and competitive bid.

The amount of effort and resource put into the feasibility study will be dependent on the size of the event. The higher the economic risk associated with hosting the event, the more comprehensive the feasibility study that should be undertaken. The majority of events bid for in New Zealand require a feasibility study which ask some basic questions as set out in Figure 2.

## **Event Bid Feasibility Questionnaire**

### **Strategic Alignment**

Does this event fit with our strategic objectives?

What are the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits?

### **Resource Requirements**

What will it cost to host the event?

Do we have the required resources to host a successful event?

What will it cost to submit a competitive bid? and do we have the appropriate resources?

Can we meet the required criteria? (In terms of funding, hosting dates, volunteers, technical requirements, expertise etc).

### **Selection Process & Critical Dates**

When is the event?

When is the bid proposal required?

Will there be a site visit? If so when?

Will there be a bid presentation? If so when and where?

How is the selection process managed?

Who are the decision makers?

Will there be a chance to meet and lobby the decision makers?

What format does the bid proposal need to be in?

### **Buy-in**

Do we have community buy-in for the bid?

Do we have political support?

What figureheads would lead the bid?

Who are the other stakeholders who would support the bid?

What agency will lead the bid?

Who will own and finance the event if won?

### **SWOT Analysis**

What are our strengths?

What are our weaknesses? and how can these be mitigated?

What opportunities exist?

What are the threats?

What are our points of difference?

What is our X-factor?

### **Competitors**

Who are our main competitors?

What are our chances of winning the bid?

What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats confronting our competitors?

**Figure 2 Event Bid Feasibility Questionnaire**

If the event bidder feels satisfied that it is feasible to submit a bid they then move onto the bid development stage.

## ***2.2 Stage 2: Bid Development***

The bid development stage is the most complex stage of the bid process. It is also a very busy and demanding stage where the bidder needs to fulfil a number of critical tasks often simultaneously. In order to develop the bid, a bid team with a bid leader must be established. The bid team then collects all relevant information and produces professional bid collateral.

### **The Bid Team**

One of the first tasks is to select a bid team that will manage the development of the event bid. A critical person of the bid team is the bid team leader whose role is to lead the team through all stages of the bid process. The leader is pivotal in the bid as they oversee the pace and direction of the bid to ensure that all tasks are being delivered on time.

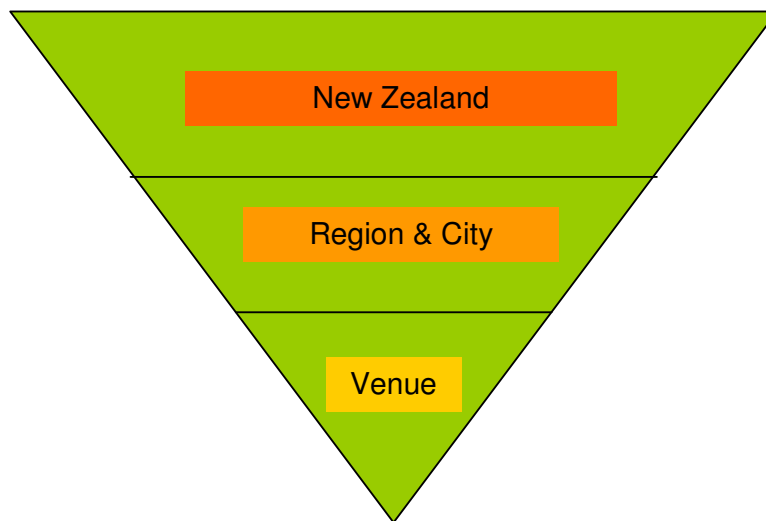
Preparing a bid requires a wide variety of skills from people including by not limited to:

- Excellent interpersonal skills for relationship building and lobbying;
- Writing skills for the content of the bid proposal document and supporting material;
- Graphic design and film production skills for the bid document and supporting material;
- Time management skills in order to be able to work under pressure within tight time frames;
- An ability to collect and interpret information quickly;
- Strong presentation skills, creativity, competitiveness and a high degree of tenacity.

### **Preparing the Bid Document**

The bid document is the most common way of communicating the bid and should be a professionally produced document that addresses all the requirements in the bid criteria while promoting strengths and addressing weaknesses.

When bidding for international events it is recommended that you promote the destination of New Zealand first (figure 3). Its natural beauty and growing reputation as a world class destination are a strong foundation to build a bid upon. New Zealand's reputation will be one of the greatest strengths that your bid will have and it would be unwise not to leverage off this opportunity. The next step is to promote the region and city that will host your event. This will assist the decision makers in understanding the social, economic, cultural and environmental context in which the event will be hosted. Conclude with the venue and all the technical requirements requested in the RFP.



**Figure 3 Bid Document Framework When Bidding For International Events**

### **Content of the bid document**

The content of each bid document (Figure 4) will vary depending upon what information is requested in the RFP. However a standard bid document will include the following information:

- Title page
- Contents page
- Introduction
- Overview of New Zealand, the region, host city (information on location, population, climate, transport, leisure activities, etc)
- Overview of the Organising Committee
- Event Objectives (and long-term for the sport)
- Dates of the tournament

- Financial requirements (event budget, travel arrangements for officials, hotel accommodation, per diems, insurance, etc)
- Technical requirements (event & training venues, venue layout, medical facilities, tournament offices, meeting rooms, security plan, catering, etc)
- Marketing, sponsorship & advertising (spectators, ticketing, funding & sponsorship, etc)
- Media and television requirements
- Supporting letters
- Pre and Post event travel and activities
- Any additional data required as per the event owner's RFP



**Figure 4 The Bid Document - World Masters Games 2017**

### **The bid audio visual and the bid presentation**

In many bidding situations it is becoming normal practice that the event bidder provides an audio visual (video or ipad) and does a formal presentation to the event owner. While the content of the bid document is comprehensive and addresses in detail what is requested in the RFP, the video and presentation may not be as detailed but will reflect the common themes expressed in the bid document.

The audio visual is a very visual medium that should reinforce the messages in the bid document and include attractive scenic images of the destination and venues. More

recent technological advancements has seen bids presented not in paper format but in an electronic format such as iPads and other portable devices. This makes for a more dynamic bid presentation that is more compelling than a static paper bid.

The appropriate length of time for the audio visual is recommended to be two to three minutes.

The degree of content of the bid presentation will be dictated by the amount of time allocated to present but also reinforce the messages in the bid document. The bid presentation is possibly your last opportunity to influence the decision makers so having a professional and well-honed presentation is essential.

### **The Theory behind Event Bidding**

A way of understanding each stage of the bid development process is to picture an archer's target comprising of five concentric rings (Figure 1). The event bidder aims to fulfil the requirements of each of the five rings, starting from the outside and working towards the bull's-eye in the middle.

#### **2.2.1 Primary Criteria**

The outside ring comprises of the *primary criteria*, where primary criteria are *essential to the success of an event* i.e. infrastructure such as venues, transportation networks, telecommunications, funding, accommodation etc. The primary criteria are sometimes known as the technical requirements of the event.

The primary criteria are the foundation upon which the bid is built and therefore the event bidder must be clear of what the stated primary criteria are. In most instances, the event owner will have a list of primary criteria that the event bidder must fulfil for a bid to be considered. In some situations the primary criteria will be used by the event owner to screen out bids that will not meet the basic hosting requirements. However, meeting all the primary criteria does not ensure that the event will be won but is an essential step to achieving bidding success.

The primary criteria are essential for the successful hosting of an event and will vary between sporting codes and events. Not surprising, the primary criteria required to host

an international rugby tournament will be quite different from that of a national swimming event.

### **2.2.2 Enhanced Primary Criteria**

The second ring in the archer's target is called *enhanced primary criteria*. Due to the highly competitive nature of event bidding, event bidders must do more than just meet the requirements as set out in the primary criteria. By adding value or enhancing the primary criteria the event bidder is attempting to gain a competitive advantage over rival bidders. Bidding organisations will propose state-of-the-art infrastructure such as sporting arenas, transportation networks and telecommunications facilities that are over-and-above the basic requirements set out in the primary criteria. So while it is essential to meet the primary criteria established by the event owners, the nature of competition dictates that this will likely not be sufficient to gain competitive advantage over rival bidders. Therefore event bidders must continuously be looking at ways in which to enhance their bid.

### **2.2.3 Secondary Criteria**

The third ring comprises of the *secondary criteria*. Secondary criteria are established by the event owners and comprise of the 'nice to haves' but are not essential to the success of the event. While it is not mandatory for the event bidder to fulfil the secondary criteria they do help to enhance an event. While meeting the secondary criteria is not fundamental to the success or failure of an event they can be fundamental to the success or failure of an event bid.

Where the primary criteria is mandatory to ensure a minimum standard of quality (resulting in a somewhat level bidding environment) the secondary criteria consists of factors that event bidders can fulfil to the degree they choose. By exceeding the secondary criteria, a bidding organisation can create a point of difference or competitive advantage over rival bidders. The secondary criteria gives event bidders an opportunity to express themselves and to be perceived to be adding value to the owner's event.

### **2.2.4 Supporting Factors**

The fourth ring in the archer's target is called *supporting factors*. Supporting factors are those offered by an event bidder outside what is requested in the primary and secondary

criteria. Supporting factors enhance an event and are fundamental to the success or failure of an event bid.

The supporting factors are what set apart one bid from another. In a competitive bidding environment where bids are perceived to be on an even-par in relation to the primary and secondary factors, the right to host the event is likely to be the result of a competitive advantage in relation to one or more of the supporting factors.

While supporting factors enhance an event they don't necessarily need to relate in anyway to the successful operation of the event. Supporting factors tend to make a strong connection with the event owner's emotions. An example of this is New Zealand's natural beauty where it is often used as an emotional draw card in many New Zealand bids. New Zealand has become such a popular destination that people are now looking for an excuse to come here. While New Zealand's natural beauty may have no bearing on the successful operation of an event it most definitely enhances an event bid.

Other examples, of supporting factors can be activities on offer outside the event such as places of interest, places to visit, shopping facilities, and entertainment opportunities. The quality of these activities can have a strong bearing on the event owner's decision-making process. These activities add value to the participants overall experience of the event and as a result enhance the bid.

### **2.2.5 X-Factor**

The final ring within the targeted model is the X-factor; the 'bull's-eye' of event bidding, and it is the X-factor that all bids should be aiming to achieve. The X-factor can be defined as the one overwhelming factor that all bids should aspire to, that exceeds the event owner's expectations in terms of fit and wins the bid.

The X-factor can be found within either the primary, secondary criteria or as either a supporting factor or common success factor. For example, government support could be a requirement of the primary criteria but how this government support is presented and perceived can have a great bearing on the bid outcome. In the case of New Zealand's bid to host the 2011 Rugby World Cup, the Prime Minister Helen Clark made the effort, under great time constraints, to represent New Zealand's bid. Her presence was very influential in the favourable outcome. The way this high level political support was



presented (in person) could be an example of an X-factor. Had the Prime Ministers of the other bidding nations been present then Helen Clark's presence would have been less impactful and unlikely have been an X-factor.

The X-factor is about exceeding the event owner's expectations in one area that overwhelmingly puts the bid out in front. Event owners are looking for a point of difference that sets a bid apart from the rest. One way the X-factor could exceed the event owner's expectations is by connecting with the event owner's emotions. Therefore, whether the X-factor comes from primary or secondary criteria or is a supporting factor it must make a strong emotional connection with the event owner. The purpose of the X-factor is to influence the objective selection process through the use of emotions. An example of this can be found at the highest levels of international sport. The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were selected not just on their ability to meet criteria but also on emotional factors such as the will of the International Olympic Committee to host the Games in the biggest country of the world, one fifth of mankind.

While event bidders should aspire to achieving the X-factor that clearly gives their bid the competitive advantage or point of difference over rivals, not all winning bids may have an X-factor. While many bids may meet event owner's expectations, few exceed them. Event bidders that seek the X-factor, are pushing the boundaries of event bidding and upping the ante in terms of bid competitiveness. In order to stay competitive event bidders must continuously be looking for ways in which to add value and achieve the X-factor.

### ***2.3 Stage 3: Bid Submission***

The bid submission stage commences when the bid collateral – bid document and supporting material – is submitted to the event owners. This can occur several months prior to the bid presentation or in some cases can occur just prior to or during the presentation. In some situations, where the events are of an international calibre, the event owners will conduct site visits of the bidding destinations. Once the bid collateral has been received the event bidders are invited to present their bid to the event owners.

## ***2.4 Stage 4: Bid Presentation***

In most cases after the collateral has been sent, the bidders make a live presentation to the event owners. Presenting the bid is a crucial stage in the event bidding process. It is the event bidder's last opportunity to influence the outcome of the bid. Therefore the event bidders utilise the relationships that they have developed and nurtured leading up to and during the bid. They will continue to lobby those who have the ability to influence and make the final decision. This can be done through informal conversations or through hosting decision-makers. Information gathering is still occurring through this stage in order to secure a competitive advantage over rival bidders.

Stage 4 culminates with the event bidder presenting their bid face-to-face to the event owner. With professional presentation skills, the event bidder addresses all the essential criteria that the event owners have requested. To add strength to the bid the event bidder must present a number of supporting factors that add value to the event.

## ***2.5 Stage 5: Site Selection***

The final stage, site selection, commences after the all bids have been presented. A decision is made on the site where the event will take place. This decision can occur right at the end of the presentation, or it can come several months after the presentation. Once the successful event bidder has been informed then discussions regarding hosting rights take place culminating in the signing of a contract. In some situations the discussions can take several months before a contract for the hosting rights is signed.

### **3. Common Success Factors For Winning Event Bids**

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Event bidding is not an exact science as a combination of many factors contribute to the final outcome. However research has identified a number of common success factors that show up regularly in winning bids.

#### ***3.1 Meeting the Criteria***

Event owners have a number of strategic objectives that they hope to achieve through the event. These can be increasing participation, leaving a legacy in the form of infrastructure, gaining an international profile through television coverage, raising the host community awareness, etc. Linked to these strategic objectives are criteria that the event owner has defined that will ensure a successful event. Therefore, it is not surprising that one of the most important common success factors for winning event bids is fulfilling the requirements as set out in the criteria. Event owners often make it clear what they require and if they are not met then a bid will surely fail.

#### ***3.2 Adding Value***

The desired outcome of event bidding is to win and in order to win an event bidder must continuously be considering the event owner's aspirations for their event. These aspirations can be found in both their high level strategic documents and in the bid criteria. In considering these aspirations the event bidder must try to achieve the best fit between the event owner's specified criteria (conscious needs) and unspecified criteria (unconscious desires) and the event bidder's bid (offerings) relative to other competing bids. In order to achieve the best fit in a highly competitive environment the event bidder must be seeking ways in which to add value to the event. Added value is the way of achieving a competitive advantage over rival bidders. It is through continuously seeking added value that event bids evolve. Just meeting the requirements as set out in the primary criteria is often not enough in a competitive bidding environment. Event bidders are adding value to primary criteria resulting in enhancements to the outcome of the event.

Adding value should be a conscious process undertaken throughout all stages of the event bidding process in order to maintain a competitive advantage over rival bidders. It

is through adding value that one is more likely to achieve the desired outcome of event bidding – best fit.

### **3.3 Government Support**

The common success factor, Government Support provides the best possible guarantee that the essential resources (government approvals and consents, funding, infrastructure, etc) that are required for a successful event will be available, and that assurance can only be given by a supportive government. Providing evidence of government support is important, as it provides the confidence that what is promised in the bid will be delivered, ensuring that the event will be run to the required standards. To instil this sense of confidence it is essential to highlight this support in the bid collateral such as letters of support in the bid document (Figure 5), government representation on the bid DVD and at the bid presentation. Government support adds credibility to a bid and also provides the event owners with a level of comfort that there is a commitment from government towards the event.

There are several reasons visible government support is critical to the success of a bid in New Zealand. Many events are hosted on public land requiring appropriate approval and consents. Gaining support from the local authority to fast track the consent process is highly desirable. Councils in New Zealand are rapidly increasing their appreciation of the role that events play, not only to their city's economic and social well-being, but also how they are perceived both locally and internationally. As a result, governments are putting more financial and human resources into securing and hosting events and the level and accessibility to these resources is an influencing factor in the bidding process.

12 June 2012

Phillipe Bourdaris  
Tournament Director  
International Rugby Board  
Huguenot House 33 – 35 St. Stephens Green  
Dublin 2  
**IRELAND**

Dear Phillipe,

By now you will have received the New Zealand Rugby Union's bid to host the IRB Junior World Championship in 2014.

The New Zealand Rugby Union will have made it clear that their bid is conditional upon financial support from both central government (Ministry of Economic Development) and local government (Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development Ltd). I am aware that central government has now confirmed their support (\$1.45 million) towards the event.

The IRB Junior World Championship 2014 is an exciting opportunity for Auckland and maintains the momentum gained from hosting Rugby World Cup 2011.

It is my strong desire to pass on to you Auckland's enthusiasm in considering a bid to host the IRB Junior World Championship in 2014. I understand that the bid deadline is 16 June 2012 and that the board of Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development Ltd does not meet until the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2012.

As this is an exciting opportunity for Auckland that involves a considerable amount of ratepayer money, I hope that you can appreciate it is essential that the board is able to undertake proper due diligence of the IRB Junior World Championship 2014.

I hope that this short delay does not inconvenience your bid process nor dilute in your mind how seriously Auckland is considering this opportunity. Once I have confirmation of Auckland's support I will inform you immediately.

Yours sincerely



Len Brown  
**MAYOR OF AUCKLAND**



Auckland Town Hall, 30 Queen St, Auckland, N7 | Private Bag 92300, Wellesley St, Auckland 1140, NZ | T: +64 9 301 0101

Figure 5 Government Letter of Support

### **3.3.1 Government Support: Political Leadership**

The support of a political leader is an important component of the bid as political leaders are seen to represent the principles of government and the guarantee to deliver. If a bid is important enough it is advantageous for the political leader to become more involved in the bid rather than just providing passive support.

The political leader's personality traits can have a big outcome on the result of a bid. In the case of the bid for the 2005 ITU Triathlon World Cup the Mayor of New Plymouth was passionate and fully supportive of the bid. He gathered a wide variety of staff and community stakeholders into one room where the event owners could have their questions answered immediately. The ability to have a political leader who can lead a bid team and have the influence to implement change is invaluable.

### **3.3.2 Government Support: Policies**

Whether it is central or local government, the policies and procedures they have in place can either make or break an event. An example of this is the debate over the location and building of the 60,000-seat stadium for the 2011 Rugby World Cup in Auckland. Three possible locations in the wider Auckland region were identified. Without the appropriate central and local government policies that ensure adequate funding and streamlined consenting processes the facility will not be delivered on time. This is one possible reason why the New Zealand Rugby Football Union partnered with the New Zealand government in order to instil the International Rugby Board with confidence that a 60,000-seat capacity stadium will be ready in time for kick-off.

Often the best way that a city can add value to a bid and to the quality of the event is by having event-friendly policies where consents and approvals can be easily obtained. To the event owner and the event organiser, a fast track, no-fuss consenting process can be measured in terms of dollars and time. A city that has customer-friendly consenting processes can quickly gain a competitive advantage over those cities that don't and this ability to make customer-friendly decisions can often be an important factor in the event owner's decision-making process. As an example, Wellington City has a reputation as a vibrant city and prides itself on its event-friendly policies and not surprising is very successful at attracting events.

### **3.3.3 Government Support: Funding & Resources**

In addition to political leadership and event-friendly policies, governments often offer financial support. This can be provided in a number of formats: (1) as a direct cash contribution; (2) as a tax exemption; (3) through underwriting the financial risk of hosting an event; (4) providing physical components such as costly infrastructure or as resources such as human expertise (that would otherwise have had to come from the event organiser's budget). Funding and resource support is as an important aspect of government support.

Governments, especially at the local government level, can play an important role in providing in-kind support to an event. Councils in New Zealand often have the human resources that can provide event management assistance, marketing expertise and support. In addition, councils have a number of well-established communication channels (street banners, community notice boards, event calendars, websites) that link into their local communities. Event owners place a high value on such publicity opportunities.

To conclude, in New Zealand it is now accepted practice to have government support when bidding for a major event and this is becoming a requirement set by event owners. Government support comes in many forms: streamlined consent procedures, funding, publicity, human expertise and infrastructure. It is the high level politicians that symbolise or represent this support and having them visible enhances the likelihood of bid success.

### ***3.4 Providing The Evidence Of Your Ability To Deliver The Event***

It is important in your bid to provide evidence of your ability to deliver as this helps to instil the event owner with confidence that the outcomes of their event will be achieved. Ability to Deliver the Event consists of three common success factors. The first factor includes essential event related infrastructure such as venues, transportation networks, accommodation, funding. The second factor includes the support of the host community, while the third factor is having event management experience.

### **3.4.1 Event Related Infrastructure**

Infrastructure generally is comprised of the tangible bricks and mortar essential to the hosting of the event. Examples of infrastructure can include - accommodation, sporting & medical facilities, transport (access to rental cars, taxis, public transportation), and transportation networks – road, rail, airports, ports etc.

Meeting the minimal infrastructure requirements is a part of the screening process that event owners demand to ensure standards of quality are reached. Infrastructure is therefore often included in the primary criteria set by the event owner. If event bidders cannot meet the infrastructure requirements set by the event owners it is very unlikely that they will be able to progress much further in the event bidding process.

### **3.4.2 Community Support**

An event is a short-term entity that regularly moves from one location to the next and ‘imposes’ itself upon the host community. The host community is often utilised for its vast resource of local knowledge, expertise and volunteer labour. Like any guests, the event organisers like and need to feel welcome in order to function effectively. Therefore event bidders use community support as a selling point so that the event owners can feel assured that competitors, officials and spectators will be made to feel welcome, and an environment will be established in which the event will function effectively.

### **3.4.3 Event Management Experience**

Event management experience of the event organiser is an important common success factor. The nature of event bidding is such that event owners are reliant on professional event managers to organise events and deliver their associated outcomes. Confidence can be gained through presenting the event organiser’s previous event management experience and high level of expertise.

## ***3.5 Bid Enhancers***

The common success factor Bid Enhancers consists of those skills & resources that a successful bid team utilises during the bid process that are deemed to enhance an event bid.



### **3.5.1 Previous Bidding Experience**

Previous bidding experience is an important factor in bidding success. The more opportunity a bid team has at bidding for events the greater the chance of success. Experience provides greater insights into the bidding process and what is required to win.

### **3.5.2 Partnerships**

Strong partnerships are an important factor in bid success. Partnerships can assist with compiling the bid, providing additional resources, providing bid advice and expertise, presenting the bid and assistance with hosting the event. Some event bidders will have multiple partnerships while working on a bid. It is not uncommon to have airlines, local and central government agencies, regional and national tourism organisations, national sporting associations, etc supporting the bid.

In the case of New Zealand Cricket's successful bid for the 2015 Cricket World Cup, partnerships played an important role in the bid process. New Zealand Cricket established a partnership with the New Zealand Rugby Union where the rugby union provided advice from their recent experience bidding for the 2011 Rugby World Cup. Though not a formal member of the bid team, establishing a partnership with an external organisation like the New Zealand Rugby Union would likely have saved New Zealand Cricket time and costs because they would have been less likely to make mistakes through inexperience. The value to the New Zealand Rugby Union is that they gained further experience in the event bidding process but also gained insight into the operating and management systems of New Zealand Cricket.

While establishing partnerships is mostly voluntary, sometimes partnerships are forced upon the event bidders by the nature of the bidding cycle and if these partnerships are not embraced the risk of bid failure is high. New Zealand Cricket's joint bid with Cricket Australia is an example of this, where they partnered together on the bid and will partner on the co-hosting of the 2015 Cricket World Cup.

### **3.5.3 Bid Leadership**

An important component of the bid team is the bid leader. Somebody needs to have the drive and passion to lead the bid through the often difficult bid process. Strong

leadership is required in developing partnerships and managing the associated relationships and to pull the group together and make it work.



**Jock Hobbs leader of New Zealand's bid for the 2011 Rugby World Cup**

Leadership is not only valued in setting the direction of the bid team but it also plays an important role in adding to the bidding team's credibility. In the case of the 2011 Rugby World Cup bid, Jock Hobbs (Chairman of the New Zealand Rugby Union) was well regarded in international rugby circles and had the ability to influence key decision makers.

### **3.5.4 Research**

Another common success factor is the need to undertake basic research when bidding for an event. Conducting research is essential as it helps to really understand the nature of the bid process and where the power base is and what will win the bid. Research also assists with understanding the technical requirements of the bid, i.e. contractual obligations, infrastructure, TV, media, sponsorship. You need to know a variety of factors before you can commence the bid; who your main competitors are and what their strengths and weaknesses are, who the key decision-makers will be, the critical bid dates, understanding the protocols of the sport etc.

Research can be as basic as asking a number of simple questions of the event owners in order to understand the essential criteria of the bid or in a more subtle way, speaking to those knowledgeable in the sport or activity who understand protocol and power bases.

Research does not have to be formal but rather it is more likely to be an informal process that continues throughout the bid process.

### **3.5.5 Quality Information**

Bidding is a two-way communication process between the event bidder and the event owner. High quality information needs to be provided by the event bidder that concisely addressed the questions that are asked. The bid document is the most common medium in which quality information should be provided.

A professionally presented bid document is essential as it sends a message to the event owners that the event bidder is professional in their approach. This focus on quality information presented professionally instils the event owners with a degree of confidence. It conveys a message - if a bidder is organised well enough to provide this quality information in a professional manner then they are more likely to deliver the event professionally as well.

### **3.5.6 Figureheads**

Figureheads, such as political leaders or celebrities, are becoming frequently used as messengers to communicate and support bids. Figureheads therefore often have a strong linkage with political support by adding credibility to an organisation's bid and have the ability to influence the event owner's decision.



**Grant Dalton, figurehead  
for Auckland's 2014/15 Volvo Ocean Race Bid**

### **3.5.7 Emotional Connection**

When bidding for events one must not assume that decision-makers are experts, or that they only use rational criteria for selection. International research provides examples of how emotional factors have come to influence what should be a rational decision making process. In some bid situations the attractiveness of the event location, to the decision-makers and their wives, have clearly determined the final bid outcome! While event bidding is meant to be a structured and rational process emotions play a large part in the final outcome.

### **3.5.8 Community Passion**

Closely aligned to community support, community passion is the host community's passion for a particular sport or event. While community passion on its own does not have a direct influence on the successful delivery of the event, it does lead to community support which then creates an effective and functioning environment providing for the event to operate in. The ability of the bid team to be able to display the host community's passion for the event or game is often important.

As a success factor community passion can be presented in either its existing or potential state. In the case of the bid for the 2011 Rugby World Cup New Zealand's passion for rugby was represented as a "stadium of four million" and presented to the IRB as a strong case to host the event in New Zealand.

### **3.5.9 Relationships & Lobbying**

A lot of emphasis should be placed on relationships in the bidding process. The use of well-connected people in a bid is a common occurrence because of their ability to influence key decision makers, collect and pass on vital information to the bid team. An informal aspect of event bidding is lobbying. A form of persuasion, lobbying is now a recognised practice in event bidding. Event bidders must do as much extensive lobbying as they can however, lobbying is a process that can occur over many years. In some bids the lobbying process starts anything up to 10 –12 years before a bid is even submitted.

Lobbying, in some situations, is not allowed or frowned upon and event bidders must therefore understand the varying protocols of each individual bid, where they need to look at what is acceptable and what isn't acceptable in terms of bid protocols.

## 4. Conclusion

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Event bidding is essentially a complex process of communication between key players: the event owner and the event bidder. The event owner has a number of criteria that they need fulfilled to ensure the success of their event. The event bidder must show that they can best fulfil these criteria relative to competitors - known as a state of 'best fit'.

In order to reach a state of best fit in a highly competitive bidding situation, the event bidder must aim to exceed the specified and unspecified bid criteria relative to competitive event bids. This specified and unspecified bid criteria is represented as the five rings within the targeted model (Figure 1).

In the event bidding process there exist a number of common success factors that help to win an event bid. These include:

- Meeting both the specified and unspecified criteria
- Continuously adding value to the bid and the event
- Providing evidence of government support
- Demonstrating the ability to deliver the event through infrastructure, community support and previous event management experience and expertise
- Previous experience at event bidding
- Developing strong partnerships and bid leadership
- Conducting research and providing quality information
- Having figureheads to front the bid
- Making an emotional connection with the decision makers
- Providing evidence of community passion for the event
- Developing strong relationships and lobbying the decision makers.

In conclusion event bidding is not an exact science whereby success can be guaranteed by following a set formula. It is a complex and confusing process where each new bid should be treated as being unique. While there are many variables that influence the bid outcome, the bidding process can be presented as five stages within which there are a number of factors common to all successful event bids. This guidebook has endeavoured to simplify the bidding process and provide insights on how to ensure success.

