The Potential of Yacht Racing as Niche Tourism:
A Case Study of the Rolex Middle Sea Race 2012

Caroline Navarro

A dissertation submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for a Degree of Master of Arts in Tourism.

INSITUTE FOR TOURISM, TRAVEL AND CULTURE
University Of Malta

November 21, 2013
Abstract

Yacht racing is one of the most exhilarating sports and the Rolex Middle Sea Race is one of the most unforgettable race courses on earth, starting and ending on the island of Malta. It is therefore inevitable that this topic should enhance Malta’s tourism product. Identifying how the development and growth potential of the yacht race could assist Malta’s niche tourism market is therefore the chosen subject of this study.

The research aimed to investigate how the Rolex Middle Sea Race, as one of the top three offshore races worldwide, contributes towards developing a stronger yachting tourism product. The objectives of this research explore the role of the Rolex Middle Sea Race as an integral part of the sports events calendar and how such attributes can assist in strengthening Malta’s niche tourism market. Evaluating the challenges the event faces in relation to the yachting industry and how they can be improved towards creating potential opportunities was an essential focus of this research. The case study chosen, the Rolex Middle Sea Yacht Race 2012, is specific and industry focused and a fundamental component of Malta’s yachting and sports event tourism product.

A qualitative research approach, towards an inductive and exploratory style suited the chosen method. Purposeful interviewing for sampling the data gathered was essential as specific data on the subject would become pivotal towards collecting the detailed and in depth knowledge needed for the successful outcome of this case study. The interviews were an essential contribution towards several key findings on the subject, highlighting the issues pertaining to a lack of awareness on the benefits of the industry. These included for example i) a general lack of statistical data making it impossible to measure accurately the statistical nature of the event from both an economic and social value. ii) The difficulty with berthing affecting not only the event but prospective business opportunities, such as Malta as an over wintering destination for yachts.

The study highlights that the event creates very few negative impacts and attracts quality niche markets like the Russian and MICE tourism business. The ability, through the awareness of the yacht race, to revive the island’s maritime
culture and traditions proves a very sustainable and sound way forward for Malta’s tourism and as an essential part of the Mediterranean region. The study contributes important lessons learnt on this new subject of yachting events as a valuable tourism product and therefore essential towards the success of event management theory in global tourism.
Acknowledgements
This paper has allowed me to develop my interest for yachting and yacht racing, which I hope to apply towards furthering my career.

I would like to thank my tutor Dr Andrew Jones for his time, availability, and enthusiasm towards supporting me.

I would also like to thank everyone, particularly my family, friends, interviewees and the yachting fraternity, who have over the past few months fuelled my passion for the subject while at the same time supported me in this journey.

It would not have been so successful without you all!
# Table of Contents

Title Page ...................................................................................... i

Abstract .......................................................................................... ii

Acknowledgements ........................................................................ iv

Table of Contents ........................................................................... v

List of Figures ................................................................................ vii

List of Appendices .......................................................................... viii

List of Abbreviations ....................................................................... ix

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION................................................................. 1
  1.1 Introduction ............................................................................... 1
  1.2 Problem Statement, objectives, research questions ...................... 11
  1.3 Research Layout........................................................................ 12
  1.4 Research Approach ................................................................... 13
  1.5 Research Limitations ................................................................ 14

Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW ...................................................... 15
  2.1 Island and Niche Tourism .......................................................... 15
    2.1.1 Island Tourism in the Mediterranean .................................... 15
    2.1.2 Mass to Niche Tourism ...................................................... 27
    2.1.3 Events Tourism .................................................................. 34
  2.2 Tourism and Yachting in Malta .................................................. 57
    2.2.1 Tourism Development in Malta ......................................... 57
    2.2.2 The Development of Sports Tourism and Sports Events .......... 66
    2.2.3 Sports Tourism in Malta .................................................... 74
    2.2.4 Marine and Nautical Tourism ............................................. 81
2.2.5 Development of Yachting ........................................... 87
2.2.6 Yachting in Malta .................................................... 99
2.2.7 The Rolex Middle Sea Race ....................................... 112
2.3 Overall Summary .......................................................... 128
2.3.1 Key issues and challenges for niche and event tourism .... 128
Chapter 3. METHODOLOGY ................................................. 135
3.1 Research Rationale ........................................................ 135
3.2 Overview of research methodologies .............................. 138
3.3 Discussion on the advantages & disadvantages of chosen methodology 140
3.4 Sampling frame work .................................................... 142
3.5 Data Analysis .............................................................. 147
3.6 Interview Design .......................................................... 152
3.7 Pilot Study ................................................................. 154
3.8 Research Validity – Reliability and Limitations .................. 154
3.9 Research Ethics ............................................................ 157
3.10 Research Timeframe ..................................................... 159
Chapter 4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS..................................... 160
4.1 Introduction ................................................................. 160
4.2 Results – The Role of the RMSR .................................... 161
4.3 Results – The Success Factors behind the RMSR .............. 169
4.4 Results – The Contemporary Challenges behind the Event ... 176
4.5 Results – The Potential of Yacht Events as a stronger tourism product 185
Chapter 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .......... 194
5.1 Introduction ................................................................. 194
5.2 Final Implications of key findings .................................... 196
5.3 Recommendations ........................................................ 201
References .............................................................................. 204

Appendices ............................................................................. 210
List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Mediterranean: Actual trend versus Tourism 2030 Vision

Figure 2.2: Niche tourism components

Figure 2.3: Event Tourism as the nexus of tourism and event studies

Figure 2.4: Typology of planned events

Figure 2.5: Impacts of Events

Figure 2.6: Model of Adventure, health and sports tourism

Figure 2.7: Sports tourism continuum

Figure 2.8: The Profile of the Sport Tourist visiting Malta in 2010

Figure 2.9: Economic Contribution of Super Yachts

Figure 2.10: RMSR Race Course

Figure 3.1: Rules for the quasi-judicial method and legal equivalents
List Appendices

Appendix 1: Calendar of upcoming yacht events organized by the RMYC

Appendix 2: Rolex List of Coverage Worldwide

Appendix 3: Crew List RMSR 2012

Appendix 4: Matrix 1 Explore the role of the RMSR on our tourism product.

Appendix 5: Matrix 2 Identify the factors that make this event so beneficial.

Appendix 6: Matrix 3 Evaluate the key contemporary challenges for the event.

Appendix 7: Matrix 4 The potential of yachting events as a stronger tourism product.

Appendix 8: Interview with Tourism Executive 1

Appendix 9: Interview with Tourism Executive 2

Appendix 10: Diary of Events and Interviews
Abbreviations

RMSR    Rolex Middle Sea Race
MTA     Malta Tourism Authority
UNWTO   United Nations World Tourism Organisation
MTCE    Ministry for Tourism, Culture and the Environment
MEUSAC  Malta EU Steering and Action Committee
RMYC    Royal Malta Yacht Club
MICE    Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions
IEG     International Events Group
SAT     South African Tourism
NSW     New South Wales (Australia)
GDP     Gross Domestic Product
FIFA    Federation International Football Association
UNEP    United Nations Environment Plan
MAP     Mediterranean Action Plan
IT      Information Technology
GDP     Gross Domestic Product
GNP     Gross National Product
CCAT    Carrying Capacity Assessment for Tourism
BRIC    Brazil, Russia, India, China
MIA     Malta International Airport
ATP     Association of Tennis Professionals
MPA     Marine Protected Areas
VEM     Volvo Event Management
VOR     Volvo Ocean Race
ISAF    International Sailing Federation
RORC    Royal Ocean Racing Club
CCO     Chief Commercial Officer
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GVA</td>
<td>Gross Value Added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMS</td>
<td>Kunsill Malti Ghall-Isport (Malta Council for Sport)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHM</td>
<td>Grand Harbour Marina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM</td>
<td>Times of Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPM</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGTB</td>
<td>Malta Government Tourist Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value Added Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOC</td>
<td>European Capital of Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAM</td>
<td>National Archives of Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCC</td>
<td>Mediterranean Conference Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEP</td>
<td>Member of European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHRA</td>
<td>Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Yacht racing is a sport that tests mental and physical stamina, skill and determination – a challenge that can last a few hours, or many days depending on the nature of the event. It allows oneself to interact with the forces of nature that challenge every man who seeks the power within. The sport of yacht racing tests ones every move to the highest of precision. Planning, experience and the ability to empower crew to compete as a cohesive team is crucial towards building the winning team. Many successful business men have transferred achievements in the boardroom to triumph at sea. It is therefore not surprising that the sport has attracted the cream of the business world since the sport's earliest beginnings.

The world’s most famous yacht races fall under the sponsorship of some of today’s most luxurious and highly-respected brands such as Rolex. Apart from being one of the world’s top watch-makers, Rolex is known for their management and sponsorship of cultural and sporting events. Rolex is the title sponsor for some twenty major yachting events ranging from the Maxi class of the worlds largest and most impressive fleet to championship yachting that hosts competitive regattas out of some of the top yacht clubs world-wide. Rolex hosts classic sailing events such as the famous Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez and famous offshore races like the famous Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, the Fastnet Yacht Race in the UK and the Rolex Middle Sea Race in Malta.

Tradition and history are fundamental to the sport of yacht racing and although sailing is an ancient activity that defines cultures and civilizations, yacht racing is
a rather recent leisure activity of the 1800s. Some of these yacht races began as friendly competitions and others as a more competitive challenge. Yacht racing is associated with luxury and glamour taking place in some of the most beautiful settings in the world, perfect for the jet-set lifestyle and therefore attracting some of the richest and most famous personalities of the business world and international royalty. The Giraglia Cup for example, started as a contest between France and Italy, designed to cultivate friendship between the countries in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Yacht racing is now becoming a crucial part of many regions event calendar. The Rolex Big Boat Series is going into its 47th year. Once just an annual gathering, the regatta is now one of the largest and most important sailing events on the American west coast. On the other side of the Pacific Ocean the Rolex China Sea Race starts from Hong Kong Harbour, one of the wealthiest cites with its interesting sky-line. Porto Cervo Sardinia prides itself on its Maxi Yacht Cup out of the famous Yacht Club Costa Smeralda founded by His Highness the Aga Khan. The Sydney to Hobart now in its 67th year and now a major event for locals and tourists alike as everyone in the City of Sydney takes to the shoreline on Boxing Day to watch some of the world’s most impressive yachts battle for the start line on Sydney’s spectacular harbour (Rolex, 2011).

The Rolex Middle Sea Race (RMSR) is one of Malta’s top sport events and internationally one of the most prestigious yacht races in the world, placing it in the top three offshore yacht races worldwide. It is the last of the Rolex series and takes place towards the end of October. It forms part of a series of events which culminates in the breathtaking start in the Valletta Grand Harbour to the sound of shots fired from canons. The course runs through the same seas that
Homer’s epic “The Odyssey” is said to have sailed. The intense seas are due to strong currents experienced, the difference in density and temperature of the Tyrrenian and Middle Sea Waters. Competitors on the race are spoilt by the incredible scenery throughout as they pass two of the world’s active volcanos, the impressive Mount Etna and island of Stromboli.

Yachts for the 2012 RMSR travelled from as far as Russia and South Africa to compete in this 606 nautical mile offshore regatta, with a record entry of 90 boats from as many as 18 countries (ranging from Germany, Austria and Croatia to the Czech Republic, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Greece, Ukraine, Spain, South Africa and Russia). The race was initiated in 1968 with only eight yachts and this year’s record entry was estimated to have attracted as many as 1,000 participants coming from new markets like Russia, the Ukraine and South Africa. 90% of yachts participating in this event were from overseas.

This year’s 33rd edition saw the 11th Anniversary of the event’s association with Rolex. Since Rolex’s sponsorship, the yacht race has seen a number of changes; the new yacht club facilities at its current location in Ta’ Xbiex Marina and numbers rising sharply as it now attracts some of the most renowned yachts in the world. Rolex’s media office has also helped with creating much world-wide coverage on the race enabling it to become much better known amongst the yachting world. “The RMSR is a major occasion in our country and an ideal showcase for our sport” (Times of Malta, 2012a)

The race is best known for its challenging weather conditions and stunning scenery. The race course can nowadays be enjoyed not only by the privileged few on the racing yachts but can be followed on a position tracker and an
interactive blogging system. The public, family and friends are therefore able to feel more part of the race, an interesting angle to exploit towards increasing spectator enthusiasm.

The fact that the race starts and ends in Malta makes this offshore race very unique. The world famous Sydney to Hobart yacht race leaves from one point and finishes in another. Therefore tourism is lost in one location to the benefit of another; whereas in the case of Malta, family and friends of participants are left to enjoy the island for almost a week, a good opportunity to offer organized tourism activities for these visitors. Most of the crew, spectators and media, access Malta by air as only a very few crew deliver the yachts for the race. Delivery crew also form part of our prospective tourist and often have a day either side to explore the destination.

The RMSR falls under many different areas of the niche tourism market, an international event, an integral part of our sports calendar and a part of our yachting industry. Thus, research will explore what factors make this event such a success and how they could be applied to strengthening our tourism product.

**The Mediterranean Region and Island Tourism**

The Tourism industry is now the largest industry in the world and is constantly evolving. Trauer, (2006) pp:183 says that the tourism industry is an ‘experience industry’ where tourists chose to pay tourism organizers to offer them the ultimate experience. Tourism is the search for the absolute real or as Mac Cannell defines it “the authentic human experience”. Tourists are therefore prepared to exchange good money and often very limited time for a life enhancing personal experience. Tourism is slightly different from all other
industries as it is multi-faceted and interlinks industries offering a set of social phenomena. It is best understood as a system connected with society and culture and not merely economic, and is the process of conversion of dreams.

According to Keller (2001) tourism is an experience oriented activity so regular adaptation and renewal of products and services supplied is central to keeping abreast of the changing requirements of emerging generations.


Trauer states ‘a holiday can also be viewed as an event, a personal project that requires time, thought and financial commitment by individuals living in industrialized post-modern societies that are time-poor and “experience hungry”.

Sports events are today acknowledged as one of the most effective marketing tools. There is no official figure available for the market size, but ESPN Star Sports says that the growth over the last 10 years has been about 300 per cent globally.

Naturally, international consumer brands understand the importance of sponsoring sporting events to reach potential customers. They implement campaigns that are often as aggressive as they are sophisticated.

It is well recognised that sponsorship conveys value through association as well as brand exposure directly with spectators and through the media.

With sports events featuring prominently among the most effective marketing tools, great efforts are made by all concerned to attract such events to their city or country.
Tourism in the Maltese Islands

The island of Malta is surrounded by sea, 93 kilometres away from the south of Sicily and 288 kilometres away from Tunisia (Apostolopoulos et al, 2001). Malta has a long naval history, a deep cultural heritage and one of the best climates in the world. Malta’s year round temperate climate, central location and easy accessibility to main European hubs, English-speaking and member of the European Union gives it a great advantage making it the ideal destination for short activity breaks.

Mass tourism in Malta started in the 1950’s when Malta was considered as the island of sun, sand and sea. Right until the 1980’s Malta’s tourism industry depended largely on the UK market, particularly during the summer months. The effects of mass tourism on seasonal employment and infrastructure created many problems. In the 1990’s there was a shift of focus, resulting in an increase in cultural tourism and a diversification of the tourism product with an all year round focus.

Weed and Bull (2009) state that Malta has for many years been known as a low cost destination, “catering for the cheaper end of the market, a market which is likely to be more sensitive to price competition”. Presently with trouble on the northern coast of Africa and economic difficulties in the Europe and the Mediterranean, particularly the main yachting hubs of Spain, Italy and Greece, Malta could stand to benefit over its competitors particularly with regards the yachting tourism industry. While the budgets of European governments are being stretched at the moment, one of the areas where spending can lead to an economic benefit is hosting sporting events.
Over the past five years Malta has proven very successful in this changing direction, putting tourism as one of Malta’s strongest industries and a main economic driver. According to the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands, tourism accounts for 29% of our GNP (Gross National Product), 22% of government income and 17% of full-time employment (MTCE, 2012).

According to the 2012-2016 Malta Tourism Policy, the maltese tourism industry has seen a steady growth of 16% over the past five years in all areas with 2012 being a record year witnessing a total of 1,411,748 tourists, recorded as a 5.6% increase when compared to 2010 and a 19.4% rise on 2009. MTA’s strategic marketing efforts are aimed to encourage a more quality product and to approach new source markets. The upgrading of our infrastructure and built heritage and the increase of private investment into the tourism industry has also helped towards achieving this success (Peregin, 2013)

**Niche Markets in Malta**

As part of this process there has been an encouraging diversification and development of niche markets. The most significant markets are the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and entertainment), culture, English language learning, Gozo holidays, cruise and sports ones (MTCE, 2012a).

Diversifying into new markets has also helped not only to attract a more affluent visitor year round but to combat the issue of seasonality while at the same time encouraging the development of a more varied product. Marketing a more quality product has therefore given Malta an advantage over its competitors mainly the Baleriac Islands of Spain, Cyprus and the Greek Islands.
Sports tourism in Malta

Sport and tourism as leisure pursuits were first the preserve of the wealthy but given that mass follows class, contemporary sports tourists are somewhat different. (Standeven and De Knop, 1999) This is particularly relevant with regards to yachting and nautical tourism.

“In Europe, water sports are the fourth most popular sport tourism activity following cycling, beach sports and hiking”. (Standeven and De Knop, 1999, p. 37).

Almost 76,500 out of 1.3 million tourists visited Malta for sports purposes in 2010. Malta’s reputation as a diving haven has attracted nearly 57,000 sports tourists to our islands that year for diving purposes. Therefore there is much scope for developing this water sports tourism (MTCE, 2012a).
Yachting Tourism, as “Luxury Sports Tourism”

The sea is one of Malta’s greatest assets – the island’s natural shores with their clean warm waters make it an ideal destination for anyone wanting to take part in water sports year round. “With a great deal of interesting coastline; the development of the Marina at Msida has meant that, both competitive and recreational, has become a significant contributor to the Maltese tourism industry. Infact, yachting and scuba-diving, along with golf, have been the subject of specific development plans that aim to develop their potential as niche tourism markets”(Weed & Bull, 2009, p. 213).

“As a group probably the most affluent visitors to Malta are the yacht owners…” (Ioannides et Al 2001,p. 239).

Yacht Racing in Malta

Malta attracts a couple of international offshore yachting events. The classic yacht race the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” which leaves St. Tropez arriving in Malta beginning of July and the Rolex Middle Sea Race, which is Malta’s largest offshore event starting and finishing in the Grand Harbour late October.

The Royal Malta Yacht Club has only recently moved over to new premises and nowadays organizes a calendar of smaller yacht races throughout the year (Appendix 1).

The primary research undertaken in this study aimed to show an in-depth understanding of the role of the RMSR and how it can contributes to the tourism sector. The findings define how the race forms part of Malta’s sports event tourism calendar and an integral part of the international yacht racing agenda.
Analysing how this local sports event has led to its top international status:

- One of the three top offshore yacht races world-wide.
- Survived a break of over ten years.
- Attracted the sponsorship of Rolex Geneva.
- Rising in popularity year after year.
- Encouraged re-visits to the island.

Evaluating the contributing factors will help add further knowledge of the value of yachting as an essential component towards the development of a sustainable tourism industry. Ultimately the scope of this research has set out to evaluate whether the tourism industry is capitalizing on this event and how Malta could maximize its potential.
1.2 Problem Statement, Objectives, Research Questions

The main problem statement is to assess how the RMSR has gained contribution towards optimizing Malta’s development as a niche tourism destination.

The aim of this investigation is to look into this gap in research and how findings could be applied towards strengthening the tourism market.

The reason for choosing this internationally acclaimed yacht race is because:

- The RMSR is one of top yacht races in the world.

- Has survived thirty years;

- Attracted the sponsorship of Rolex Geneva;

- Growing in popularity from eight in 1968 to ninety yachts in 2012.

This research aims to explore how these success factors could be applied to strengthening the tourism industry.

The research objectives of the study set out:

1. To explore the role of the RMSR as part of our tourism product.

2. To identify the factors that make this event so beneficial.

3. To evaluate the key contemporary challenges.

4. To explore the potential of yachting events as part of a stronger tourism product.
Keeping research questions straight and to a minimum in order to keep the research clear and focused was crucial. On the topic of research focus Veal (2006, p. 65) stated “The aim here is to focus the research on one or more very specific questions which can be answered by the research”.

The research questions for the study are:

1. What is the role of the RMSR as part of our tourism product?
2. What are the factors that make this event so beneficial?
3. How can one best overcome the contemporary challenges?
4. What is the potential of yachting events towards a stronger tourism product?

1.3 Research Layout

Research is divided into five sections, namely:

(i) Introduction set out to justify the rationale, research aims and objectives.

(ii) Literature review overview and academic context for the research.

(iii) Methodology is the research framework for the research methods and techniques undertaken

(iv) Analysis is the presentation & discussion of results.

(v) Conclusion and recommendations provide an overview of results and a synthesis with the literature followed by recommendation at both an organizational and strategic level
1.4 Research Approach

This dissertation uses an inductive research approach since it contains how and what research questions. Since this single case study is of an empirical nature it can be best described as an ‘exploratory’ study, containing statements about what is to be explored, its purpose and what factors it will be judged on.

This case study best fits under the illustrative style and particularly in an organizational theoretical structure. It deals with how an event is structured, functions and performs particularly within the different inter-organizational partnerships.

This research deals with the case study of a real life event and therefore its academic value could tend be rather specific and industry focused. The empirical value of my enquiry can be applied to other similar projects yet the results obtained are very specific to the RMSR.

The research design and correct choice of methodology assisted with the collection and analysis of data.

Direct in-depth personal interviews with the key stakeholders involved in every aspect of this event, such as organisers, media and participants were analysed and discussed towards key findings and conclusions on the subject.
1.5 Research Limitations

In this research the topic was kept as straightforward and specific as possible due to the limited timeframe available, focusing on where the event is now, the attributing factors and how they can be applied towards strengthening our tourism industry.

Initiating the study of where yachting racing is in relation to our tourism product in order to create awareness and assist towards future research, since there is a current lacuna in the field.
Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 ISLAND AND NICHE TOURISM

2.1.1 Island Tourism in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean Region

The Mediterranean is the largest, oldest and most developed tourist region in
the world with a growth rate of 2.3% per annum and it is estimated to grow to
one billion travelers by the end of 2012. It is the world’s leading tourism
destination in terms of international and domestic tourism with a total of 306
million worldwide international tourist arrivals. It is estimated that the region will
reach 10 million new arrivals every year on average up until 2030. The
Mediterranean creates 215 billion euros in export earnings from international
arrivals. Tourism is a major pillar of Mediterranean economies. Nonetheless, the
Mediterranean region is going through changes and furthermore visitors are
demanding a more innovative and creative product as taken from UNWTO
(2012).

The Mediterranean Sea occupies an area equivalent to 0.7 percent of the
world’s oceans or 2,511,000 square kilometers. Theses 21 states mentioned
below are unique in their culture but closely connected strategically and
economically. The sea is what unites this region.
MEDITERRANEAN COASTAL STATES

EUROPE
Albania
Bosnia
Herzegovina
Croatia
France
Greece
Italy
Malta
Monaco
Montenegro
Slovenia
Spain
Turkey

AFRICA
Algeria
Egypt
Libya
Morocco
Tunisia

ASIA
Cyprus
Israel
Lebanon
Syria

Mediterranean: Actual trend vs. Tourism 2030 Vision

Fig 2.1: Mediterranean: Actual trend versus Tourism 2030 Vision

Adapted from Source: (UNWTO)
The diagram explains the 2030 vision for tourism showing that the global growth in international arrivals will continue to increase moderately from 4.2% per year (1980-2020) to 3.3% (2010-2030) because base volumes are higher so smaller increases still add substantial numbers. Lower GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as economies mature at a lower elasticity of travel to GDP and shift from falling transport costs to increasing ones.

- Potential for further expansion and new destinations can benefit from this trend and opportunity provided they follow adequate conditions and policies with regards, business, infrastructure, facilitation, marketing and human resources.
- Challenges towards maximizing social and economic benefits and minimizing negative impacts

Over the past twenty years Mediterranean tourism has been dominated by developments in the northern rim by countries like Cyprus, Spain, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Portugal and Slovenia. Yet nowadays new emerging destinations, changes in consumer behaviour, economic crises in source markets and political challenges to the tourism sector in the Mediterranean have meant there is a need for a new direction towards enhancing competitiveness in this region. The Mediterranean therefore needs to re-evaluate its tourism sector particularly in context to sustainable development. The restructuring of industry including the increase in efficiency and
competitiveness and the need to form strategic alliances for co-operative promotion and marketing to maintain a competitive edge.

The Mediterranean is one of the world's most intensively used seas, being a global highway for shipping and having considerable strategic, economic and cultural significance for its states. While most coastal states are eager to exercise their offshore sovereignties as recognised by the 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention, there are a number of problems associated with reaching formal maritime boundary delimitations, and in the exercise of rights particularly those associated with territorial waters.

According to Ioannides et Al (2001) “tourism is a global industry and the Mediterranean is one of the most important tourist regions in the world, accounting for approximately a third of total tourism revenues and half of international arrivals” (UNWTO, 2012). Most countries in the Mediterranean have taken a more strategic view towards tourism planning and policy development.

There are several elements which lead to such a focus in tourism development, as analysed by Conlin & Baum (1995), namely to:

- generate foreign revenue
- provide employment on a national level
- improve local/regional economy
- create awareness about the country
- support environmental/public conservation
- contribute to infrastructural development
- create international goodwill.
The Mediterranean region is best known for its temperate weather, deep history and culture, its scenic coastline, its warm and clean blue seas, its natural heritage, its easy accessibility to central hubs allowing it to be linked to many nearby destinations with a variety of islands. The area holds three of the most popular tourist destinations; Spain, France and Italy. This area faces a number of challenges such as political changes, fluctuating economies and increasing competition. The North African far southern coasts of the Mediterranean have been going through political and religious turmoil for decades and such instability influences tourism development and the attractiveness of a country. Moreover, tourism brings about challenges due to changing consumer choices and business models. The preservation of the natural heritage faces peril as numbers of visitors rise and more damage and pollution is experienced. Emerging worldwide destinations in Asia, the Middle East and Africa are fast growing competitors to the Mediterranean Region. (UNWTO, 2013).

The Mediterranean region is also very vulnerable to environmental factors. According to the UNWTO (2013) the Mediterranean region is becoming more vulnerable as a result of the continued increase in temperatures and the frequency of droughts. This in turn creates water shortages. The region is also prone to devastating fires due to high temperatures, originating mainly from heat waves.

Huge investments in large-scale coastal hotels, marinas and infrastructure towards mass tourism in the 1970’s and 80’s has seen irreparable damage to many shorelines and the seas (Mc Elroy, 2003). Examples of this can be seen along the east coast of Spain, Torremolinos on the Andalusia coast and Lloret de Mar on the Costa Brava in Catalonia.
Seawater pollution is a serious problem in most of the areas in the region and since tourism in the Mediterranean is primarily related to the sea, an action plan towards protecting the environment known as the Blue Plan\(^1\) was formulated. As identified by the EC Tourism Sustainability Group (2007) based in the Mediterranean region aims are to:

- reduce its seasonality demand through its product diversification
- impact of tourism transport within the region
- maintain and enhance community prosperity even through change
- minimize resource use and production of waste
- conserve and give value to natural and cultural heritage
- make holidays available to all levels of society
- use tourism as a tool in global sustainable development.

There is evidence from literature to suggest that the Mediterranean region should explore niche markets such as religious, historical, sport, festival tourism and practice focused market segmentation to maintain its position in tourism. The region has a good ability for tackling new markets and it is experienced in building long-term development and sound strategies (UNWTO 2012).

\(^1\) The Blue Plan is one of the stakeholders involved in this cooperation. The 21 states bordering on the Mediterranean and the European Union together have developed an original mechanism for environmental regional cooperation within the framework of the United Nations Environment Programme’s Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP). The Blue Plan’s main task is to produce information and knowledge in order to alert decision-makers and stakeholders to environmental risks and sustainable development issues in the Mediterranean, and to shape the future scenarios to guide decision-making processes.
Mediterranean Island Tourism

According to Royle (2009) Mediterranean Islands exemplify well the interactions between tourism, heritage and culture, yet their small scale, isolation and weak economies are often stronger perceptions associated with the notion of islands. Islands may differ economically and socially from mainland areas and often suffer problems of insularity and vulnerability. The Mediterranean’s natural attractions and good climate give it a competitive edge in tourism activities. Islands also experience certain benefits due to their different location, unique cultures and international investment (Lim and Patterson, 2008).

Tourism development has therefore brought many economic benefits to these islands but at the same time its uncontrolled growth through mass tourism has proven somewhat harmful towards their sustainability. While tourism can bring many economic advantages to small islands, one can see many instances of rapid, short-term, unplanned tourist developments which produce an over-reliance on this one industry and often on one specific market, culminating in environmental degradation and a concentration on the lower end of the mass tourism market. As a result, in the 1990’s many islands sought to remedy the situation by a greater commitment to planning, upgrading of facilities and developing new markets.

According to Conlin and Baum (1995) the influx of large numbers of tourists to an island destination is likely to have a more profound effect on the destination in cultural, social and environmental terms because of its small scale. This could also cause socio-economic concerns such as labour shortages, rise in real-estate prices and higher cost of living. Locals who previously worked long hours
in agriculture and now opting to follow career positions in hospitality could also have a negative effect on family and religious values on the islands where the communities are more insular. As Mc Elroy states (2003, pg 23) this has therefore allowed for “a rapid decline of traditional pursuits and other social intrusions that threatened insular lifestyles and identity.”

According to Weed & Bull (1999) often rapid tourism development on these islands concentrated on limited markets. The central location and year-round favourable climate has found these islands turned into tourist ‘meccas’ for sun-seeking northern Europeans as stated by Ioannides et Al (2001). Tour operators have therefore tapped into this market offering accessibility to package tourist holidays year round. Regular flight schedules to the main European hubs are also one of the contributing factors towards the Mediterranean island’s rapid development.

Unfortunately many of the islands witnessed significant damage by unplanned and uncontrolled tourism and were vulnerable to such issues as changes in fashion. This has left some popular tourist destinations in decline due to poor accommodation, inadequate infrastructure and degradation of the environment. The strain on the existing infrastructure, particularly water and electricity resources have had a negative effect on agriculture and the environment. Often carrying capacity studies in many small islands pursuing a mass tourism strategy came too late when damage was often irreparable (McElroy, 2003).

Majorca attracts approximately 10 million tourists and holds the reputation of a destination that attracts low-spending tourists in a few coastal areas (Ioannides et Al 2001). Its airport is one of the largest in Southern Europe and there is an
oversupply of accommodation. Yet over the past few years the government has worked towards a better planning strategy for the sustainable management of the area. Part of Majorca’s successful product diversification strategy has been the initiation of the yachting industry which nowadays has grown into one of the foremost Mediterranean hubs. “Palma has one of the finest and best established infrastructures in the world of berthing, maintaining and repairing super yachts and catering to the needs of their owners, charterers and crew” (Majorca Magazine, 2013).

Butler’s theory of the six stages of the destination lifecycle model could be applied in the issue towards better planning and marketing of these Mediterranean Islands as they have proved vital in the sustainable progress of some island destinations that escaped mass tourism. Some of the Greek islands and the area of Alghero in Sardinia seem to have gone through a similar transformation.

The Aeolian Islands have kept a better hold of its traditional culture because many of the islands are only accessible by a ferry system from a few ports on the southern coast of Italy and Sicily. This area’s interest towards eco-tourism is valid but its lack of adequate infrastructure has led to water shortage in the summer months.

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean after Sicily and Sardinia. Like Malta it is a sovereign island state, gaining its independence from the United Kingdom in the 1960’s. The southern territory, the Republic of Cyprus too is example of a destination that has suffered mass tourism (Ioannides et Al 2001). Cyprus has been losing its competitive advantage as a mass tourism
destination, resulting in slower annual growth rate of arrivals and tourist expenditure on the decline. Therefore since this placed Cyprus in its consolidation or stagnation point of its lifecycle the authorities response was to propose the development of an up market tourism product. Sustainable development by choosing renewable energy sources and simultaneously enhancing economic diversification efforts in other sectors like the financial and telecommunications industries was recommended (Ioannides et Al 2001).

Mass tourism development induced a product standardization; the modular week-long holiday package allowing full-load return charter flights and therefore the same image of tourist localities. This rapid tourism growth in many Mediterranean islands at that time meant that there was very little interest shown towards the uniqueness of each island. The local tourist industry’s efforts to build sites to make reality corresponding to tourist imaginary known as “disneyfication”. One island could be substituted for another, leading to the lack of quality and competition between the islands (Ioannides et Al 2001).

Originally competition between the islands focused on price rather than quality. Yet in order for the region to develop, these places should have a multi-faceted natural environment. Many Mediterranean islands are seeking to change their image towards a more sustainable one as they observe the new international trends offered by emerging destinations worldwide. Therefore an approach towards niche markets in the region is essential if the Mediterranean is to progress in tourism (Apostolopoulos et Al 2001).

Governments, industries and investors are conscious “that for tourism to continue to flourish there is a need to protect the very resources that attract
visitors in the first place”, (Ioannides et Al 2001, p.5) A balanced development will therefore protect the destination’s resources and enhance competitiveness while improving the way of life for local inhabitants.

Summary

The explosion of tourism in the Mediterranean happened in the 60’s due to the improved quality of life in northern Europe which meant that people where getting better paid, working less hours and transport in the region became more accessible. Tourism represents one of the most important economic activities and therefore agricultural land and trade was quickly developed for tourism purposes within the region. Its temperate climate led to its Sun, Sand and Sea image which therefore began towards the mass tourism phenomenon as Northern Europeans found this area cheaper and more pleasant to live and holiday in.

Islands suffer from small scale isolation and weak economies and are often insular and vulnerable and so quickly adopted tourism as a foremost economic driver which led to tour operator involvement and to the islands becoming standardised.

The coastal Mediterranean has focused on large numbers of tourists and therefore having effects on its carrying capacity and stress on its infrastructure particularly due to its problem of seasonality. This rapid growth in with a short-term outlook has unfortunately led to long-term environmental problems within the region.
Since the balance between economic and environmental sustainability is the foremost importance, tourism planning and policy development were key to its progress. Increased growth in emerging destinations and affordable transport, put the Mediterranean under much competition against areas like the Far East.

Today the region is working towards the shift from a mass tourism concept to the diversification of new source markets. This has been made possible due to its easy accessibility by land, sea and air particularly with its scheduled flights on legacy and low cost airlines. Changing consumer behaviour has meant that tourists are demanding a more varied, unique, individual and quality product.

The Mediterranean’s natural resource, its 46,000 kilometres of coastline and its natural heritage require a sustainable approach towards its major resource.

Its opportunity towards enhancing competitiveness:

- for product and segment diversification by creating innovative products and services.
- tackling new markets including multi-destination routes and products. Plus the exchange programs for travelers and tourism professionals.
- positioning itself as a “green” destination towards being a more competitive factor.
- create long-term development strategies and planning in particular with regards human resources and infrastructure.
- increase regional cooperation through joint activities in the field of research, promotion and technology.
2.1.2 Mass to Niche Tourism

Developing Niche Markets

In early days packaged holidays were the answer to inexperienced customers who wanted a guaranteed good time often over a short holiday period. The advent of IT (Information Technology) and low budget airlines has seen people taking holidays more regularly and although it is still easier and more common to use this vast inter-connected global machinery for tourism purposes nowadays people much rather believe they are part of a more intimate experience. This has therefore helped initiate the idea or as Novelli (2005, p.3) remarked “a move to post-industrial/post Fordist economies where consumption no longer follows on from production, but rather drives the production process as consumers increasingly consume material objects, signs and symbols to extract value, meaning and status”; tourism as the consumption of an experience-based product.

Although mass tourism seems to dominate and characterise the patterns of tourist flows, tourism nowadays is heading towards a more specialized form of tourism, “niche tourism”. The term niche tourism came from niche marketing, meaning a place in the market for a particular product and people to support it, or “a specific product tailored to meet the needs of a particular audience/market segment...a set of individuals with specific needs relating to the qualities and features of particular products” (Novelli, 2005).

Thus, ‘niche tourism’ emerged as an alternative to ‘mass tourism’ and “it implies a more sophisticated set of practices that distinguish and differentiate tourists” (Novelli, 2005, p.1). For destinations wishing to change their response towards
sustainable tourism while attracting a higher-spending tourist, niche tourism offers a set of experiences tailored towards the visitor’s needs and wants.

This development in the international travel market is due to the fact that people are having more leisure time, a higher spending power and have therefore become more discerning in their choices. This is particularly relevant nowadays as niches have been broken down from larger macro-niches like culture, rural and sport to micro-niches like yachting tourism to suit the needs of every social class.

The World Travel Organisation (WTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) view niche tourism as having a more sustainable approach and therefore beneficial to host communities (Weiler & Hall 1992). As pointed out by Macloed (2003) cited in Novelli (2005) choosing a holiday and destination is partly identity-making. Studies by Hlavin-Schulze (1998a, b) cited in Trauer (2004 p.184) which suggest that individuals ‘adjust their needs and desires based on images of societal behaviour that “promise” societal acceptance.’

Image creation too plays an important part in the increase of Special Interest Tourism. This can be witnessed through the media exposure of high-risk leisure activity (Bartam, 2001, cited by Trauer, 2004). Trauer (2002a, 2004b) adds that the media is responsible for affecting our intimate space and therefore influencing our value creation, beliefs and attitudes.

Through an increased travel experience, confidence and affluence, the tourist life cycle transition from comfort zone to more adventurous kinds of travel and holiday are purchased towards achieving social prestige and ego-enhancement. Therefore those interested in Special Interest Travel choose a holiday in accordance with the interests and activities taking place at home. Trauer (2004)
goes on to say that “although event and cruise tourism can be the special focus of activity, events and cruises are further specialized by themes and interests such as sport events (e.g. World Masters, The America’s Cup).

The emergence of satisfaction as the principal criterion of vacation selection has led to a marked shift towards ‘active holidays’ towards an interest in ‘experience-oriented’ holidays for the more sedentary occupation visitor (Helber, 1998, cited in Hall and Weiler, 1992).

Novelli (2005) explore the diverse nature of niche tourism and related products through many different approaches.

- The geographic environment in relevance to the specific activity.
- The product offered in accordance to the specific needs of the tourist.
- The customer demand and supply of specialty activities.

From a strategic development point of view the planning process towards building some niche markets involves good infrastructure, availability of resources, private entrepreneurship and public initiative. The involvement of the community, the location of resources and activities and the ability to innovate and implement ethical approaches towards products and services offered also play an important role.

Niche Tourism is essential towards a more sustainable approach to tourism development in order to combat environmental problems and was introduced as part of the World Conservations Strategy by the International Union for the Conservation of the Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN, 1980). It was then followed by the “Brundtland Report” from the World Commission on
Environment and Development 1987 where meaningful strategies and policies towards a sustainable perspective.

“Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.” (WTO 2001)

**Types of Niche Tourism**

The choice of niche tourism options as seen in the figure below shows what a vast variety of alternatives it is made of. The main five macro-niches divided into cultural, environmental, rural, urban and others. Each macro-niche is then broken down into a number of micro-niches emerging from the most appealing and vibrant characteristics, locations of destinations and specific tourists’ interests. Niche tourism is the diversity of motivations, behaviours and experiences from a production and consumption perspective.
As seen in the diagram, (pg 43 fig. 2.2) the macro-niches can be further divided:

- Cultural Tourism is mainly concerned with a country or regions culture, the lifestyle of the locals within its geographical area.
- Environmental Tourism is often referred to as eco tourism and therefore a sustainable approach towards the environment.
- Rural Tourism can be seen as a variant to eco tourism and is concerned with the village and its lifestyle as the tourist attraction.
- Sports tourism is travel for the purpose of engaging in a particular sport either through participation or to watch a team.
• Urban tourism is concerned with travel to a city region often for leisure or business purposes such as to take part in a conference or to visit an exhibition, fair or gallery.
• Others Tourism makes up a variety of miscellaneous forms of tourism.

The similarities between Sport & Culture ‘niche markets’

The interesting connection between arts and sports has been visible since the Olympic Games were classified as a cultural event (Heinze, 2011). Although the financial dimension may at times be rather different, cases from the fields of sports and culture are very similar as reported by Schellenberg and Hedderich, 2011). Business models for both types of tourism are very similar and the goal for artistic and athletic success too. Therefore a key task in culture and sports tourism management is stakeholder management.

“Sports and culture are characterized by an increasing eventisation” and according to Schellenberg and Hedderich (2011) sports events are moved to urban centres in order to bring experiences to customers. The broadcasting of MET opera performances in cinemas, the commercialization of exhibitions and large open-air events in the concert area are new and similar trends. There are therefore many similarities between the cultural and sports sector and much can be learnt and applied to either respectively according to Schellenberg and Hedderich (2011)

The role of sport is ‘as an important vehicle for popular cultural citizenship, and to allow populist democracy required by the “city of culture”, where sport is used as a realm of cultural policy and planning towards promoting and re-imaging the cultural capital. The link between sport and cultural policy in relation to the
“creative industries” could be further developed through study and therefore allowing it to form part of cultural policy (Hughson, 2011).

“...The parochial dimension to sporting culture is important to cities in their appeal to local resident participation to cultural events. Yet the very nature of sport contains both a unifying and differing potential which could prove difficult to align for those in charge of cultural policy.

Summary
The modern day tourism market has now developed a completely different concept towards offering a more sophisticated product. Niche tourism is the sustainable approach towards combating the environmental issues brought about by mass tourism rapid growth. Niche tourism can be seen as an alternative to mass tourism offering a broader choice and quality portfolio of opportunities to consumers. Nowadays the tourism industry is concerned with creating niche products for new markets through better strategic policies and marketing plans. The importance of adequate infrastructure, resources, the presence of private entrepreneurship, public initiative, host community cooperation towards the products and services offered (EU Commission 2002). Choosing a destination or traveling for special interest purposes is seen as a status symbol or identity-making. The tourism demand and market trend of a more individual nature.
2.1.3 Events Tourism

Introduction

Recent years have seen the focus towards events and how they have helped towards the competitiveness in the global tourism market. Goldner & Ritchie (2003, p. 224) state that events ‘serve as a powerful tool to attract tourists during the off-season and to create an image and awareness of an area’. Events act as a catalyst to change the perception of a destination from a single season only location to one providing year round leisure opportunities (Allen et al, 2008).

Getz (2005, p.12) defines event tourism as “a term used mostly in the tourism literature to describe a destination development and marketing strategy to realize all the potential economic benefits of events.” Events are something happening within a chosen space at a specific temporary moment. Events depend on a number of contributing factors – “setting, people, management system – including design elements and the program” quotes Getz (2008, p.404). The organization and delivery of events are not based purely on tourism. Often events are created for community purposes and are eventually included in a place’s tourism product. Other events are set up especially for tourism purposes.

By looking at Maslow’s hierarchy of needs one can realize that events fall under the last of all human needs, self-actualization. One’s lifetime is shaped by a number of rites of passage and thus a number of events, such as separation, liminality and incorporation. Separation is when there is a detachment from the former self signified by symbolic actions or rituals in preparation to move from one place or status to another. Liminality is the transition phase or the period
between states, during which one has left one’s place or state but has not yet joined or entered the next. Incorporation or reaggregation is when one has completed the rite and assumed a ‘new’ identity or status. Events can be seen as a ritual and the journey or pilgrimage. The idea of pilgrimage is often attached to the concept of a sacred place but in this case events or places. These include cities where the Olympics were once held for example, which can develop high symbolic meanings. Carnivals and festivals might be the best applied to understanding this concept of the notion of separation, loss of identity and social status, and role reversals. As Getz (2008 p.414) adds that “people are more relaxed, uninhibited and open to new ideas” when they are in this state.

Event tourism according to Getz (2008, p.405) is a recent concept, the term event tourism was first used in 1987 when The New Zealand Tourist Publicity Department reported that it was rapidly becoming an important segment of international tourism. Donald Getz developed a framework for planning events.
Event studies appears to have been coined in by Donald Getz in a conference following the Sydney 2000 Olympics and later in a journal where he questions their status as possible disciplines. Event management is the applied field of study and area of professional practice devoted to design, production and management of planned events. Events encompass many different typologies from cultural, political, art and entertainment to business, educational, sport and private events. Each type requires a specific set of needs depending on the purpose and program and a professional know-how for each sector.

Events can be divided in a number of typologies. These can be classified according to size, type, content and audience.
Special events are often categorized according to their size or scale. Common categories are mega-events, hallmark events, major events, local/community events. According to Allen et Al (2008) these definitions are not exact and distinctions can be blurred. The scale of impacts depend largely on attendance, media, profile, infrastructure, costs and benefits.

‘Mega-events’ as stated by Allen et Al (2008) “are those events that are so large that they affect whole economies and reverberate in the global media”. As stated by Marris cited in Getz (2005, p.18) mega-events “should exceed 1 million visits, their capital cost should be at least $500 million, and their reputation should be that of a ‘must see’ event.” According to Weiler & Hall (1992 p. 5) such mega-events as “World Fairs, Soccer Cup finals and Olympic Games are targeted at international tourism markets. Their size in terms of attendance, target market, level of public financial involvement, political effects, extent of television coverage, construction of facilities and impact on economic and social fabric of the host community.” According to Allen et Al (2008) a good example of this is the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and was perhaps Australia’s first true mega-event.

One of the main reasons why mega-events do not generate the expected benefits for the host destination is that event organizers and destination managers adopt a short-term vision as opposed to a long-term strategy for the destination. Mega events and World Fairs have gathered a fair deal of importance because of their magnitude. However Getz (2008, p.412) notes that such events do not really fit as planned events or event tourism, “developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination”. Getz states that countries have used mega events to gain
legitimacy and prestige, draw attention to their accomplishments, foster trade and tourism, or to help open their countries to global influences and thus this is much more than place-marketing it is more like national identity building.”

‘Hallmark event’ according to Allen et Al (2008) “refers to those events that become so identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city or region that they become synonymous with the name of the place, and gain widespread recognition and awareness.” As stated by Ritchie (1984 p.2) cited by Allen et Al (2008) such events are “major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short or long term. Hallmark events tend to encourage the investment of city renewal towards attracting media attention and external visitors as opposed to local empowerment within the community. In the last twenty years most major events for cities in search of a regeneration boost are focused on either sports such as Olympics or World Cups or technological showcases such as Expos or World Fairs. They rely on their uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.” Getz (2005, p. 16) points out their ability to provide competitive advantage for their host community “Over time, the event and destination can become inextricably linked, such as Mardi Gras.”

‘Major events’ according to Allen et Al (2008) have due to “their scale and media interest the capability of attracting significant visitor numbers, media coverage and economic benefits.” The annual Formula One Grand Prix in Monaco, the Australian Open Tennis Tournament and regional art and musical festivals are some good examples “Major events are seen as an effective catalyst for city regeneration processes as they are able to merge tourism
strategies with urban planning and can boost the confidence of local communities” as reported by Roche (1994) cited by Garcia (2011). The Brecon Festival in Wales is an example of a community event that had developed into a major event even though it has experienced difficulties and has survived for thirty years.

The Brecon Jazz Event was held annually in the rural surroundings of South Powys, Mid Wales. It was started by the Four Bars Inn in 1984 on a budget of £100 and nowadays attracts leading international jazz musicians and up-coming artists from the UK. In 2008 it went through some difficulties when the event went bust and subsequently rescued by the producers of Hay Festival and funded by the Arts Council of Wales. In 2009 it tackled the issues of social disorder and was commended for staging a local popular carnival parade and returning the festival back to its old musical roots. As from 2012 the Cardiff-based events and media are the new operators of the Brecon Jazz Festival. The event now encompasses alternative acts in pubs, hotels, galleries, cafes and other venues in the town which attracted 8,000 visitors last year and looks forward to its growth into its 30th year (BBC, 2013).

‘Local or community events’ are part of what a host community produces in order to stimulate social, fun and entertainment values. According to Allen et Al (2008) “these events often produce a range of benefits, including engendering pride in the community, strengthening a feeling of belonging and creating a sense of place. They can expose people to new experiences, encourage participation in sports and arts activities, and encourage, tolerance and diversity.” Therefore many governments support such activities as part of their community and cultural development strategies. As defined by Janiskee (1996
p. 404) cited in Allen et Al (2008) “family fun events considered ‘owned’ by a community because of volunteer services from host community, employ public venues and produced at the direction of local government agencies or non-government organizations.”

As witnessed in the diagram above the key typologies of events tourism can be classified in major categories according to Getz (2010). Events can fall into the public domain and those of interest to individuals or small private groups.
Cultural events are celebrations such as festivals, commemorations of a historic event, carnivals and Mardi Gras, religious events, parades and processions and art and entertainment events. Political and state occasions usually incorporate visits by Very Important People (VIPs) and form part of cultural events within a region. These events are an important expression of human activity and contribute to social and cultural well-being of a host community. According to Allen et Al (2008) the most common type is the arts festival which encompasses of art forms such as fine art, music and film festivals. Food and wine events too are becoming increasingly popular not only amongst local communities but for tourism purposes too.

Business and trade events such as fairs, exhibitions, meetings and conventions are another events area. In tourism these events are commonly known as part the MICE industry. Educational and scientific events such as training workshops or seminars can also be included in this subsection. It is a very lucrative market for tourism in many regions and according to Allen et Al (2008) the average expenditure of international delegates is six times that of the average tourist. A successful MICE destination must therefore offer a variety of events to increase its competitive advantage.

Sports events are an important and rapidly growing area within the event industry and include a full spectrum of individual sports and multi-sports events. These can be further divided into the regularity of the scheduled game or tournament, multi-sport such as the master games, sport festivals, one-off sports ‘spectaculars’ and exhibition games with touring invited teams. According to Allen et Al (2008) they have the “ability to attract tourist visitors and to generate media coverage”. Due to the economic impacts, sports events are
now an essential part of government event strategies and destination marketing programs.

**Private events** are often held for individuals, families and social groups yet often require professional event managers and specialist venues. Hotels, resorts, restaurants, private clubs and catering facilities might refer to such events as ‘functions’. A universal example of this is the wedding.

Not all events are produced with a tourism potential in mind and in order for them to get noticed they need to have both a tourism plan and a comprehensive events policy. According to Getz (2008) “festivals and events desiring support or cooperation of tourism agencies…tend to conduct tourism and economic impact studies to ‘prove’ their value in economic terms”. In order for events to become sustainable they “must secure tangible resources and political support” stated Getz (2008).

Traveling to attend an event overseas is very different to attending an event in one’s own country. The travel experience is an integral part. An event is something where one has to be present, willing to travel and prepared to enter into activities that are out of the norm. “Events are an important motivator of tourism, and figure prominently in the development and marketing plan of most destinations” as stated by Getz (2008). They can be a prominent factor as to why a tourist chooses to visit a destination. Motivational factors may vary greatly depending on the event and region where it is held. At a time when there is such a variety of events towards offering the ultimate overseas experience it is crucial that one’s research in how to plan, promote, produce and evaluate is thorough in order to guarantee success and longevity.
Motivational research in events refers to the pull or seeking factors that apply to those with special interests who want a specific set of benefits offered by the event like for example runners needing to compete as stated by Getz (2008). Mackellar’s (cited in Getz, 2008) research on the differences between special-interest and general motivations in attracting people to travel to events. Bohlin (cited by Getz, 2008) reports that well-established, recurring events had the greatest drawing power.

Planned events can help towards the development and marketing of a destination but must be viewed from the demand and supply perspective. In order to understand demand one must identify who travels for events, why and what they like to do and spend their money on. Developing a well thought out event calendar is essential to avoid clashes with other ongoing events.

Yet as stated by Getz (2008, p.405) this would enable one to assess “the value of events in promoting a positive destination image, place marketing in general, and co-branding with destinations.” On the other hand Getz (2008) stresses the importance of being able to identify the supply side as to how “destinations develop, facilitate and promote events of all kinds to meet multiple goals to attract tourists.” How events can be used to develop areas, attractions and infrastructure towards building a better local community and destination image in place marketing.

Assessing what events are most beneficial from a tourism perspective is very important in order to help work out gaps in the market which could be developed. Following this research a tourism strategy for the implementation of events should be set up. Research into the trends of event visitor markets,
competitive destinations, knowledge of visitor’s perceptions of quality events, stakeholder viewpoints, economic impacts and management practices is insightful towards assisting event agencies to develop programs designed to build the events sector (Allen et Al, 2008).

Goh’s study (2003, cited by Allen et Al, 2008) highlighted the weaknesses with regards Irish festivals; 47% of festivals have no data of their audiences, 59% do not provide training for their volunteers, 23% have no presence on the web, 58% have no strategic plan. Events Australia places a high value on research though; looking into specific market segments, projected event consumer behaviour, economic yield and expenditure. The building of a good research strategy towards long-term planning is essential for future direction and “evaluation is fundamental to the success of any strategy” as stated by Allen et Al (2008).

**Impacts of Events**

Events touch every aspect of people’s lives. Events impact on the social cultural, economic, environmental and political aspects of a place and the people who live there. These impacts reflect why events are often well-supported, documented and researched with strategies formed to enhance outcomes and optimize their benefits. Impacts of events can be seen from both a positive and a negative perspective. Events can generate a number of positive outcomes, yet, events can also have unintended consequences that can result in their gaining public prominence and media attention for the wrong reasons” (Allen et Al, 2008).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT OF EVENTS</th>
<th>POSITIVE IMPACTS</th>
<th>NEGATIVE IMPACTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Social and cultural | 1. Shared experience  
2. Revitalisation of traditions  
3. Building of community pride  
4. Validation of community groups  
5. Increased community participation  
6. Introduction of new and challenging ideas  
7. Expansion of cultural perspectives | 1. Community alienation  
2. Manipulation of community  
3. Negative community image  
4. Bad behaviour  
5. Substance abuse  
6. Social dislocation  
7. Loss of amenity |
| Political | 1. International prestige  
2. Improved profile  
3. Promotion of investment  
4. Social Cohesion  
5. Development of administrative skills | 1. Risk of event failure  
2. Misallocation of funds  
3. Lack of accountability  
4. Propaganda  
5. Loss of community ownership and control  
6. Legitimation of ideology |
| Environmental | 1. Showcasing of the environment  
2. Provision of models for best practice  
3. Increased environmental awareness  
4. Infrastructure legacy  
5. Improved transport and communications  
6. Urban transformation and renewal | 1. Environmental damage  
2. Pollution  
3. Destruction of heritage  
4. Noise disturbance  
5. Traffic congestion |
| Tourism and economic | 1. Destinational promotion and increased tourist visits  
2. Extended length of stay  
3. Higher yield  
4. Increased tax revenue  
5. Business opportunities  
6. Commercial activity  
7. Job creation | 1. Community resistance to tourism  
2. Loss of authenticity  
3. Damage of reputation  
4. Exploitation  
5. Inflated prices  
6. Opportunity costs  
7. Financial mismanagement  
8. Financial loss |

Fig 2.5: Impacts of Events
Source: Adapted from Hall, (1989) cited in Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonnell (2008 p.64)

**Social and cultural impacts of events** directly affect participants and often their wider host communities according to Hall (1989) as cited by Getz (2005). They can result in an intense national and community pride as football fans often have with their team when returning home after the victory of a game. The economic benefit of events must not be the main succeeding factor but attention
to local participation and ownership is equally attractive to visitors and media (Garcia, 2011). Tourists will often choose to visit a destination for a number of reasons and their curiosity behind the culture and landscape of the host destination will often be a priority. Encouraging the host community to show its skill and expertise will assist local industry and give business opportunities which would contribute towards the economic perspective. Job opportunity creation is often positive yet sometimes it can be short-term and therefore unsustainable with regards a degree of skill development and improved access to future employment as reported by Garcia (2011).

Events can contribute towards a political debate, help to change history and promote healing in the community as for example the events dedicated towards the victims and survivors of terrorist attacks. The value of hallmark events with regards profile and upgrading of facilities often overcomes the temporary inconvenience and disruption to society. Managing crowd behaviour, criminal activity and substance abuse are some negative impacts which require the need for a better security system. It is therefore important that the host community is part of the consultation process behind the hosting of events in order to ensure maximizing returns to the community.

“One negative social impact, in particular, has the potential to undermine the key positive impacts that events can deliver for a host community” (Deery & Jago, 2010 p.8) Anti-social behaviour such as drunken, rowdy and potentially life and property threatening behaviour can seriously ruin the image of an event not only amongst the local community but it is unfortunately what the media choose to highlight. The effect this anti-social behaviour can have on the local community’s pride is very damaging and because there is much importance
given towards safety and security in a community this issue is becoming of higher priority according to Deery & Jago (2010). Nonetheless, events can create a very positive social impact such as intense national and community pride, as evidenced by the outpouring of emotion by many Australians that greeted the Socceroos performance at the FIFA World Cup in Germany in 2006” as remarked by Allen et Al (2008).

**Political impact of the role of events** was researched by Arnold et al (1989, p191) Allen et Al (2008) and suggests that “governments in power will continue to use hallmark events to punctuate the ends of their periods in office, to arouse nationalism, enthusiasm and finally, votes.” Governments have realized that events have the ability to raise the profile of an area because of the media coverage. Governments help support and promote events nowadays as they understand the economic gains that could be earned from these special events. Special events figure prominently in the development and marketing plans of most destinations states Getz (2008, p. 403). Events can also work as a catalyst for the development of infrastructure and an alternative to capital-intensive developments which can prove highly sustainable. This in turn attracts tourists creating economic benefits and job opportunities. Events can showcase emerging nations and economies such as the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

**Environmental impact of an event** gives the opportunity to a region to showcase its unique characteristics and assists with the promotion of a destination through its coverage. According to Stevenson (1998) cited by Garcia (2011) “major events cannot be organized at the expense of the local community nor should they be planned without grassroots consultations. The argument that local groups are to benefit through tourism and inward
investment.” Satisfying tourism interest according to Hall (1996) cited by Garcia (2011) is often in contradiction to the traditions of the place and may affect its natural environment. Therefore inward investment must therefore protect the interests and rights of community and require a balance between corporate competitiveness and public needs as reported by Garcia (2011) cited by Owen (2002). A good example of the positive impacts of the environment on events is when Tourism Australia chose to promote Australia through the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Events often help with the development and update of local infrastructure. They can also revive a region’s more run-down areas as can be seen through the developments for the London 2012 Olympics. Major events may often need an environmental impact assessment and careful planning in order to avoid negative outcomes such as damage to the national heritage, traffic and excessive waste issues.

“The presence of large numbers of tourists at events may also establish an environment that epitomizes the concentration of opportunities for crime” as stated by Barker, Page and Meyer (2002a). The threat to tourist’s safety is of paramount importance and therefore by examining the crime/event-hosting relationship, and identifying the underlying factors would help reduce crime. The America’s Cup Yacht Race that took place in 2000 in Auckland New Zealand experienced crime especially against tourists and were mainly affected by ethnicity and form of accommodation. According to Barker, Page and Meyer (2002a) crimes experienced by overseas visitors were of a much larger capacity when compared to domestic ones. Therefore it is understandable that an increase and change in the status of the population at such an event would encourage such activity.
Tourism and economic impact of an event for most event entrepreneurs is of prime importance, whether it is in budget and able to create a profit. According to Allen et Al (2008) it is essential that the income from sponsorship, merchandising and ticket sales exceeds the costs of conducting and marketing the event. The revenue generated from tourism is crucial as there is much additional expenditure on travel, accommodation, goods and services throughout the region in a variety of industries and beyond the event itself. Media coverage is one area that can help strengthen the awareness of a destination and encourage more visitors. Events can also open up the opportunity for business and investment and showcase a host community's expertise. There are long term effect of events on a region and Humphries (2000) cited by Allen et Al (2008) remarked that following the Sydney 2000 Olympics the State Treasurer Michael Egan was quoted saying, “we’ll be benefiting from the Games well after we think the benefits have worn off and in ways that will never show up in statistics’. Unfortunately little has been done to analyse or quantify the amount of business that events generate.

The question here is do traders and small-businesses benefit. According to Allen et Al (2008 p. 73) “Olympic visitors proved to be sports mad, tight fisted and uninterested in traditional tourist attractions”. Events can create substantial employment in the lead up but in the long term not always the case as events are often short-lived and use existing staff from other areas or sometimes volunteer-operated.

Since the economic benefit of event tourism is so substantial I would like to identify it further. “Events tourism is mainly driven by the goal of economic benefits” as stated by Getz (2008) and this is evident from the amount of
research that has been done. It is important to observe the effects it has on a personal and societal level and how it can effect cultural and environmental changes. Therefore event tourism should be identified from all stages; it’s input stage where one can see what it takes to make an event happen, the development and marketing. How events can change the image of a destination and the impacts this change have whether positive or negative.

The first comprehensive economic impact study on event tourism dates back to the Adelaide Grand Prix in 1986. Resident’s perceptions and attitudes towards events have also been researched although the tourism-specific dimension remained relatively unexamined. From an environmental perspective very little research has been done especially regarding the issues caused by mega events and making them ‘greener’ and the fact that “tourism in general is a huge consumer of energy and producer of pollution” as stated by Getz (2008). The environmental outcome of events is of ultimate importance and therefore industry associations are working towards greener events and new environmental standards have been set in the UK (British Standards, 2007). The most recent mega event, the Olympic Games in London, transformed the east London neighborhoods which were known to be deprived areas into a new vibrant city quarter by building the new Olympic Park there (London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games 2006).
“Events spill out of our newspapers and television screens, occupy much of our time, and enrich our lives” (Allen et Al 2008, pp.5) Media coverage is key to building events as it creates an image in the minds of tourists who have never visited the place before (Chalip 2003). “Events are capable of delivering key messages about a destination and a community’s positive image to the world” as stated by Chalip (2003) According to a study by Jago et al (2003) cited by Allen et Al (2008) “efforts at using events for destination branding purposes depend greatly on local community support and on the cultural and strategic fit between the destination and the event conducted there.”

According to Allen et Al (2008) choosing existing events that have the capacity to be developed into major attractions and therefore using them as a foundation for image-building could help towards a destination’s advancement in tourism. “A variant to this approach is the idea to develop a single hallmark event that can then be supported by a range of similarly themed events” as stated by Allen et Al (2008 p.428). Supplementing a large event by adding smaller events throughout the year would capitalize on its value while at the same time maximising on a year-long appeal for the destination.

Events and destination are two separate entities but yet serving each other in a manner, often referred to as co-brands. A destination and the event are the product which depends on brand recognition, perceived, brand quality and strong mental and emotional associations. Therefore the successful marketing of this product is crucial to building its brand equity. Chalip (2003) reports that
image is a key factor in tourism development and that the image of the event and destination should become inseparable and mutually reinforcing.

According to (Allen et Al 2008) key themes associated with destination’s general tourism product can be reinforced through events. An example of this is Auckland in New Zealand, where maritime, cultural and ethnic diversity, artistic and creative and active outdoor and sporting events are used to create an identity for the city (Auckland City 2006).

“Destinations often use events to progress their overall tourism promotional efforts” as stated by Allen et Al (2008).

Sponsorship of events too can result in a transfer of image or co-branding and this can be determined by the consumer’s perception of the fit between the sponsor and the event (Getz, 2005). The choice of sponsor therefore plays a very important part.

According to the International Events Group (IEG) (1995 cited in Getz 2005) sponsorship is “a cash and/or in-kind fee paid to a property (such as an event) in return for access to the exploitable commercial potential associated with that property. Other definitions are that ‘sponsorship is more of an “affiliation” or “association” of events and corporations for their mutual benefit, although it generally involves payments for specific services rendered by the event’ as stated by Getz (2005 p. 255). The IEG (1995, cited in Getz 2005) reports that people respond better to sponsorship than other advertising.

Sponsorship is part of marketing and the bulk has gone to sports according to IEG (1995, cited in Getz 2005). 70% of Sponsorship going to sports by North
American companies totaled almost 9 billion dollars by the year 2000 according to Getz (2005, cited in Bennett, Henson and Zhang, 2003). The sponsorship of sports is particularly important in building brand awareness and corporate image which is linked to brand equity; the exposure of the valuable factors that make up the brand. According to Keller (1993 p. 10) cited in Cornwell et Al (2001) “anything that causes the consumer to experience or be exposed to the brand has the potential to increase familiarity and awareness.” Later Smith (2005 p.15) adds to this by stating that analysts find sponsorship popular as a “platform from which to build equity and gain affinity with target audience.” Through studies followed by Cornwell et Al (2001 p. 49) “longer sponsorship relations lead to stronger perceived effects on brand equity” and therefore since sports sponsorship is largely event based different methods have to be orchestrated in order to maximize value.

Getz (2005) reported that ‘extending the marketing “reach” is another benefit of sponsorship.’ Often the sponsors will include advertising, public relations, marketing advice and an enhancement of the image of the event through associations with a positive corporate image. Corporate sponsors may also provide the use of their professional staff and expertise. Sponsors benefit from an event because they reach smaller audiences and often a tie or commitment to a particular niche market. Events should be viewed and managed as marketable products to succeed at sponsorship according to Getz (2005).
Event Tourism in island destinations

Islands often attract smaller scale events for shorter-duration which include the local community are often preferred as they do not put stress on the existing infrastructure, enhance host-guest relations and often have fewer negative impacts which could come about otherwise through mass tourism and the issue of carrying capacity. Getz (1995) advocates the development of a portfolio of attractions and events which reflect national values, cultures and history (but due to change in people’s choices for travel this idea may need to be shifted). Getz (1995) adds “unique events and themes should be highlighted, especially if they have a potential to attract niche markets or generate a strong image.” Conveying the image that a destination is alive with events makes it more attractive to the visitor all year round. Getz (1995) states that “an island destination could position itself as being unique and world-class with respect to a particular theme; events can provide the tangible products by which visitors experience the theme.”

Summary

The universe of events is very diverse yet key typologies of events tourism do exist can be classified in major categories according to Getz (2010). Nowadays events are a major platform for tourism development and can help with the marketing of a destination. They have the capability to have a strong economic contribution as they bring added value towards a better quality product within the tourism market. They can be developed and promoted as an added tourist attraction giving the destination a competitive advantage. Events encourage government support towards developing the community. They stimulate repeat
visits or lengthen duration of stay. The creation and bidding of new events helps extend the tourist season and geographic spread to a year-round calendar of activities.

Events can be used as a catalyst to expand and improve infrastructure. They assist towards urban renewal or transformation of a region. Host communities benefit from events through a spirit of pride and must be included in the consultation process. They create business opportunities, promotion of investment and job creation. Events develop industry through encouraging local expertise and in the long term events have a multiplier effect through a variety of industries.

Yet unfortunately events have the capability of affecting the environment through issues such as stresses from overcrowding, pollution, traffic congestion and damage to the natural heritage. Events can contribute to inflated prices and exploitation at the host community destination. They create a lack of skill creation and long-term job opportunities. There is sometimes a misconception of the effect of events on investment. Community may experience negative issues such as a loss of traditions or authenticity, crime and therefore a resistance to tourism. Events can risk failure, mismanagement, financial loss and damage to a country’s reputation.

A number of organizational issues prevail due to the fact that events are to have well-planned tourism strategies or policies, managed and marketed by experienced personnel. Events require a negative impact assessment and a carrying capacity assessment, particularly for larger events. They often attract large corporate sponsors to assist with funding and strengthening of image. The
role events play in promoting cultural goals, arts, sports, heritage conservation and community development links events to policy areas and therefore need to be well-researched.

The impact assessments of the social, environmental, political and economic aspects of any event are crucial. It gives a clear understanding of business/investment opportunities to local business. The budget allocated towards conducting and marketing an event which must not exceed the income from the various areas of funding such as sponsorship, merchandising and ticket sales. An event’s broad economic impact from tourism is of great value as it has the ability to affect many levels of industry.
2.2 TOURISM AND YACHTING IN MALTA

This section will identify the critical factors that relate to the research topic and which in turn provide both a theoretical and contextual ‘backdrop’ for the research. In this respect the section addresses key issues for tourism growth and development in Malta, the development of sports tourism, and an overview of yachting events and how these factors relate to the Rolex Middle Sea Yacht Race sports event.

2:2:1 Tourism Development in Malta.

The Maltese Archipelago comprises of the largest island Malta, followed by Gozo and Comino. These islands are centrally located in the middle of the Mediterranean basin, strategically positioned 80 kilometres south of Sicily and 304 kilometres to Cape Bon in Tunisia. They are an independent microstate, one of the world’s smallest and since 2004 have been a member of the European Union, with a population of 409,000 on a land area of 316 square kilometers.

The Maltese economy was originally targeted towards providing services to the British military since their arrival in the year 1800. However after 164 years the British naval forces decided to withdraw and as such an independent Malta pre-empted to find alternative ways to structure its economy. Subsequently tourism was considered in the Development Plan (1959-1964) as the potential towards acquiring foreign exchange earnings, infrastructural development and increased employment.
In the early 60’s Malta’s tourism industry mainly catered for the UK holiday market with as much as 76% of the total tourism market developed at a very rapid rate (MTCE 2012). This rapid growth was the cause of a number of environmental and infrastructural problems such as water shortage issues. Subsequently over the proceeding decades there was an immediate decline in tourism (up to 44%) which lasted up until the mid 1980’s. This was also accentuated by the international recession at that time. From the mid 80’s & 90’s Malta attracted more than a million tourists, again mainly British during the summer and autumn season, who were looking primarily for a resort /package style holiday.

As a response in the late 1980’s, a Master Plan for tourism was directed towards better planning and a strategic approach for the future of tourism development in Malta. The 1990 Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands states “Malta has now reached the point at which tourist infrastructure is destroying the very features which attract tourists in the first place.” (Government of Malta, 1990) The aim and objectives were to combat the issues associated with seasonality and to attract a better quality tourist through an improved value product focusing on the islands cultural and historical assets.

According to Pollacco (2003) the major problems experienced in the 1980s related to a lack of public awareness with regards to the importance of sustainable tourism. The main concerns associated to the environment included the tourist accommodation problem, the over dependence on the UK market, the perennial problems of seasonality and integration of Gozo into Maltese tourism.
As a result Malta tried to attract other markets, including the German, Scandinavian and the USA and put less emphasis on the package holiday maker from Britain. The Maltese government consequently focused on the construction of luxury accommodation, restoring and improving access to heritage sites and tapped into other niche markets. Yet as stated by Ioannides et Al (2001) such an approach seemed to lead to confusion between “high culture visitors with big spenders”.

Once again the 90’s saw continued growth in tourism, but a more recent decline in visitors followed as the local tourism industry felt increasingly unable to adapt to the changing demands of the visitor and the ongoing changes in tourism trends. As a consequence the Maltese Government explored the need to diversify into other industries such as the financial and private services. Simultaneously however, the tourism authority in Malta commissioned an economic study proving that tourism has continued to be a prime industry.

Subsequently in 1999 the Malta Tourism Authority (MTCE 2012) was set up under the Ministry of Tourism Culture and the Environment. Malta became more accessible to the main European hubs, with connections by chartered and scheduled flights to 48 countries. MTA’s 2002-2004 Strategic Plan was published and aimed to move away from ‘mass tourism’ and attract niche markets such as the MICE, English language learning, cultural and sports tourism markets, like diving and water sports. Besides these effects, the introduction of low cost air travel (from 2006 onwards) and the use of Information & Communciation Technology (ICT) as a means of booking and promoting Malta continued to help boost overall tourism. Increased use of ICT and in potential visitor autonomy in selecting and booking a holiday, meant a
decrease in the dependence by tour operators and keeping tourism online with international growth trends reflecting a more independent response to travel.

Attracting a different type of tourist has meant there was a need to have better access to the Maltese shores all year round with a more varied product which would appeal to the more discerning and affluent traveller. In this respect when considering the upmarket tourist, the best customer is the repeat customer, because this visitor requires less expensive marketing campaigns and this pertains particularly to the island, “Malta’s newspapers frequently have letters from people who have been to the island twenty or thirty times” (Ioannides et Al 2001, p. 245). Therefore the overall aim should be towards a more sustainably-conscious tourist, combining repeat holidays with high spending, where possible.

From 2007 to 2011 tourism attained record yearly performances mainly attributed to increased air routes and more effective marketing initiatives placing Malta as a year-round destination. MTA statistics illustrated this as arrivals exceeded 1.4 million visitors in 2012, with an expenditure exceeding 1.3 billion euros, a 16% increase on the previous year (The Sunday Times, 2013).

The balance between increase in tourist arrivals and increase in earnings is however delicate yet essential to strike, ensuring maximum return and minimal impact, since “the volumes cannot keep swelling at the risk of increasing environmental damage”. Since according to Pollacco (2003) the one million saturation mark has already been reached and exceeded, negative impacts were increasingly evident. Considerations therefore, have to be put into focus by
a “limited growth scenario” (Pollacco 2003, p. 286) in order to ensure long-term and the best possible level of sustainability.

According to studies done by the MTA’s Research Unit, tourism has seen a steady growth year after year and it now accounts for 29% of the GNP and the largest contributor to the market services sector. Tourism nowadays accounts for 22% of government income, 11% of imports and outflows and 17% of full-time equivalent employment (MTCE, 2012)

The Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands 2012-2016 (MTCE, 2012b) prime goal is to ensure that tourism works towards the sustainable development of Malta’s tourism industry and consequently the tourism industry needs to adapt respectively as tourism trends evolve.

The 2012-2016 Tourism Policy’s main objectives are:

- **To increase visitor traffic over the shoulder months by developing Malta as a city-break destination.**

- **Identify the markets that can deliver the highest potential and encourage traffic by offering year-round accessibility to the island.**

- **Approach a variety of source markets with a mix of tourism interests keen on the niche market approach.**

On reflection Ioannides et Al (2001, p. 246) statement ten years back demonstrates some truth that “the Maltese policy of emphasizing luxury tourism appears environmentally and economically flawed”. Therefore recent efforts have been towards upgrading the product by renovating existing
accommodation rather than constructing new developments and by focusing on different markets and areas in Malta, taking a sustainable long term approach.

One of the key new initiatives has been towards focusing on emerging economies such as the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and in particular the Russian market. This is a potential secondary market and therefore as mentioned in the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy, Air Malta, the national carrier, plans to increase connectivity. The issuance of Visas for Russians travelling to Malta has also been addressed. Air Malta’s will be increasing its seat capacity by 50% to and from St. Petersburg in Russia and therefore looks to attain 82,700 Russian visitors. Flights to Russia began in 1996 and over the past 10 years the market has grown substantially generating almost 370,000 passengers. Last year in 2012, Air Malta carried 50,000 scheduled passengers to and from Russia, representing an increase of over 16% compared to the year before (Il-Bizzilla, Air Malta In Flight Magazine, 2013).
Event Tourism in Malta

Event tourism is another key area for development. Malta has developed an eclectic and appealing calendar of events of world class music, cultural and sporting events (MTCE, 2012a). Although the government’s investment in this area is and remains critical as one has to acknowledge the efforts of the private and voluntary sectors in organising events. Some of the events that attract foreign audiences are the Jazz Festival, the Malta Music Week (comprising of the Isle of MTV), The Malta Marathon, Notte Bianca, the Manoel Theatre Opera Season, the Fireworks Festival and the Rolex Middle Sea Race. The MTA collaborates with other agencies and government departments in supporting events and gives financial support to two schemes; one scheme supports events organized by local government and the other supports sports organizations which host international tournaments or training camps in Malta. Since many of the sports events take place over the winter months, this helps combat seasonality by attracting business in the lean period such as the Valletta 2018 ECOC plans to achieve.
The 2012-2016 Tourism Policy stipulates an array of strategies:

- **Identifying the source markets that would appeal to the events organized.**
- Designing an event calendar that will comprise all major cultural, musical and sporting events.
- **Working with tour operators or special travel groups that would be interested in promoting the event.**
- **Encouraging better marketing strategies for tourists who happen to be visiting.**
- **Inviting journalists to cover major events and use media services to promote events overseas** (MTCE, 2012a).

The 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (MTCE, 2012a) notes that Malta’s efforts to concentrate on sponsoring events organized by the private sector and NGOs will take place as long as such events generate additional tourism business and better the tourism product. The government and MTA will continue to organize the non-paying major events even though they may not yield much economic return to a private investor. Better synergies between MTA, Heritage Malta, visitor attraction centres and theatre boards help maintain an updated calendar of events that can be marketed by MTA.

**Summary**

Malta’s tourism growth over four decades, albeit changes, has been exponential. Malta’s tourism industry began in the mid 50’s with a dependency on the lower-end UK market and therefore suffered issues associated with mass tourism such as seasonality and environmental problems.

The 1980’s Master Plan worked on addressing these issues and worked towards attracting a more discerning and affluent market but this happened to be a more cultural tourist off-setting the larger spending markets.
When MTA was set up in 1999 a strategic plan towards developing niche markets was the key focus. Later the introduction of low cost airlines and MTA’s concerted plan to develop along recent market trends gave tourism a new boost. More recent years saw record performances in tourist arrivals and spend but the question still remains as how to maximize productivity and minimize impact focusing on the importance of a more sustainable approach to operations and development.

The Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands advocates competitiveness through a more quality product. All these policies aim to improve and sustain Malta’s tourism market in the longer term and to support a more discerning tourist which requires better quality products that are more environmentally sustainable. The Rolex Middle Sea Race is an example case in point. The event fits well into the MTA’s strategy to encourage a more diverse and discerning market while focusing on using Malta’s natural resources towards a more sustainable approach. However it is a market that is still in its infancy and one that still remains to prove itself and therefore the focus of this research.
2:2:2 The Development of Sports Tourism and Sport Events

Despite such positive sentiments sports tourism is difficult to define as it is a growing market and falls under many categories. The earliest records of Sports Tourism date back as far as the Olympic Games in Greece in 776BC. Today, “Sports and Tourism are now inextricably linked, and as globalization advances, new and exciting possibilities are opening up to enrich touristic experiences through sport and enhance sport development through tourism” (Mac Cannell, 1976).

Weed and Bull (2009) divided Sports Tourism into 5 different types:
1. Tourism with Sports Content
2. Sports participation tourism
3. Sports training
4. Sports events
5. Luxury Sports tourism

The active and passive distinction is also a concept explored and in the nine – category matrix in Figure 2.6. Weed and Bull (2009) illustrate that we can see the level of activity versus the level of competitiveness. At one axis (The top left hand corner) are where the recreational activities are found such as spa tourism while at the other axis point (the bottom right hand corner) the more competitive sports such as ocean yacht racing can be found.
### Sport Tourist behaviour and concepts:

The ‘Sport Tourist’ spends much time, money and energy fulfilling his or her sports interests or hobbies and therefore wishes to connect with like-minded people. Sports tourism therefore requires a delicate balance or as Weed & Bull (2009, p. 15) note, “a unique interaction of activity, people and place”. A sport tourist choice or travel destination is mainly based on their participation or

---

**Figure 2.6: Model of Adventure, health and sports tourism**

Source: Adapted from Hall’s (1992a) cited Weed & Bull (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Less active</th>
<th>More active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Tourism</td>
<td>(eg. spa tourism, health travel)</td>
<td>Health Tourism (eg. fitness retreats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure Travel</td>
<td>(eg. yacht chartering)</td>
<td>Tourism Activities which contains elements of health sport and adventure (eg. cycling, sea-kayaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Tourism</td>
<td>(eg. spectating)</td>
<td>Sports Tourism (eg. lawn bowls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Tourism</td>
<td>(eg. ocean racing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Adventure Tourism (eg. white-water rafting, hiking, SCUBA diving)
interest to watch an organized sport event as opposed to the destination being the first preference.

The individual’s decision to travel is often based on his or her perceptions of the destination, and as to what extent it can fulfill expectations towards catering for the persons sporting need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary characteristics</th>
<th>Incidental</th>
<th>Sporadic</th>
<th>Occasional</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Committed</th>
<th>Driven</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making factors</td>
<td>Impromptu</td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>Can be determining factor</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation factors</td>
<td>Fun or duty to others</td>
<td>If convenient</td>
<td>Welcome addition to tourism experience</td>
<td>Significant part of experience</td>
<td>Central to experience</td>
<td>Often sole reason for travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-participation factors</td>
<td>Prefer relaxation non-activity</td>
<td>Easily constrained or put off. Not essential to life profile</td>
<td>Many commitment preferences</td>
<td>Money or time constraints</td>
<td>Only unforeseen or significant constraints</td>
<td>Injury, illness or fear of illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical group profile</td>
<td>Family groups</td>
<td>Family and friendship groups</td>
<td>Often friendship or business groups</td>
<td>Group or individuals</td>
<td>Invariably groups of like-minded people</td>
<td>Elite groups and individuals with support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Sport is insignificant</td>
<td>Sport is non-essential. Like but not a priority</td>
<td>Sport is not essential but significant</td>
<td>Sport is important</td>
<td>Sport is a defining part of life</td>
<td>Sport is professionally significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Expenditure</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Minimal except sporadic interest</td>
<td>High on occasions</td>
<td>Considerable</td>
<td>Extremely high and consistent</td>
<td>Extremely significant. Funding support from others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.7: Sports tourism continuum

Source: Adapted from (Jackson and Weed, 2003 cited by Weed and Bull 2009 p. 112)

Figure 2.7 is developed from empirical research undertaken by Weed and Bull (2009). It maps incidental sports participation on general holidays through the
various levels of commitment. The idea is built on the basic concept from the former English Sports Council “Sports Development Continuum” which maps the movement of sports participation from the Introductory Foundation Level, through Participation and Performance, to the Elite Excellency level.

In the long term, sports tourists are an opportunity for a destination. “The cost of retaining re-visitors is less than attracting new ones” and this is particularly the case with regards to the long-term benefits of a host destination, “to persuade the event participants to stay beyond the period of the event or to attract them to revisit as a non-sport tourist.” (Chalip and Mc Guirty, 2004 cited in Chen and Funk, 2010) Often there are a number of factors that will affect the re-visit decision based on prior travel motivation, past behaviour, satisfaction, perceived value and attractiveness.

**Sports Event Tourism**

Sports tourism is now a well-established niche tourism segment. A large number of cities, regions and countries are using sport initiatives to enhance their image particularly with regards tourism. Smith (2005) explores such the idea of “sport re-imaging” with sport as display as opposed to sport as play. Sport re-imaging pertains to the process whereby a government alone or in partnership with the private sector capitalizes on sport to develop the image of a destination. This can often be seen through promotional literature as part of the marketing of a place but in this case it applies to a thorough approach where sport is the main focus towards image change. As referred to earlier in the event tourism section, Chalip (2003) discusses the concept of co-branding. Were success relates to the relationship between the destination and the image of the event staged. The
compatibility between the two is an important consideration and therefore keeping links are essential. Yet according to Chalip et al (2003) as cited by Smith (2005) there is no proof that such an image upgrade could directly affect tourism visitation.

Clearly as part of a broader understanding of sports tourism, sporting events play an important and ever increasing role within this growing sector of tourism markets. Sports events are a one-off real life experience which can never be repeated “every event is a unique blending of its duration, setting, management and people” (Getz, 1997, cited by Hallman and Breuer, 2010).

Sports events are today acknowledged as one of the most effective marketing tools as it deals with the relationship between the images of the sports events and the destination identified. Smith (2005, cited by Hallmann & Breuer, 2010) also considered that these events do not only appeal to sports tourists but can have a broader tourist audience and wider participation. In this respect sports events can have many positive connotations leading to a positive outcome for destination cities or regions. It is also possible that the destination can provide a tool for the promotion of a sport event, which in turn might help towards repeat visitation to the destination and sport event.

Sport event image depends on the event type, the event characteristics and individual factors that refer to the value of the image such as its size, status, history, venue and promotional worth. According to Horn and Zemann (2002) cited by Hallmann & Breuer (2010), the size of the destination plays a very important part as apparently smaller destinations tend to benefit favourably. An event image can impact a destination in particular when the event has a higher
profile than the destination. Consequently sport sponsorship activity is often applied here towards enhancing brand awareness, the sport event and/or destination.

As an example of this is the Spanish city of Barcelona which has seen a tremendous rise in tourist visits from 3.8 million people in 1990 to 9.1 million people in 2003. One of the reasons is due to the Olympic Games in 1992. Barcelona’s transformation of the city occurred through the upgrading of its industrial north coast to a coastline full of landmarks built by renowned architects which was part of the successful development towards the Olympics and broader city planning and regeneration objectives. This therefore presented the world with a whole new Barcelona (Smith, 2005). Today, more than 20 years later, Barcelona’s successful branding through its sports events has shown long-lasting effects.

On a less global dimension, small-scale sports events include “regular season sporting competition, international sporting fixtures, domestic competitions, Masters or disabled sports and the like” (Highman, 1999 p. 87 cited by Ritchie, 2005). The distinction between small-scale and hallmark events is not simply related to the event, but also related to the fact that regular season games do not tax the resources of the host city in the same manner as hosting a mega event (Gibson et al, 2003, cited in Ritchie 2005 p.160). Therefore, smaller events use existing infrastructure, lower investment of funds, help minimize seasonality, and are more manageable than larger ‘hallmark events’. These smaller events can be just as important for developing sports tourism in a region and can provide good marketing and economic benefits to small destination regions. Apart from favouring the destination’s existing infrastructure and
resources, it can also assist in reducing displacement for visitors and locals and other costs linked with hosting larger events (Ritchie, 2005).

Summary

Sport as part of a broader tourism industry is now clearly established as a specific market and a large successful sector. As such the sports tourism sector has established some clear characteristics which distinguish and distance the sector from more general tourist characteristics.

Understanding what stimulates one to travel in order to participate in sports and what pushes one to select a destination is of key importance towards building a successful sports tourism destination. Therefore the concept towards retaining re-visitors following a sports event is crucial as it is a lot more beneficial and much less costly than attracting new ones. The ability to persuade the event participant to stay beyond the event or attract them to revisit as a non-sport tourist is equally valuable in this respect.

Smaller scale events are more manageable than hallmark events because they can assist a destination by minimizing seasonality, lowering investment of funds and using existing infrastructure. Smaller destinations tend to benefit favourably from sports events as they acknowledge their value as one of the most effective marketing tools; the image of a sport and destination referred to as co-branding; proving that it is of a great economic advantage for Malta to market the RMSR.

These notions highlight and provide an important context for the RMSR in Malta. The event is now an established sporting fixture in the Maltese tourism event calendar as it now contributes to the overall Maltese tourist product by both
contributing to sports tourism and event tourism. In what order and what context and whether it provides more positive or negative benefits are still questions that largely remain at best ambiguous. Again the issues highlighted here can provide a contextual back drop from which research on the RMSR can be further, compared, analysed and evaluated.
2.2.3 Sport Tourism in Malta

The development and potential of sports tourism as part of Malta’s diversification strategy began through focusing on niche markets towards combating seasonality. As a result the then Malta’s National Tourist Organization (1997) began to promote a wide range of sports events and activities to foreign tourists. In 2009 MTA entered into an agreement with the Malta Sports Council (Kunsill Malti għall-Isport, KMS) a body established by the Maltese Government to serve as the authority for sport locally to introduce a Sports Tourism Incentive Scheme.

The scheme which is government-backed amounts to 350,000 euros annually and funding offers a grant to every non-profit sports organization registered with KMS. The scope of this scheme is to help improve the overall standard of sport in Malta as well as for tourism purposes. The amount offers an array of incentives but largely depends on the number of bed nights it generates. Successful candidates receive a subsidy of 3 euro per bed for every person it attracts for sports-related activities during the peak season, 5 euro for the off-peak season and 2 euro for attracting visitors to Gozo.

In 2010 the Sports Tourism market including diving, attracted over 76,000 visitors. Weed and Bull (2009) remarked that many European destinations would be interested in visiting Malta for sports reasons since it has a temperate climate all year round. Its convenient location only a short flight away, makes it an ideal destination for a short break or sports event. The main markets identified are diving, yachting, power boating, golf, football. These markets are ideal for both the incidental and sporadic tourist.
Consequently, Malta’s ability to build its sports tourism market over the past few years has nevertheless been significant. The country has hosted a number of international events including the World Offshore Powerboat Racing Grand Prix, a senior ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) Tennis Tournament, the Small Nation Games, the Malta Marathon, the World Paralympics, the Small Nations Games and several editions of Jeux Sans Frontières. Participation in the qualifying rounds of the World Cup have brought teams and their supporters to Malta, specifically with the Malta Ireland match in 1994 attracting 3,000 visiting spectators. The most visited sports events in Malta are football, horse-racing, bowls (bocci) and the marathon (MTCE 2012). Weed and Bull (2009) also suggest that it is evident that such events will often have a wider tourism impact as they will attract not only the competitors but also their families who can combine an event with a holiday.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Share</th>
<th>Water sports (excl. diving)</th>
<th>Walking/Hiking</th>
<th>Climbing</th>
<th>Golf</th>
<th>Attend sport events</th>
<th>Participate in sport events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic Countries</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep of Ireland</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.8: The Profile of the Sport Tourist visiting Malta in 2010

Source: Research Unit, MTCE 2012.
This table 2.8 above shows percentages of the variety of sports tourists originating from the different countries visiting Malta to attend sports activities.

This socio demographic profile of tourists participating in or attending sports events in 2010, demonstrates that the average sports tourist is married, average age of forty nine and earns an average income of 2,500 euro a month. The majority of tourists, 70%, find out information and book their trips over the internet. Six out of ten sports tourists were in Malta for the first time and 40% were returned visitors. The UK had the highest share of returned visitors at 61%. The largest share of tourists based their decision to visit Malta on recommendations from friends and family. Almost half booked a non-package type trip and the majority of sports tourists stayed in a four star hotel. 93% of visitors said they would recommend Malta for its hospitality, enjoyable atmosphere, good weather and variety of things to do especially cultural-wise. 77% intend to visit Malta again saying they found it enjoyable, relaxing and friendly. Whereas the negative comments were that Malta has a poor road infrastructure, transportation service, lack of cleanliness and is over-developed. Thus research demonstrates that sport tourism, its facilities, support infrastructure and customer feedback provide a positive platform from which to develop such markets within Malta (MTCE 2012)

An example of a strong sports tourism sector that has proven successful is the Land Rover Malta Marathon which saw a record number of participants with 403 full marathoners and 2,385 half marathoners and walkathon participants in 2013. The increase was up by as much as 25% with 560 more participants than 2012. In turn there is also an expected increase in numbers for 2014. The growth in marathon numbers is slowly developing amongst the Maltese and this
can be seen from the 28% increase in Maltese participating in the marathon, from 1,543 participants in 2012, to 1,980 participants in 2013.

According to the race director, Mr Joe Micallef, MTA take an active part in promoting the event as part of the sports calendar. As a result, an increase of 22% of foreign participants, from 1,014 in 2012, to 1,236 in 2013 occurred. It is forecasted that 2014 should see a total of more than 3,637 participants. The Malta Marathon has demonstrated according to Mr Micallef, “a great potential to grow further both in the number of local and foreign participants.” In this context this year saw a couple of interesting market growths in particular areas such as the American and Japanese markets, with fifty Americans and thirty six Japanese participants.

Diving is by far Malta’s largest sports tourism niche market with as many as 60,000 tourists visiting Malta for SCUBA diving purposes in 2009 and 57,000 in 2010. Malta’s reputation world-wide as a superior diving destination has been developing steadily for years through its support from the government, MTA and private stakeholder’s investment in this business. Good water quality around Maltese shores has also largely contributed to this growth. Two diving masters have been created in order to enhance the diver’s experience in Maltese waters.

‘Luxury Sports Tourism’ in Malta

According to Weed and Bull (2009) much of Malta’s sports tourism does not fall under the ‘luxury sports tourism category’. Back in the 1990’s, Malta’s Structure Plan had called for four or five golf course proposals, following the recommendations of the Golf Development Study. Marwick (2000) noted that golf courses attract visitors to the island during the winter months therefore
lengthening the tourism season. Developments of golf courses help embellish derelict areas, increase competitiveness amongst other destinations and if well-marketed help attract high spenders. Yet due to the islands water shortage issue and lack of green or agricultural space proposals were declined as they were considered not to be in line with the development of sustainable tourism (Marwick 2000).

The current Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands mentions opportunities for growth in a range of sporting activities including, climbing tourism, cycling tourism, water sports, beach volley tournaments, billiard tournaments, trekking and related initiatives such as geocaching (MTCE, 2013). Arrivals for climbing tourism in Malta grew 50 fold “between 2005 and 2011, with an average of 25 climbers every week in 2011”. Apparently numbers ‘hit new heights’ after a visit from two of the world’s most famous rock-climbers, Sonnie Trotter and Tommy Caldwell choose to explore Comino and Gozo for new experiences.
The tourism policy notes the following actions to address the issues it faces with sports tourism:

- Encourage support towards local Sports Associations in their efforts to attract foreign sports teams to carry out sports camps.
- Seek the co-operation of MIA (Malta International Airport) and tourism stakeholders towards setting up a strategy for sports camps during the winter months.
- Provide appropriate accommodation by licensing for dormitories in school.
- Work together with tour operators who specialize in sports tourism by strengthening their marketing access at tourism fairs.
- Organize seminars and networking initiatives for local associations and tourism stakeholders towards encouraging co-operation.
- Seek to identify sports markets which will support existing sports facilities.
- Endeavour to extend current training programs for athletes and sports enthusiasts with the help of entrepreneurs, managers and event organizers.
- The government therefore has an important role assisting towards key infrastructural requirements of sports tourism, transport system and water supply.
- It’s environmental planning policies that develop and control the attractiveness of places for sports tourism.
- Sport and tourism policies can encourage sports tourism development and through its relevant agencies to promote it’s appeal overseas (MTCE, 2013).

The importance of linking both sports and tourism bodies is of ultimate importance if sports tourism is to develop in Malta. In this respect the small-scale nature of the administration locally should make it easier to co-ordinate links and discuss issues amongst stakeholders (Weed and Bull, 2009).
2.2.4 Marine and Nautical Tourism

Europe’s coasts offer a rich maritime heritage, steeped in tradition and culture with a coastline and seas that are so varied and scenic. Its maritime spaces and coasts are central to its well-being and prosperity, as they have provided trade routes, climate regulators, sources of food, energy and resources. The EU’s maritime region accounts for about 40% of its GDP and population. Tourism contributes to a substantial part of this impact, employing more than 2.36 million people representing 1.1% of total EU employment. As an example 51% of all hotel beds in Europe are to be found on these coasts. Consequently, working towards a more sustainable approach in these regions is of ultimate importance in order to guarantee a better future (EU Commission 2011). “Ocean and coastal tourism is widely regarded as one of the fastest growing areas of contemporary tourism” (Hall and Page, 2002 p. 283)

Aware of the impacts of such tourism in the region, the European Commission is in the progress of setting up strategies to work towards a more sustainably-conscious coastal region. The prime areas for the development of a European Maritime and Coastal Tourism strategy are highlighted in the Maritime Policy for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea 2011. The EU Commission Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries set up policies to:

- Promote the competitiveness of the sector
- Support responsible and high-quality tourism
- Boost the image of Europe, offering a good variety of high-quality sustainable destinations
- Maximize the potential of EU financial support to implement the goals towards a sustainable high quality tourism product.
In May 2012 the European Commission representation in Malta set up a public consultation program aimed at local Maltese stakeholders to formulate better knowledge on the challenges and opportunities for Maritime and Coastal Tourism in Europe. Respondents classified non-beach recreational tourism such as nautical boating as very important. The discussion focused on Maritime Spatial Planning, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and the ‘Blue Growth Strategy’\(^2\). The discussion was concerned with the environmental sustainability of the European coast, its heritage, issues of seasonality, product diversification and innovation, competitiveness, transport and accessibility, infrastructure and employment opportunities and skills. A follow up to the twelve week Public Consultation by Member States and stakeholders resulted in the annual European Maritime Day Conference held in Malta in May 2013. The conference discussed matters relating to coastal and maritime tourism, based on the integrated maritime policy and blue growth.

The “blue economy” focuses on a clean, healthy and productive marine environment towards the sustainable use of marine resources.

The major challenges identified were the issues of high seasonality in the region as traditionally most people take holidays over the summer months causing issues related to ‘mass tourism’. Since many establishments close in the off season this tends to effect the job market and skills development within the sector. A lack of communication and networking amongst business clusters have led to a limited entrepreneurial interest and innovation within the sector.

\(^2\) The Blue Growth Strategy is a long term strategy to support growth in the maritime sector. It works towards identifying and tackling challenges from an economic, environmental and social perspective. Highlights synergies between sectoral policies and studies interactions between the different activities in the sector and their potential impact on marine environment and biodiversity. It also helps identify areas of potential growth and assists in removing barriers, encouraging research and innovation and promoting education and training in the sector.
Since destinations outside the EU are becoming stronger competition this makes it harder for the region to survive.

In terms of nautical tourism, marinas are experiencing the need to offer a better quality service through facilities offered. The need to link ports and marinas to city centres and touristic attractions are limited in coastal areas. The lack of public awareness towards the importance of the industry and uncoordinated tourism growth in the region has resulted in much unsustainable touristic development. This unfortunately has led towards obstacles limiting the Blue Growth potential within the region.

Coastal and maritime tourism as the largest single maritime economic activity offers much potential for growth and jobs (EU Commission, 2013) supporting competitiveness and sustainability towards EU 2020 Objectives. During the EMD conference, stakeholders were encouraged to share their knowledge of best practice towards increased employment in the sector by added skills development. Methods towards the development and maintenance of quality product and services offered the need to increase levels of innovation in SME (Small and Medium Enterprise) and promote new niche markets and products which can also be helped through funding within the sector.

Nautical Tourism in particular nautical sport was of particularly interest in conjunction with the area of research taking place. The subject was presented as a method towards boosting European coastal and maritime tourism destinations. Nautical sport delivers a high-quality experience which can help towards overcoming tourism seasonality. It can help improve the SME market, create jobs and wealth for coastal communities and increase profitability as
users will spend 30% more on average. It could also help promote a more sustainable approach towards the environment, local community, jobs and customer choices. Therefore using nautical sports as a vehicle to transform a destination could pertain particularly well with regards the sport of sailing, yacht chartering and yacht racing events.

On a local level Malta has adopted policies through which integration is a basic principle underlying maritime policy. The Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (2012-2016) focuses on key areas such as:

- Assigning of Blue Flag beaches
- Conservation of coastal tourism zones
- Preservation of the best bathing water quality;
- Added opportunities for tourists to explore the underwater marine environment;
- Prevention of looting from marine attraction, wrecks and marine cultural heritage;
- Aid to avoid interferences which can affect the destruction of habitats;
- Directing tourism towards supporting the principles of Natura 2000\(^3\) (MTCE, 2013a).

Malta as a major tourism destination acknowledges the importance of its marine and costal environment and has worked towards achieving high standards with regards to its beach management systems, sewage treatment plants, embellishment of the coastal environment and the protection of its marine biodiversity. Malta is one of the few Mediterranean islands that fully treats its sewage, and has improved waste disposal facilities, initiated educational programs on environmental awareness and has achieved Blue Flag and Beach 3 Natura 2000 is the conservation and awareness towards the sustainable management of local sites.
of Quality for most of its main beaches. Over 15% of hotels in Malta are eco-certified. This has meant that Malta has been able to continue to attract a record number of tourists, as many as 607,000 cruise line passengers in 2012, with each spending an average of 60 euros generating 36 million euros (MTCE, 2012a)

**Summary**

Sports tourism is not, as yet, an essential part of the Maltese culture. The evidence this far does however support the notion that Malta can be an ideal destination for sports as the country’s climate is temperate year-round and easily accessible by air for short breaks. The provision of facilities, however, still remains mixed, perhaps ideal for training camps, yet it would appear that more sophisticated and specialist facilities require more investment and the development of an appropriate accommodation base. Some controversy has also emerged which presents questions on the future direction of development and growth.

In terms of actual sporting activities the most popular sports would be football, horse racing and the marathon. Diving however remains Malta’s largest external sports tourism market with over 60,000 arrivals in 2010. The 2012-2016 tourism policy focuses on the opportunities in climbing tourism, cycling, water sports, off peak beach volley tournaments, billiards, trekking, geo-caching. In this context climbing has grown by 50 fold since it started in 2005. Hiking and biking also appear to be popular past times which are on the rise too. The benefit of such growth in activities has demonstrated a positive outlook. For example the land rover marathon attracted 2,000 tourists in 2013 with an increase of 22%. Sports
events are also perceived as an important area which could encourage families and additional tourist spend.

Sports tourism for Malta is clearly on the policy agenda, water sports, however, not including Diving would appear to remain a rather untapped market sector. The EU has given particular importance towards the need for sustainability, competitiveness and high-quality tourism which has been highlighted through several policies such as the Integrated Maritime Policy and the Blue Growth Strategy. Further research on the financial support given by the EU could help contribute towards the growth potential of this sector.

Implications towards overcoming seasonality issues which effect the environment and job market associated with ‘mass tourism’ are some of the largest concerns. This includes considering a niche market approach towards product diversification and innovation while at the same time utilizing existing infrastructure. Therefore the importance of boosting a destination through nautical sports such as sailing could appear advantageous particularly since the ideal tourist is the sustain-ably conscious one.
2.2.5 Development of Yachting

Yachting as “Luxury Sports Tourism”

Yachts are boats with on-board accommodation, longer than 6 or 7 metres and vary from motor yachts to sail boats, requiring crew or bare boat. Yachting is commonly understood to mean pleasure cruising and since the 19th century it has been considered relatively elite. The motivation originally was to explore the historically-rich seas and it was only after the 1960’s that descriptions from travellers started to appear and crossing the Mediterranean was seen as part of a broader tourist experience. During the development of this type of tourism small fleets of chartered sail boats and flotilla, became increasingly popular as an alternative, rather up-market form of tourist activity which spread to the more exclusive tourist destinations across the Mediterranean and in the north and west of Europe. Concurrently an increase in private vessels became a growing phenomenon mainly due to an increased standard of living.

The first construction built for yachting in the Mediterranean was the tourist development of the Languedoc-Rousillon on the south Mediterranean coast of France. The region from the mouth of the Rhone to the foothills of the Pyrenees was therefore developed and promoted as one of the first pleasure periphery in Europe for yacht-sailing based tourism. A few years later the National Tourist Organisation of Greece based one of their tourism development objectives on yachting. The Balearic Isles also became a suitable destination particularly for the winters as accessibility to the rest of Europe was good and affordable year-round. In Italy the west coast and the coast between Venice and Trieste were established as key yachting destinations. The Croatian coast particularly from
Dubrovnik to Split also became a yachting base and more recently Turkey and the coasts of the Aegean Sea have become known for their best organized marinas.

Yachting falls under the definition of marine tourism as it forms part of all water-based tourism locally carried out on the shoreline.

Marine tourism in the Mediterranean is “certain to grow” relocating the fundamental man-to-sea relationship from the beach to the open sea. Marine tourism still remains a rather costly form of leisure and therefore attracts relatively small numbers of elite visitors. In Malta, “due to its central position in the Mediterranean has historically become very attractive to international yachting, better known for over-wintering rather than a sailing zone”. This reflected earlier efforts by the Maltese tourism authorities, the Maltese Tourism Development Plan of 1989 which foresaw the construction of marinas as part of the effort to enrich tourism on the island at that time.

**Yachting racing world-wide:**

Today several of the world’s coastal regions and cities are bidding to hold some of the largest yacht races as they learn about the value associated towards boosting their destination. Since these events attract a high-quality image based on their sponsorship and media coverage, they often work as vehicle towards transforming a destination. In some regions these events have assisted in reviving old maritime cultures while in others they work as a new mode for attracting enthusiasts and tourists.
Yacht racing falls into two categories, i) the commercially funded professional sailing teams and events; and ii) ‘private owner’ primarily funded fleets racing in a mixture of event types often organised by yacht club programs. The present recession has obviously hit the sport which has meant that only the strongest projects are able to survive. Therefore the most important stakeholders in the industry are discussing how to work together, merge events, re-organise, and strengthen the offer to brands and host venues.

Recognizing the interrelationships between impacts and the success of hosting events will allow destinations to evaluate their benefits in particular with regards public and private investment according to Barker, Page and Meyer (2002). Four case studies on yacht racing are now presented to highlight such effects.

**The America’s Cup Event**

Competition for the America’s Cup dates back to 1851, which makes it the world’s oldest international trophy (Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002). It is unique from many other hallmark events as hosting depends on the event being won in competition rather than being bid for or added to an existing tourism product. The event itself too spans over a six month period.

The City of Auckland in New Zealand became the host of the 2000 America’s Cup. In 1995 team New Zealand defeated America in San Diego and won the rights to host and defend the America’s Cup. New Zealand is a sporting nation and, “Aucklanders are renowned yacht owners with sailing comprising a major recreational pastime (Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002).” Tourism Auckland promotes itself as the ‘City of Sails’ (Lawton and Page, 1997 as cited in Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002) and this is due to the fact that it has one of the world’s
highest amount of boat owners per capita and the city is renowned for sailing, built on a history for hosting maritime events.

The economic success of hosting the America’s Cup amounted to NZ$ 1.3 billion for New Zealand, largely due to the fact that the event lasted 19 weeks and had a lead up of 2 years. There was a NZ$ 85.7 million spend on the America’s Cup Village infrastructure and an income over expenditure of NZ$9 million according to (Rudman, 2000, as cited by Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002). Unfortunately there was no economic or social impact analysis available to measure how the residents benefited financially as a result of the event.

Sailing’s image problems might make it hard for events like the America’s Cup to get their content onto mass-market TV, but the sport still attracts sponsors that other sports can only wish for. This is mainly because the sport has a desirable base of participants and fans as well as a clean and elitist image. Gary Jobson talked about the America’s Cup Opportunities remarking that in small host cities like Fremantle and Auckland, the America’s Cup dominated. In Valencia half the population did not know what was going on and in San Diego the event got a bit lost. Therefore it is very important to inform a city about the event so the host community knows how to react; signage at the airport and the taxi driver asking one whether one is here for the event (Yacht racing, 2012).

The sustainability issue associated with hosting super yachts is an important issue. The topic was discussed in view of the 34th Edition of The America’s Cup in San Francisco in 2013 with the head of sustainability for the America’s Cup Event Authority, Jill Savery. Commitments have been agreed towards delivering a sustainable event, “sustainability means optimizing the social, economic and
environmental impacts of our activities”. The AC34 Sustainability Plan is a super yacht sustainability program that has been voluntarily set up to minimize any potential negative environmental impacts. This plan does not just deal with the environment but has to do with social and economic aspects. This therefore goes to show that yachts visiting also contribute significantly to the local economy by using businesses and offering employment opportunities (McCabe, 2013).

The ongoing high profile campaign building up to the event and other supplementary events at the time attracted the media interest which contributed towards its success as a tourism destination. The opportunity to capitalize on the extensive media coverage and market penetration to a global audience was also exploited. The America’s Cup has helped capture world-wide audiences and markets that were difficult to target or unknown before the Cup (Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002). Its exposure created numerous tourism, trade and investment opportunities. Within 6 months, 4.2 million people were reported as having visited the America’s Cup Village, making it New Zealand's most popular visitor attraction (America’s Cup Village Ltd. AVCL, 2000). Yet “it is less clear who are new visitors and who would have visited anyway but rescheduled their holidays to coincide with attending the event” (Barker, Page and Meyer, 2002).

The true success to the America’s Cup event can only be understood in the long-term. Auckland’s opportunity to host the 2003 America’s Cup was once again a great success encouraging New Zealand to focus on special events as part of its tourism development strategy.

Increased business opportunity as stated by Davies (1996) cited by Allen, O’Toole, Harris and McDonnell (2008 p. 71) is particularly relevant with regards
how the event was able to “illustrate the capacity, innovation and achievements of event participants and or host community.” A good example how Auckland maximized it’s benefits from the America’s Cup Defense in 2000 by integrating its marine industry components and stakeholders through MAREX (Marine Export Group), placing its marine industry at the centre of a range of exciting developments.
Volvo Ocean Race:

In 1997 Volvo bought the Whitbread Around the World Race, now the Volvo Ocean Race (VOR), for approximately US$7.5 million, Twenty million dollars were spent to produce the first VOR held in 2001-2002 and a further 10-15 million dollars to leverage for marketing purposes. Since it is held every four years there is a defined cycle of organization, investment, evaluation and planning. In the first race eight teams competed with their respective syndicates spending 12-20 million dollars each. A race of such magnitude requires that syndicates form to organize and attain sponsorship for each competing yacht. Interested parties are to approach with a proposal. Co-branding among Volvo and the team sponsors can also be developed (Getz, 2008).

The choice of stopovers for the race has standards and has been the same since its Whitbread days but VEM (Volvo Event Management) intends to select ports with a bigger audience, create business-to-business hospitality, and generate revenue. Ports wishing to boost their tourism are therefore able to bid to host part of the race. In the first VOR 10 ports spent between 1 and 1.5 million dollars on their own events and promotions. Volvo enters into a contractual agreement with the host city and their success will then be judged. The “utilization” or “leveraging” of the VOR is about developing relationships, cultivating the media and creating new sales opportunities. The idea is to strengthen the pride and passion for the brand (Getz, 2008).

According to a VOR report on Lisbon, Portugal’s “total impact on production” from its last edition stopover was at 31.5 million euros. Lisbon and the surrounding area of Cascais have invested heavily in attracting sailing events to
the region such as the America’s Cup World Series and the ISAF\textsuperscript{4} Sailing World Championships over the past few years with the hope of attracting a desirable tourism demographic. The Mayor of Lisbon, Antonio Costa commented:

“Welcoming the Volvo Ocean Race to Lisbon for its next editions will again represent a great opportunity to promote the culture and heritage of Lisbon on a global scale” (Yacht racing, 2013)

The 2007 ISAF Sailing World Championships in Cascais, Portugal:

The Cascais Naval Yacht Club has prided themselves in being part of a number of nautical activities. One of the most recent events being the successful bid for the 2007 ISAF Sailing World Championships; the idea to bid for the event was discussed within the team that worked hard to bid for the 2011 America’s Cup.

According to Miguel Magalhaes the President of the Cascais Naval Club (Arruda and Ferrand, 2007) the Club began by analyzing what features the event would require and the necessary conditions that would contribute towards the successful bid for the event. Once this process had been defined the proposal was then put forward to the Government, the Cascais Municipality, the Estoril coast Tourism Office and the Marcascais and the Portuguese Sailing Federation. These offices immediately saw the potential and agreed to back the initiative and affiliate themselves as partners in the event from its inception (Arruda and Ferrand, 2007).

The event was made possible based on already well-established newly renovated infrastructure part of the Cascais Marina at the Club’s premises and

\textsuperscript{4} ISAF- International Sailing Federation is the world governing body for the sport of sailing.
the Cidadela Fort in Cascais. The success of the project was also due to the efforts put in by the Cascais tourist resort centre. The natural environment of strong winds and good sea conditions within the bay helped towards building the region’s reputation amongst the sailing community worldwide. Feedback from the sailors, team members, sporting representatives from the different countries and ISAF officials on the outcome of the event was very positive. This has therefore helped to build a strong image of Portugal as a place to where major sporting events can be held. (Arruda and Ferrand, 2007)

Magalhaes also noted on the fact that the success of the event was due to the honest intentions, good connections between the different stakeholders; the members of the Cascais Naval Club and other clubs in Portugal, the jury members, regatta officials, the various departments that form part of the Cascais Municipality, the Port Captain’s office, the local Police department, the local fishermen and several local and international volunteers (Arruda and Ferrand, 2007). The Cascais Naval Club played a vital role in the success behind the event and as the President of the ISAF remarked that it was, “the greatest sailing event ever prepared for Olympic sailors.”

**Oman Sail**

The Oman Sail, began with government funding and is now growing its own commercial partnerships, and sponsorship sector.

Oman Sail was set up in order to revive Oman’s maritime heritage while at the same time to promote its tourist industry. Oman Sail has contributed to Oman’s
tourism and created a bigger awareness of its sailing heritage by putting on the map as a key maritime centre. Oman Sail received an award at the World Tourism Award Ceremony, part of the World Trade Market in London in November 2012. Oman has attracted top events such as the Extreme Sailing Series, the Laser Worlds and the RC44 regatta. It will also be the venue for the ISAF Sailing World Cup and the host of the ISAF annual conference in 2013. (Yacht racing, 2012a)

Another of Oman Sail’s focus is its youth program; using the sport of sailing to create good citizens. The National Sailing Team Manager for Oman Sail Rashid Al Kindi said they are targeting the youth to get involved with sport because of the positive values of sportsmanship. “Sailing promotes an active and healthy lifestyle… it encourages leadership, teamwork and communication skills… it require self-discipline, integrity, honesty, sincerity, humility, courage and flexibility plus a strong work ethic and the ability to maintain a sense of humour under pressure. This is what our young sailors will learn and keep with them for life.” The aim of the program is to introduce 70,000 Omani youth to sailing by 2020 (Yacht racing, 2012b)

Oman Sail is trying to attract sailing events in off-peak times of the year like the 2013 RC44 Championship that took place in Muscat during the end of January till the beginning of February. Sicily was also part of this tour championship.

In the Oman region, sailing can be seen as an incredibly powerful tool to help promote the nation and it has led countries in Asia and the richer parts of Africa to follow suit. The 2013 “Sailing Arabia – The Tour” will go a long way to establishing the sport in the hearts of the Gulf’s people. (Yacht racing, 2013a)
Several observations world-wide have proven how this new approach to yacht racing can be developed into a successful tourism product. The cases proved that a good venue and climate are essential towards holding such events and therefore that is why the Oman has chosen to bid for events taking place in the off season. Having won awards for this initiative and the ability to attract top sponsors shows a great success. The particular interest to revive the maritime heritage and the focus towards building a stronger awareness of the benefits of youth sailing could be applied in the case of Malta.

The focus given towards better links between the government of the region of Cascais in Portugal and the organization set to host the 2007 ISAF Sailing World Championships. The importance of good connections between different stakeholders was essential towards allowing them to feel responsible for the event. The success of the event was due to the Cascais Tourist Resort who chose to use this newly renovated club facilities and Marina towards a stronger image for Portugal and a place to host major sporting events.

From the perspective of larger events like the America’s Cup and the Volvo Ocean Race tourism, efforts towards attracting these events have proven beneficial yet it is unsure as to whether tourists have chosen to visit specifically. Choosing an innovate way of attracting more fans like stadium sailing and funding from large sponsors has helped give the sport better branding and made it more accessible. Business and employment opportunities like the building of the race village and the increased investment in New Zealand’s marine industry are strong contributors.
The Race Village has now been used as a tourist attraction, a catalyst towards updating infrastructure. Unfortunately some negative impacts associated with larger events can often be felt; pressure is put on a region’s carry capacity level, sometimes even resulting in crime. The sustainability issue from an environmental and social aspect have become increasingly important to these events; making visiting yachts aware of these effects. Encouraging the local community to become more responsible for the event is essential if the local maritime culture is to remain sustainable through the hosting of such events.

Key implications from the above cases can be applied towards developing yacht racing in Malta towards a stronger tourism product.
2.2.6 Yachting in Malta

Throughout history, Malta has been known as a maritime hub and Maltese known as a seafaring nation. During the British colony, the island was used as a naval base and developed into a ship-building destination due to its natural harbours. Its strategic position has been undeniable and has shaped a large part of Malta’s history. Malta is located only two or three days by sea to any other major Mediterranean yachting hubs and enroute to other major cruising destinations. Malta’s varied coastline also makes it attractive for scuba-diving, windsurfing and sailing. This is also supported by fairly good and frequent access to most European cities - with only, on average, a couple of hours flying time with flights operating year-round. Its favourable climate throughout the year, English-speaking, membership of the EU, political stability and safe environment are basic factors towards its success. Its fiscal incentives, skilled labour and quality marinas and yard facilities all contribute towards making Malta an ideal yachting destination for wintering as well as for shorter yachting activities (Sultana, 2012).

The detailed and insightful research on yachting and sailing in Malta however remains fairly limited and there is little hard evidence to prove the value of the yachting industry since there is little available Maltese data on differential spending patterns by a variety of tourist segments and little cost/benefit analysis undertaken (Ioannides et Al 2001). However on a more positive note, yachting is seen as a potential for further and positive growth: “As a group the most affluent visitor to Malta are the yacht owners using Malta as a port of call while sailing the Mediterranean. Although these individuals contribute revenue
through port charges and purchases, they are highly unlikely to use luxury accommodation onshore” (Wilkinson, 1999 cited by Ioannides et Al 2001).

It is estimated that a foreign yacht owner is likely to spend between 4,000 and 6,000 euro a week for a 15 to 20 metre vessel according to the latest report put together on berthing in Malta and Gozo. (Times Of Malta, 2013)

In 2007 seven companies clustered together to form the Super Yacht Industry Network. This network was set up in order to share and gain market intelligence and to explore opportunities with foreign companies. This network was also the local support for after-sales back-up. The Chamber of Commerce nowadays too holds a yachting section which has helped open up business in this industry (Sultana, 2013).

In 2010 Transport Malta, a government authority, was set up to incorporate the Former MMA (Malta Maritime Authority) as well as other transport authorities including a Yachting Directorate. The following year an economic assessment of the super yacht industry was undertaken by Price Waterhouse Coopers and was submitted in April 2011. This report mainly focused on Malta as a wintering destination where yachts spend an average of month months a year taking part in repairs and refits as opposed to the average months day stop over. It is very difficult to estimate what a yacht spends since it depends on its size, number of crew and the purpose of the visit. Yachts often require a variety of services and therefore their economic input usually affects many areas of industry. It can be estimated that the average crew member spends approximately 300 euros a day. There are as many as 213 super yachts registered under the well-recognised Maltese flag, generating 250,000 euros in tax revenue and fees
annually. This has made Malta the largest registrar for ships in Europe with a total of 5,830 vessels (PWC, 2011).

Malta’s current state of play is the result of a huge transformation over the past few years which included the privitisation of much of the yachting sector to attract investment to upgrade the infrastructure and level of service and improve space management. In 2008 Malta’s yards and marinas were privatized.

Malta has also been well-known for its shipbuilding trade which allowed it to develop a good reputation world-wide. Currently, Malta’s shipyard industry is made of four yards; Manoel Island Yacht Yard on Manoel Island in Gzira, Bezzina Shipyard and Cassar Shipyard in Marsa and the largest Palumbo Shipyard in the Grand Harbour (formely known as Malta Super Yachts Services). The hand-over of Malta Super Yacht Services to Neapolitan shipyard Palumbo has brought some international business (Sultana, 2013).

Despite Weed & Bull’s (2009) remark in the earlier section about Malta’s weakness towards ‘luxury sports tourism’, the government’s interest towards the development of yacht marinas over the past few years has, nevertheless, been considerable. Areas like the Msida marina, the Grand Harbour Marina in Birgu and Portomaso at the Hilton project in St. Julians on the east coast highlight the importance of the yachting industry for both competitive and recreational reasons. Unfortunately one of our biggest challenges nowadays is the demand and supply of berths. The marinas mentioned often run short of berths for yachts below 24 metres (Times of Malta, 2013) but plans for seasonal berths and the expansion of Mgarr harbour in Gozo are some of the latest development towards dealing with berthing issues.
The Grand Harbour Marina (GHM), based in Birgu is Camper and Nicholson’s flagship marina. Their presence at the biggest yacht shows and charter boat shows is part of their marketing strategy promoting Malta as a lifestyle and maritime tourism destination. Grand Harbour Marina was one of the reasons for the region’s regeneration giving the locality a new lease of life towards a social and economic upgrade (Portbooker 2012).

Apart from hosting the maxi yachts as part of the RMSR, GHM hosts a 600 mile offshore classic yacht race which was started twelve years ago in 2002 and is in its 11th edition. The “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” began as part of the RMYC’s yachting calendar but due to lack of funds it moved to the Grand Harbour Marina in Birgu. The yacht race takes its name after the 18th century French Admiral, Pierre Andre de Suffren de Saint-Tropez. Hailing from France, he spent his early career in Malta where he received of “Bailli de Suffren” from the Knights of St. John. This yacht race is best known as “the Mediterranean’s most beautiful classic yacht race” and is divided into three legs; St. Tropez – Porto Rotondo(Sardegna) - Trapani (Sicily) - Malta. Yachts participating have to be of either two classes; “Spirit of Tradition” rating under IRC^5 “Vintage” and “Classic” with a CIM^6 rating.

This year the race has attracted some big names with five maxi classic sailing yacht participating June/July 2013; demonstrating its rise in popularity. The yacht race last year highlighted the importance of sustainable maritime tourism, found at both the starting and ending ports of St. Tropez France and Birgu in

---

^2 IRC is a handicapping system for sailboats and yachts managed by the Royal Ocean Racing Club specially for the purposes of racing.

^6 CIM stands for Comite International de la Mediterranee is the rules for the rating and racing of vintage and classic yachts.
Malta. “Recognising close links spanning two centuries, the ports have now officially agreed to work together to promote sustainable tourism in the maritime sector” (Galea Debono, 2012).

Oman’s focus towards nurturing an interest in sailing and the valuable life skills it contributes has also been recognized by a recent initiative the Malta Sail Training Association. This non-profit organization, was recently set up to offer under-privileged children the opportunity to experience the benefits of sailing and the skills it required towards being a responsible crew member. The first event took place in 2012 and its positive outcome has helped draw an increased awareness towards our yachting culture which could eventually strengthen our industry. In turn it has also contributed towards the exposure Malta Tourism Authority specified needs to take place; an essential component for yachting and part of the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands.

Infrastructure to support yachting and sailing is consequently well established however commentators such as Transport Malta suggest it still lacks its desired capacity; with as little as 68% of yards being utilized. Such infrastructure already generated around eight million euro in revenue and highlighted the value of the industry but also the fact that it is not utilized to its full potential as seen in the figure below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Economic Contribution</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Yards</th>
<th>Marina</th>
<th>Surveying</th>
<th>All other industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross output invoiced directly to super yachts (Euro 0,000)</td>
<td>30,605</td>
<td>10,627</td>
<td>3,818</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Gross Value Added (Euro 0,000)</td>
<td>15,120</td>
<td>3,812</td>
<td>2,414</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>6,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect &amp; Induced GVA (Euro 0,000)</td>
<td>10,787</td>
<td>4,334</td>
<td>1,343</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>3,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total GVA (Euro 0,000)</td>
<td>25,907</td>
<td>8,146</td>
<td>3,757</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>9,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct FTE</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect and induced FTE</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity utilized currently</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.9: Economic Contribution of Super Yachts

Source: Transport Malta, 2011.
Therefore based on these figures above, a 10% increase in demand will generate over 62 million euro in revenue and over 83 million euro in with a 50% demand generator.

The 2012 – 2016 Tourism Policy states that, the national strategy in terms of sports tourism views yachting as a segment of particular interest. MTA also plans to continue to promote Malta as a destination by connecting it with Sicily and Tunisia for more varied yachting routes.

MTA’s current marketing initiative to promote yachting includes:

- **Inviting journalists from specialized and lifestyle publications to cover the Rolex Middle Sea Yacht Race.**
- **Hosting journalists in Malta and offering them outdoor activities like sailing around the Maltese Islands.**
- **Featuring adverts of the Rolex Middle Sea Race in prestigious sports related publications such as SportsPro.**
- **Supporting other sailing races such as the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” which begins in St.Tropez and ends in the Grand Harbour in Malta.**
- **Promoting sailing at Outdoor Active Fairs overseas and to Tour Operators.**
- **MTA Germany is creating an online map with GPS coordinates for all yacht related services and yacht marinas on the island.**
- **Support publications on Yachting in Malta.**
- **Provide information on and exposure to the various sailing academies and yacht charter companies (MTCE, 2012a).**
In addition over the past couple of years MTA has sponsored a sailing boat in the UK that takes part in several major races. This campaign acts as a means to use sports to promote the destination” (Long, 2012).

Yacht racing in Malta and the Royal Malta Yacht Club

Some of the earliest records of yacht racing in Malta date back to 1822, the 8th of September Regatta which is still held annually in the Grand Harbour. This regatta was introduced as part of the festivities of Our Lady Victory and to commemorate the epic Great Siege of Malta. Malta prides itself on an extensive calendar of yacht events which includes popular weekend regattas, coastal races, match racing, inshore and offshore races (Appendix 1).

Nonetheless, the main focus of sailing and yacht racing nowadays is centred on The Royal Malta Yacht Club (RMYC). It is one of Europe’s oldest yacht clubs and a founding member of the Malta Sailing Federation. The club dates back as far as 1835 and records show that British Admiralty formally acknowledged iteration in 1873 and in 1921. Fourteen years later the club was formally granted the “Royal” affix. The yacht club moved from Haywharf in Floriana to Couvre Porte on Manoel Island in 1967. The Middle Sea Race was initiated as part of the move to the Manoel Island premises. In 2009 the RMYC moved to new premises at Ta’Xbiex Marina.

The RMYC hosts a calendar of yacht races open to its 600 members only. There are around 60 boats registered but only as few as 10 take part in races on a regular basis. According to Vit (2012) there has been a slump in local race participation. The results of the research show that “there is a gap in perceptions and understanding and that the overall ‘climate’ of support’ does not prioritise
racers." In this respect racers feel that there is not enough effort made to improve the racing experience and that institutionalized priorities override the key interests of the, sailors and racers. The report also shows that apparently there is some awareness of these issues but there seems to be continued unwillingness to change. It suggests that unfortunately the consequences of such failure could lead to withdrawal of sponsorships, decline in memberships and overall participation (Vit, 2012).

Sports organizations also often lack an element of professionalism as their managerial techniques and strategies are not businesslike enough. Such organizations are often faced with performance pressures from their stakeholders, such as members, public or the government. In order to effectively deal with these pressures the key objective to promote success would appear to lie in the need to provide leadership, identify goals, create policies and measure achievements.

According to a report on yacht racing participation in Malta, racers believe that the success for Maltese yachting should aim at attracting new people that conflicts need to be approached as an opportunity to stimulate change and new ideas. Mu Yeh and Taylor (2008, cited in Vit, 2012) support such approaches by suggesting that through a proper governance system activities can be regulated in order to bring benefits to sports organizations.

Vit (2012) also suggested a need for change and this could be brought about by learning more about the needs and expectations of their stakeholders in order to work towards these new and improved strategies. As an example improvements can be made through holding meetings, workshops, discussions and surveys.
The author does however qualify such approaches by saying that strong institutional barriers, particularly in Malta, can clearly derail more contemporary and innovative approaches to support modern sailing and yachting operations and events.

The RMYC is best known as the home of the Rolex Middle Sea Yacht Race which attracts international sailing professionals from around the globe. Income for the Club is mainly generated through the sponsorship of local races but the sponsorship from Rolex for the RMSR is the largest contributor by far. Rolex invests much money in the activities which circle this race.

U-Sail is another initiative that was set up by one of the members with the interest to develop sail coach training for regatta sailing. The Carinthian sailing club in the UK also organizes sailing charter holidays in Malta in conjunction with the RMYC.

The Euromed Championship is yet another yachting event organized by Malta’s Young Sailors and takes place in December attracting aspiring international sailors and their families. Malta has also attracted other international yachting events; The Powerboat P1 World Championship, which since 2009 no longer takes place in Malta. Undoubtedly the most renowned of all yacht races in Malta is by far the Rolex Middle Sea Yacht Race (RMSR); it is no longer just a part of the RMYC (Royal Malta Yacht Club) program but an essential role in the international professional sailing calendar.
Summary

Yachting and sailing albeit small but growing market segments, are now well-established parts of the tourism industry of Malta. In this respect, Yachting may offer one of the best opportunities for diversifying the traditional tourism product of the Maltese Islands. In this respect, Malta’s interest in developing its yachting sector has been in progress for many years based on its maritime culture. Its infrastructure is fairly mature and sufficient but unfortunately there remains issues for marinas that face lack of berthing for yachts below 24 metres. Despite this however the latest tourism policy looks at encouraging yachting and yacht racing such as the RMSR and the “Trophee Bailli du Suffren”.

Since many regions and cities world-wide are choosing sailing, in particular yacht racing events to boost their destinations many lessons could be learnt and applied to Malta’s status. From a branding point of view big sponsors like Rolls Royce and Rolex in the case on the Middle Sea Race in Malta have much to benefit. The coverage such events attract add a valuable interest to an events calendar. In the case of the Oman, they have been able to attract off peak events which could also apply to Malta. Observing how the Oman has branded itself on sailing through its successful approach towards sporting business development strategies.

Creating better links between the government and stakeholders while making everyone feel responsible for such events will create a more sustainable approach towards similar events in the long-term. Organisational issues experienced due to a lack of communication between committee members. The successful execution of such events can therefore build a strong image of the
yachting industry encouraging more events as in the case of Cascais in Portugal.

Such events could become the catalyst towards updating new infrastructure or creating a new attraction like the America’s Cup Village in Auckland. Job creation and the business opportunities that could eventuate towards demonstrating the industry’s capabilities could be applied towards Malta. In the case of existing facilities and infrastructure most is adequate and there is even room for growth in particular with regards local shipyards.

Although Malta is a seafaring nation yachting is not part of the youth culture and more could be done such as in the case of the Oman where they have set up a sail youth program towards building a stronger sailing culture among young Omanis. Exposing youths to the sport by giving better exposure to sailing academies is part of the 2012-2016 Malta Tourism Policy. An active approach towards this local concern was recognized by a recent initiative, the Malta Sail Training Association, offering under-privileged children the opportunity to experience the benefits of sailing as a life skill. Building a yachting culture among its youths could eventually strengthen our industry and our society in turn.

An innovative response towards attracting locals and tourists is by making the sport more accessible to the public. This could be done by allowing them to educate and entertain through stadium sailing a similar concept to watching football and formula one racing on the big screen. Attracting other coinciding events to take place while drawing interest from other international parties to collaborate on similar yacht events could help increase awareness, popularity
and the importance of yachting as a sustainable and innovative approach to tourism.
2:2:7 The Rolex Middle Sea Race

The Rolex Middle Sea Race is one of the top three offshore yacht races worldwide along with the Sydney to Hobart yacht race and the Fastnet. It is last classic offshore regatta of the season and as Ted Turner (USA), today CEO of Turner Communications (CNN), once wrote, “it must be the most beautiful race course in the world. What other event has an active volcano as a mark of the course?”

This 606 nautical mile yacht race, similar in length to the Fastnet Race, leaves Malta annually towards the end of October. The race heads north from Malta anti-clockwise along the east coast of Sicily past Mount Etna and through the Messina Straits to the Aeolian Islands and Stromboli and then south down the west coast of Sicily towards the islands of Pantelleria and Lampedusa, with the finish line in Malta.
From a yachtsmen’s point of view the race has been termed to be “difficult”, according to Lancellotti, who has sailed the course eleven times (Borg, 2012b). Due to its changeable and demanding conditions it has been likened to a long race consisting of a number of shorter races. The most challenging part full of crucial tactical decisions is undoubtedly early on in the race at the Straits of Messina, where one is constantly faced with currents. Sailing west towards San Vito Lo Capo is where tactical decisions need to be taken. The sail down towards Pantelleria and Lampedusa becomes challenging as the sea is shallow and the waves here are known to be short and steep. The final stretch with strong north-easterly winds is known as one of the calmer legs but still taxing. Every year offers new and unexpected weather conditions, the unpredictability
of the winds and seas that change throughout the race make the race intriguing and challenging for every skilled yachtsmen and this is one of the main reasons that sees such professionals return year after year (Borg, 2012b)

Yachts participate in four classes, ranging from 30 to a 100 foot of the most high tech builds. Throughout history the race has attracted a select number of the most famous yachts, owners and racing crew who have transformed it into a legacy and ‘must do’ for the hardened yachtsman. Last year the race attracted close to 1,000 competitors, guests, race officials and media (RMYC, 2012)

The tracking and blogger system as part of the RMSR website has become very popular with enthusiasts, family and friends of crew and yacht owners who are unable to participate in the race (RMYC, 2012). Real-time yacht tracking technology is capable of accurately reporting the position of participating yachts every fifteen minutes, allowing a desk-bound spectator to have real-time results from the race course. The transmitted data allows viewers to see a yacht’s position overlaid on a chart or Google Earth, along with its latitude and longitude, course and speed over ground, the wind speed and direction in its locality. The data can be manipulated to estimate a yacht’s position on handicap, distance to the finish line and position relative to other yachts in the fleet. Such innovation allows ‘more passive’ supporters of the race to observe a ‘virtual race’ (RMYC, 2012).
Timeline of the Rolex Middle Sea Race

The Rolex Middle Sea Race was conceived in 1967 to celebrate the RMYC new premises at Couvre Porte, Fort Manoel on Manoel Island. It was the result of a sporting challenge between sailing advocates, Jimmy White, Alan Green and the Maltese Ripard brothers. The race therefore aimed to promote a harmonious integration between the British and Maltese which were at the time the two main communities on the island (Borg, 2012a). The first race began in 1968 with only eight yachts participating. Already gaining popularity in the third year; 1970 saw twenty-five yachts participating from seven different countries plus some important names in the sailing scene which helped raise the international status of the race. These early years were important in establishing the value of the race and providing a stimulus for further investment in yachting as a tourist activity and event across Malta (Borg, 2012a).

There was considerable press coverage at this time for example from the Times Of Malta, 1970. On this point a letter dated 15th January, 1971 sent to Mr Drago at the Malta Government Tourist Board from the Honorary Secretary of the RMYC “Map’ and expressed hope that the board would be able to help again with what would undoubtedly be increased expense this year” (Hon Sec, RMYC 1971)

In 1972 the race was suggested to take place anti-clockwise and Martini International Club decided to sponsor the yacht race to assist with funding issues. That same year the Commodore of the yacht club invited Mr Drago, from the MGTB, to be a part of the Middle Sea Yacht Race Committee. This same year Scottish travel agents visited Malta for the yacht race and an article for the
Times of Malta dated 18th October 1972 read “The Middle Sea Race has generated a good volume of work and business to the Manoel Island Shipyard and Yacht Marina and other allied businesses.” (Comm RMYC, 1972) The following year 1973 saw the best entry so far not only in quantity but in the quality of the fleet which saw an impressive collection of competitors, with boats from as far away as Bermuda and Australia participating.

In 1975 the race began in June and issues with the limited berthing space were already prevalent. In 1976 the event was moved to the month of October and the prize-giving was able to be held at the Excelsior Hotel. The Commodore, John Ripard at the time, sent a letter dated 25th March 1976 to the Malta Government Tourist Board asking for “moral and financial support without which it would not have been able to make Malta’s Middle Sea Race the internationally recognized event it has become” (Comm RMYC, 1976).

In 1977 the course was lengthened and in 1979 the race suffered very poor entries with only fifteen yachts registering. In 1982 as many as twenty nations participated. In 1983 Martini lost interest in backing the race which meant that the race could no longer take place. This issue caused substantial damage as it was in 1983 when the race was about to make its big break (Borg, 2012a). The race resumed in 1996 in full force placing itself amongst the top classics of Mediterranean sailing. The Ripard family won the race which gave the RMYC committee renewed fate. The next couple of years saw only a few entries and much bad weather yet 1999 saw three maxi yachts (yachts above 30 metres) participating. For the following three years the RMYC struggled to fund this top yacht event as it was fast building recognition.
In 2000 Rolex sponsored a Rolex Cup event that took place in Malta. This led to the Middle Sea Yacht Race enhancing its status through its sponsorship from Rolex in 2002. Rolex’s international reputation for excellence meant that that this race was now put in a league of its own and part of the world-renowned international Rolex Race Series; Calendar comprising the Rolex Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, the Rolex Fastnet Race, the Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, ISAF Rolex World Sailor of the Year and the Giraglia Rolex Cup. The race now forms part of the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) calendar of events. As a consequence the exposure the race now receives has attracted some of the world’s most renowned yachts and yachting personalities. (Borg, 2012a)

Following involvement from Rolex participation has seen a sharp rise in the numbers and quality of yachts participating. As many as forth-four yachts coming from all corners of the world took part in the race in 2003. The following year saw record entries once again with fifty-five participating yachts and the Commodore at the time, Georges Bonello Du Puis commented that, “These are times with unprecedented heights in all aspects. Besides attracting the largest fleet so far, we succeeded in luring the best boats of the moment. This certainly ensures the Rolex Middle Sea Race with the highest reputation amongst the best regattas in the world” (Sultana, 2009).

2012 saw a record number of entries reaching eight-two yachts in total. Five maxi yachts participated with the majority coming from Italy, the UK and Russia. Line honours was won by the Slovenian Super Maxi Esimit Europa 2, which coincidently was the largest yacht competing, while the trophy for the first overall
in IRC category was won by South African yacht HI Fidelity and in ORC 7 class the Greek yacht Optimum 3 Aspida. It is expected that 2013 will see record entries once again as the race continues to rise in popularity (RMSR, 2013).

**Aspects of the Rolex Middle Sea Race Event**

The race promotes Malta as a lifestyle destination in the Mediterranean. Apart from Rolex’s high profile media coverage, MTA invites international press from lifestyle magazines to cover the story during the race dates. Journalists are invited by MTA to cover the event on various lifestyle and sports magazines.

In 2012, Rolex covered the RMSR in over 500 articles, on the web, in newspapers and magazines worldwide reaching as far as China, Brazil, Argentina and Russia. Some sources include The Luxury Channel, the High Life Supplement Asia Business World, the Russian Robb Report and the National Geographic and well-known yachting sources like Superyacht Times, Sail World, Charter World.com (Appendix 2). Fiona Sanderson from Luxury Channel commented “Malta is a perfect haven to escape the winter blues, as well as being a sailing enthusiast’s dream.” (Sanderson, 2012) Rolex’s 26 minute video shown on Eurosport, BBC World and CNN in over forty countries also adds value to Malta’s brand. As ex-Commodore Georges Bonello Du Puis commented, “Rolex, The Malta Tourism Authority and the Malta Maritime Authority show strong cooperation and work together to make the race an excellent vehicle to promote Malta” (Sultana, 2009).

It is also claimed (Borg, 2012a) that the RMSR is a good opportunity for locals to test their maritime skills up against some of the world’s most professional

---

7 ORC is rule ratings system applied by the Offshore Racing Council while racing and include the limits and defaults for different scoring options based on the hull, rig, sails and crew.
yachtsmen. In this respect there are a number of locals who have made a name for themselves throughout the RMSR history, the longest standing being Arthur Podesta who has participated in all thirty-three editions of the race. The Ripard family who are behind the initiation of the race have also proved to be keen participants.

To encourage local support the RMSR holds a series of events involving various locations, industries and their stakeholders. Most of the events happen in the RMYC Clubhouse, such as the popular crew party with over 1000 crew and locals attending which according to one popular yacht owner who has participated eleven times commented, “the party thrown by the Royal Malta Yacht Club for crew has acquired a mythical status.” (Borg, 2012b) The registration, captain’s briefing and press conference are all held at the RMYC whereas the start event party is held in the Lower Barrakka Gardens and the prize-giving ceremony takes places at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta.

The Grand Hotel Excelsior Hotel in Valletta with its own marina onto Marsamxett Harbour also forms part of the event. The hotel has a policy that berthing is only allowed to clients that have a room booked in the hotel. The hotel makes an exception for the RMSR and allows the RMYC to choose a number of boats to be berthed there on a complimentary basis. The hotel is in the progress of planning a number of events that will be centred on the Marina. It therefore has a keen interest in developing the yachting industry in Malta and understands the value of associating themselves with the RMSR. The economic multiplier for this event filters possibly down to the local Maltese tourist economy in a number of ways.
A local travel agency has been looking after the accommodation, car hire and airport transfers for the past ten years. Ian Tonna, the General Manager of United Travel, commented that when the RMYC first set up the arrangement with his agency they looked after 60% of the foreign travel arrangements. Nowadays it has dropped to 10% due to the fact that there are many returned yachts and therefore less assistance is needed in booking.

Air Malta, Malta’s national airline, gives a special discount of 10% on flights booked by crew, family and friends through the race website. This is therefore an incentive for the crew’s friends and family wishing to visit Malta. It is estimated that the amount of people participating as well as visiting the event reached up to 1,000 as recorded by the RMYC. (RMYC, 2012).

This event, however mainly attracts yacht owners and crew. Yacht owners, captains and crew are considered medium to high net-worth earners and come with a variety of needs ranging from flights to accommodation, shopping to entertainment. Organizers, media and family and friends of overseas participants often stay for a week or longer since the race begins and ends in the same location. There are often many returned crew and yachts every year, as the race prides itself on its unforgettable and hospitable experience. When one returned participant was asked “What makes the Rolex Middle Sea Race so special?” he answered “Friends, a welcoming club, the best boats and sailors around, a splendid Malta, a fabulous start, incredible sights along the course, two volcanoes and challenging seas. At the Rolex Middle Sea Race participating is truly a reward in itself” (Borg, 2012b).
From an economic point of view super yacht racing should be put in a category of its own. According to an Economist and ex-Minister for Finance Edward Scicluna (Sultana, 2009) “studies estimate an average daily spend of 5,000 euro per boat, two-thirds of this on repairs with the rest in utilities and mooring. Average crew daily spend of between 250 and 500 euros. Excluding airfares the average daily expense of visitors related to the event is estimated around 350 euros, which is higher than the average tourist spends during an entire holiday in Malta, with the event possibly leaving fourteen million euro or more.”(Sultana, 2009)

Ben Stuart, General Manager for Grand Harbour Marina (Sultana, 2009) commented on the effect of the RMSR which comes as a, “direct input into the local economy in the form of equipment repair and substantial purchases from local chandlers.” Stuart notes that “a number of containers were shipped to Malta by different boats with sails and other gear for the big event.” Unfortunately due to the lack of data collected for this event one is unable to give any further statistical figures to prove its economic success. “The Rolex Middle Sea Race has become more than just a race, but an icon among sporting challenges and extending the summer season the race comes at the perfect time to attract people to over winter in Malta which could lead to almost six months of dockage and repairs” (Borg, 2012c).

**Highlights of the Rolex Middle Sea Race 2012**

This year the race attracted a number of coinciding events, due to the international ‘Sustainable Maritime Tourism’ agreement between the French port of St. Tropez and Birgu in Malta. This was a direct result of another popular and
upcoming international offshore classic yacht race “The Trophee Bailli du Suffren” mentioned in the earlier section on yachting in Malta.

For the first time in 2012, the Medot Trophy, a race held towards linking the Barcolana, a very popular race from Barcelona to Trieste, to the RMSR. The maxi yacht Esimit Europa II chose to establish the benchmark for the 600 nautical race from Trieste to Malta in time for the RMSR. Igor Sincic commented, (Times of Malta, 2012a) “With the initiation of this world sailing record, we want to inspire other yachts to take part and connect the two regattas.” This therefore allows the Barcolana and the RMSR to collaborate together showing an interest to co-operate with other nations. The Skipper of the Esmit Europa II Jochen Schumann remarked that the RMSR, “is one of the classic races in the Mediterranean Sea and coming to Malta again is just fantastic with all the big boats and narrow entries.” He added that they “were remembering and admiring how the old sailors managed to bring their ships into the ports.” (Times Of Malta, 2012b)

In terms of international exchange the sailing yacht Dinah sailed 3000 miles to compete in the race. Yacht owner and skipper Barry Hurley from Ireland had raced the RMSR several times but this year he brought his own yacht which he sailed doubled-handed. Jim Hennessy the Irish Ambassador to Malta, remarked that he was keen to create a “two way movement of boats” and he is hopeful that Maltese boats with Irish sailors aboard will head north next year for “The Gathering” which is a spectacular year-long celebration of Irish culture and

This year saw a record of five maxi yachts compete for the RMSR Trophy. The majority of international yachts that joined the 2012 fleet for the RMSR came
from Italy with twenty-nine boats, the UK with twelve and quite unexpectedly thirteen yachts crewed by Russians. Eighty-two Russian crew participated in the race and supposedly one of the reasons was due to the recent strength in connectivity set up by Air Malta. There were also seven German boats, five Austrian boats, four Croatian, three Czech, two Irish and single representation from France, Monaco, South Africa, Switzerland, Greece, Gibraltar, Ukraine and Spain (Appendix 3).

Thirteen Russian yachts participated and as a result, a prize for the best placed Russian boat was offered. This would be held in conjunction with the Russian Sailing Federation and therefore offer an added incentive for Russian crewed yachts to participate. (Times of Malta, 2012c)

The growing number of entries for participation, with 2013 again set to be a record year, could appear to cause a difficulties but according to the Commodore “This is a pleasant problem for us having so many foreign boats coming once more for our race” (Borg, 2012d). The Commodore adds that they are “prepared for such a high number of entries and we have also been planning all the required logistics of this event to be ready for any eventuality. Our priority is to accommodate boats in safe berthing”. Issues associated with a lack of berthing close by the Yacht Club is a matter that is in the process of being remedied as the committee is fully aware if the logistic difficulties it has caused for captain and crew participating. Safety precautions against the damage caused by unpredictable north/north-easterly winds that blow into Marsamxett Harbour are being discussed.
From the local business perspective little involvement is evidenced by neighbouring hospitality businesses. The Grand Hotel Excelsior and Grand Harbour Marina at Birgu are responsible for hosting and berthing the larger yachts participating in the race. This arrangement has been taken due to the fact that the RMYC is only able to berth the smaller yachts as there is inadequate berthing space in front of the Yacht Club.

**Summary**

In summary this offshore regatta began in 1968 between the British and Maltese in order to commemorate the move to the new yacht club in Manoel Island and almost immediately saw interest from local and foreign participation. The yacht club needed much support turning to the Malta Tourism Board for funding and sponsorship from Martini International. Ten years later Martini lost interest in sponsoring the race and could no longer take place. The race was then absent from the yacht calendar for over ten years resuming in full force in 1996 as one of the top classics of Mediterranean sailing. Although race participation was on the rise it still suffered issues due to a lack of funding and berthing space.

2002 saw the race’s big break through the sponsorship commitment of Rolex. The race now formed part of the Rolex Series which brought it up to its international status an attracted forty-four yachts to participate. In 2012 the number of participations doubled with as many as eighty two yachts, five maxi yachts, originating from eighteen different countries. Many attendees were repeat visitors, some of whom have been coming every year consecutive for the past ten years.
Rolex as the high profile official sponsoring the RMSR has contributed considerably to the increase in popularity of the race. It’s world-wide media coverage network is second to none, having access to extensive media sources varying from some of the best known luxury, lifestyle and yachting publications to the Rolex 26 minute on the top television channels reaching as many as 40 countries as far as Brazil and China. MTA too host a number of journalists for the start of the race in order for them to cover the event in various lifestyle publications. This media boost is an essential part of the success behind the event and contributes towards better marketing strategies as highlighted in the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands.

The unforgettable start in the Grand Harbour is one of the strong features and key to its scenic value. Incorporating the island of Sicily gives the race course a more varied and challenging aspect as one is faced with unpredictable seas and weather patterns. It allows for the addition of further cruising ground in order to encourage more sailing charter holidays. The new yacht club’s adequate facilities are able to hold the present day participant numbers. Many of the returned participants are satisfied with hospitality and comment on the warm welcome they receive.

Literature is unfortunately limited on the RMSR and there appears to be no factual evidence to suggest that there are operational or other problems associated with the event. However past evidence from other events proves there may be some negative input which might relate to infrastructure, marketing, operations and funding.
One of the biggest issues experienced is the lack of berthing close by the RMYC. Through research dating back to the very beginning years of the race problems with regards adequate berthing have been an ongoing. The severe lack of available berthing space for the under 24 metre yacht has unfortunately stemmed from an industry problem. It has therefore created logistical difficulties for participating yachts. Yet one of the largest issues the race faces is the problematic weather conditions at that time of year adding the need for extra safety precaution measures while yachts are berthed.

The shortage of local professional crew is unfortunately due to the limited exposure most youths have to the sport in general. As far as the event is concerned it only attracts a small select group of locals who are mainly stakeholders, enthusiasts or friends of participants.

So far the event is closely limited to links with Grand Harbour Marina and the Grand Hotel Excelsior. Neighbouring establishments do not participate in celebrations and unfortunately are not aware of the potential benefits they could attain from their involvement.

The cross cultural benefits and potential towards building Malta’s sports event tourism image has been realised by a new initiative this year, the “Medot Trophy”. This regatta helps to link the well-frequented yacht race the “Barcolana” that ends in Trieste to the RMSR in Malta. Another future event, the Malta Knight’s Trophy, aims to include local sailing clubs, offer social events and create business opportunities. Building better yacht chartering holidays, sail training/coaching possibilities and Malta as destination for yachts over the winter
could help create stronger business opportunities for the yachting sector and tourism likewise.

The “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” has helped increase the awareness of yacht racing towards creating stronger cross cultural links between the historic maritime city of Grand Harbour Marina in Birgu in Malta and the jet-set destination of St. Tropez in France. The signing of a twinning agreement between both ports took place on the start day of the RMSR. The Grand Harbour Marina as the home of RMSR maxi yachts and the super yacht arrivals to the area has helped boost regeneration in Birgu while at the same time strengthened Malta’s economy. Commitment towards this agreement has been shown by the Birgu local council, government ambassadors and the MTA. This therefore witnesses a conscious interest towards building a more sustainable maritime tourism industry built on links made through yacht racing as part of our tourism product.
2.3 OVERALL SUMMARY

2:3:1 Key issues and challenges for niche and event tourism

Section two has reviewed the key issues and challenges for the development of overall tourism in Malta and in turn the role and contribution of sports tourism, yachting and sailing and the RMSR in this context. A number of key observations, issues and challenges have emerged from the review and provide a ‘platform’ from which further analysis of the RMSR can be evaluated. These include issues and challenges for a number of tourist market sectors in Malta:

i) observations on general tourism development for Malta,

ii) sailing and yachting development in Malta and

iii) future issues for the RMSR.

i) Tourism in Malta and new market developments:

The literature review has illustrated a number of key issues for the development of tourism in Malta. Evidence from such literature suggests that Islands often suffer isolation, insularity and weak economies and therefore Malta’s choice towards a strong tourism development strategy was the most suitable response to economic growth. Unfortunately Malta alike other popular island destinations in the Mediterranean has been affected by issues related to mass tourism and seasonality. As tourism choices have evolved there has become an intense awareness for a more customized quality product built on a sustainable approach towards tourism. In order for Malta to remain a competitive destination one of its key policies was to develop the concept of product diversification into
new source markets. Accessibility to Malta year-round is a key contributor to its success as a tourism destination.

The development of niche tourism towards attracting a higher spending tourist was originally concerned with the more cultural visitor. Yet over the past few years the trend towards Malta as a sports tourism destination has become increasingly popular due to its temperate climate year round. Events too have been a good contributor towards this success. Malta’s events calendar offers a large number of attractions targeting a variety of tourists visiting for many purposes. Attracting quality tourists to visit Malta is probably among one of the hardest markets to infiltrate yet the RMSR, due to its reputation and media coverage, has been able to attain this successfully.

ii ) Key Yachting issues in sailing and yachting development:

Malta’s location in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea has contributed towards its maritime history and has therefore led to the development of Malta as a yachting hub. The early infrastructural growth that took place through the building of marinas and shipyards demonstrated Malta’s interest towards the development of the yachting sector.

The lack or even non-existent statistical data that the yachting sector generates towards our GDP has created many difficulties in particular with regards an inability to measure its value. Therefore the idea of encouraging SME’s to invest in the industry makes it that more challenging as they are unable to define the benefits that can be gained. In turn this could be a contributing factor towards the lack of quality found in the existent infrastructure, such as the poor state of marina facilities.
The fact that the yachting sector can influence many areas of industry has meant that it is increasingly more difficult to co-ordinate it. In 2007 the Super Yacht Industry Network was set up to encourage local stakeholders to share best practices, gain market intelligence and explore overseas contacts. The publication ‘Yachting in Malta’ has been of a great service to the industry and to those visiting from overseas. Yet unfortunately the loss of communication between local stakeholders still persists nowadays.

Following the privatization of much of the industry in 2008, commitment to quality has become a serious issue. Most marinas and shipyards are not up to standards resulting in many complaints. The lack of a breakwater at Marsamxett Harbour has created many difficulties for Manoel Island Marina and the Royal Malta Yacht Club particularly due to bad weather and heavy winds.

Through literature, there is still room for growth as marinas and yards have not yet reached their full capacity but unfortunately the lack of berthing for yachts 24 metres and below still remains the largest issue effecting many areas of the sailing and yachting sector whether from a recreational or business perspective.

The setting up of Grand Harbour Marina in Birgu, as Malta’s quality marina, saw the positive regeneration of the locality of Birgu. The marina nowadays hosts a yacht race the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” that links St. Tropez in France to Birgu Malta. The maritime history these cities are based on, has been essential towards the promotion of sustainable maritime tourism. The signing of twinning agreement has helped create cross cultural links while at the same time drawing importance to the issue of working towards a more sustainable maritime tourism approach.
Based on national concern for the need of a stronger sailing culture and the benefits it could contribute to society, Grand Harbour Marina set up a non-profit organization, the Malta Sail Training Association aimed towards offering the under-privileged a chance to sail as part of a crew. Such an initiative was created towards encouraging the importance of the sport and consequently the strengthening of Malta’s maritime industry.

Literature has highlighted several issues concerning the development of yachting as a new and emerging market worldwide and therefore MTA has realised its value by adding the sport of sailing to its latest sports tourism portfolio, with Malta as a sailing destination for sail training and charter holidays year round. The decision to couple this leisure activity with other adventure sports towards offering an exciting package are some of the latest marketing strategies put in place by Malta’s sports tourism development plan. MTA makes a point of being present at outdoor and sports fairs, connecting with tour operators towards promoting the sport in the destination.

*Issues for the RMSR:*

The latest tourism policy highlights support given by MTA towards the RMSR and the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” as valuable sports tourism events. Since the RMSR is nowadays one of the top three races in the world and an integral part of the international yacht racing calendar it’s status has been elevated to worldwide recognition.

The coverage this event attracts from both a local and international perspective is very extensive particularly due to Rolex’s media network. Although MTA invites journalists to visit and cover the event in feature magazines overseas,
public awareness through local media coverage still remains rather limited. The start in the Grand Harbour is the ideal setting to promote the island as a top yachting and tourism destination.

The sponsorship of Rolex has not only helped from a promotional point of view placing Malta as a lifestyle destination but the funds have helped the race develop in popularity towards attracting some of the biggest names in yachting. Its successful series of events, although by invitation, have made the RMSR increasingly sought after.

Yet in order to develop the event into a more substantial tourism product available to the local public and overseas visitors, other events need to take place at the same time. With family and friends visiting for the week there is much scope to develop a number of activities alongside. Building the event in several locations could turn it into a national event while the creation of a race week or race village, like what happened in New Zealand as part of the America’s Cup Event.

Unfortunately few of the locations have taken much initiative to capitalize on the event by increasing hospitality within the region. Government and local councils seem to have lost interest and it still remains a question as to whether they are fully aware of the value of the event and the quality of visitor it could attract.

This year’s success in popularity of the classic yacht race the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” has helped strengthen Malta’s position as an ideal destination to host yachting events. It has also encouraged the awareness of Birgu in Malta as a sustainable maritime tourism destination built on its maritime history while helping increase cross cultural connections.
The RMSR as the last race of the yacht calendar has helped lengthen the Maltese summer and yachting season. Due to Malta’s ability to host such an event it can now place itself as an ideal destination to attract similar events.

Issues with funding the event have been prevalent from beginning days. The ten year suspension period of the event due to Martini’s inability to sustain sponsorship placed the event on a very delicate footing. Since its come back and ability to attract Rolex as the main sponsor, this has allowed the event to flourish. The absence of relevant statistical data available has hindered the industry’s growth from a business development investment point of view.

The newly-renovated facilities of the RMYC have also worked as an advantage towards the growth of the event. Better connections between stakeholders and their outlook on optimizing the benefits that could be gained from the event have not yet been fully explored. This event offers a great opportunity towards creating international connections which could later be developed into business opportunities for Malta influencing many areas of the local economy.

The lack of berthing to enable all yachts to be centred in a given space is one of the largest issues the event faces. Unfortunately this problem has persisted since the initiation of the yacht race. Apart from the negatives of making it more logistically challenging for the participants and the organization likewise, it could also offer the opportunity to enable the event to grow on a national level. The issue of berthing has been Malta’s largest problem in the yachting industry for years and both the private and public sector are working towards a method of ramification.
Maximising on benefits that could be gained through better methods like host community participation, which is until this day almost non-existent. Encouraging the host community to feel more responsible; for example in the case of the Valletta 2018 ECOC project which could assist towards a more sustainable approach. It would also assist towards more job creation and employment within the hospitality industry as neighbouring establishments may opt to collaborate with the event by creating particular activities or attractions that coincide.

Other areas of tourism development which have recently emerged have been the significant rise in participation witnessed. Ninety two participants on thirteen yachts demonstrating the Russian market as a valuable niche market interested in sailing and yachting holidays.

The Literature review has encompassed a number of issues and challenges that both reflect general tourism development on Malta and the development of yachting and in turn the issues associated with the RMSR. All these discussion provide a ‘platform’ from which primary data analysis of the event can be benchmarked and future conclusions drawn. These are further discussed in the results and conclusion sections of this research.
Chapter 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research rationale

The purpose for conducting the research was to investigate how the Rolex Middle Sea Race could help towards strengthen Malta’s yachting tourism product. The reason behind undertaking this research was to enquire how further knowledge of the event being explored could be analysed and applied to strengthening the activity of yachting and yacht racing tourism. The RMSR takes place annually in October and forms part of the international yacht racing agenda. It attracts yachting enthusiasts from a variety of nationalities, many returned participants and therefore the ideal opportunity to conduct research during the event program.

The research set out to identify how the RMSR fits as part of Malta’s sports event calendar and likewise as an essential component of the yacht racing program worldwide. Defining what factors have contributed towards its rising popularity and how these attributes can be applied to strengthening Malta’s yachting tourism product. The interview analysis was essential towards defining whether Malta is optimizing the benefits it could gain from the RMSR and how it’s contributing factors could be applied towards improving the tourism product while offering potential opportunities. The scope of the research set out towards gaining insight and better awareness of the subject; “it may not resolve an immediate problem, but will contribute to knowledge in a way that may assist in the solution of future problems” remarked Collis & Hussey (2009).

The research area best dictates the methodology and in this case an inductive qualitative method most suitable since the purpose of the study was to explore
the subject based on the research problem. The tool for gathering this data was in-depth interviews. The dissertation uses an inductive approach because the research questions formulated beginning with “how” and “what” in order to encourage the researcher to extract as much information as possible.

The choice to use an empirical approach towards qualitative methodology using direct and in-depth personal interviews with key stakeholders was essential towards fulfilling the purpose of the research. The data collected from interviews was then analyzed in a neutral situation so that the outcome of the report would offer an honest view of current perceptions on the subject being researched.

Since the research chosen needed to be both valid and current, the initial data collection process took place during a real life event and was followed by more personal interviews hereafter. The event was the ideal occasion to gather a wide range of data and impressions on the topic. The case study approach was therefore advisable. A good case study shows a development in theoretical framework helping to define the correct research design, data collection and main driver towards attaining solutions. This single case study is similar to a single experiment. “The rationale for a single case is representative or typical. Here, the objective is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation… a typical ‘project’ among many different projects” (Yin, 2009, p. 48).

Initiating the research in a wider context was essential towards understanding its position and how it could be developed. The research design and correct choice of methodology assisted with the collection and analysis of data. A rigorous design meant that one is able to keep to the original research objectives while
adding a certain amount of flexibility which would allow for an interesting piece of research work. The research strategy required particular attention in order to ensure research questions were answered correctly and what had been set out to accomplish was covered through this research. The study plan looked at patterns, concepts and ideas that have been discussed in the literature and related them to the findings gathered from the data collection available in order to generate conclusions and further recommendations. The research strategy and appropriate methodology adopted was crucial to ensure the research was undertaken successfully.

A brief plan included:

- Appropriate extensive literature review
- Data collection process
- Analysis of the results gathered through data collection
- Comparative analysis of findings based on the literature
- The critical factors drawn from discussion towards the implications of the research results from a micro and macro perspective.

This process led towards delivering the final implications on the subject under discussion.
3:2 Overview of Research Methodologies

Selecting the most appropriate research method or methods is based on their “suitability to answer the research questions posed, not on the basis of some prior preference for a particular method.” (Veal, 2006 p. 116)

The decision on how to research a topic will be determined by the main research problem. Understanding how the research problem can be tackled with regards the various data sources available and how it can best be analysed. The main issues one needs to consider in selecting a research method are:

- previous research
- accessibility to data available
- resources
- time
- validity, reliability and generalisability
- ethics
- uses of the findings

According to Collis and Hussey (2009 p. 7) “looking at the approach adopted by the researcher can also differentiate research.”

Qualitative techniques involve the need to gather large amounts of in-depth detailed information from few specimens and using interpretative methods of analysis, whereas choosing a quantitative approach to answering ones research questions often involves collecting relatively small amounts of data from larger numbers of cases data and analyzing it through statistical methods. “The main
differences lie in the nature of information collected and the way it is analysed” remarks Veal (2009 p. 99).

“Qualitative research is generally based on the belief that people personally involved in a particular leisure or tourism situation are best placed to describe and explain their experiences or feelings in their own words” (Veal 2009, p.193)

This social research method the study falls under is the reliability test. The objective was to be sure that if at a later stage an investigator followed the same procedures as described by the present researcher, conducting the case study in the same way all over again, the later investigator would arrive at the same findings and conclusions. “The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study” (Yin, 2009, p. 45).

In order to avoid issues at a later stage a ‘case study protocol’ and the development of a ‘case study database’ were necessary. Conducting a pilot study was essential at this stage in order to help develop procedures towards the issues being investigated. This therefore helped avoid bias.
3:3 Discussion on the advantages and disadvantages

“Inductive research methods are developed from the observation of empirical reality; thus general inferences are induced from particular instances” and opposite to the deductive method as stated by Collis & Hussey (2009). Often this method moves from “individual observation to general patterns”. Therefore moving from specific to general, a theory discussed in depth in the following section.

The fact that no similar studies had been previously undertaken meant that an exploratory research method was applied based on the fact that the researcher could not refer to any similar information about the issue. According to Collis and Hussey (2009, p.5),

“The aim of this type of study is to look at patterns, ideas or hypothesis, rather than testing or confirming a hypothesis.”

Techniques used in exploratory studies include case studies, observation and historical analysis and can provide both quantitative and qualitative data. Often these techniques are flexible and therefore more appropriate especially since in this study the data collection needed to be informal yet structured in order to achieve the best possible results. “A case study is preferred in examining contemporary events but when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated.”(Yin, 2009)
**The case study technique:**

Since a single case study is of an empirical nature it can be best described as an ‘exploratory’ one which contains statements about what is to be explored, its purpose and what factors it will be judged on. This case study best fits under the illustrative style and particularly in an organizational theoretical structure. It deals with how an event is structured, functions and performs particularly within the different inter-organizational partnerships.

The information gathered was then applied to the philosophies based on Robert Yin’s case study theory. “To justify using the case study method, you need to go one step further: You need to define a specific, real-life case to represent the abstraction” (Yin 2009, p. 32).

The theory behind this case study is largely of a holistic nature and therefore this global approach could experience difficulties in particular with regards its abstract nature lacking defined measures. The orientation of the study may take on a different perspective of what it was set out to do and address other research questions instead. Therefore an embedded design containing subunits may help avoid this shift happening and offer the opportunity for extensive analysis, enhancing the insights into the case study. This exemplary case study should enable the researcher to conclude as to how valuable these yachting events are towards our tourism product and if other similar activities should be encouraged. In this context the RMSR provided a particularly well defined case example to explore the problems, current operations and future opportunities that an event of this nature can contribute to both local tourism and niche market
development in Malta and to broader perspectives that assess global events and their contribution to tourism in general.

3.4 The sampling framework.

A sample is “a subset of a population” according to Collis and Hussey (2009 p.209) and for the objective of this study a purposeful sampling framework was applied as opposed to random sampling. The difference between quantitative and qualitative sampling according to Veal (2006 p. 294) is that,

“Qualitative sampling does not involve statistical calculation demanding prescribed levels of precision.”

Yet as Henderson (1991, p. 132) cited in Veal (2006 p. 294) states that it aims “to present a working picture of the broader social structure from which the observations are drawn.”

The choice of participants was carefully selected based on the strength of their experience. This sampling framework was part of the snowball method as decisions towards choosing the best participants were supported by a member of the RMYC especially since the event happens once a year and therefore the process could not be repeated. Therefore “Judgemental (and purposeful) sampling, where the researcher makes the decision prior to the commencement of the survey and does not pursue other contacts that may arise during the course of the study” (Collis and Hussey 2009 p.209) was the best way forward.

A balanced number of eight overseas yachtsmen and choice depended on their availability to be interviewed. These samples aimed to produce honest results
based on the fact that there would be no ambiguity and expert professional opinion.

A target sample of eighteen interviewees were identified using purposeful sampling techniques. Since the subject addressed yacht racing as a tourism product and concerned a variety of stakeholders those producing the event and those experiencing the product, the choice on who best to interview was of utmost importance. It was essential that when targeting who to interview, a mix of both foreign and local stakeholders with yachting experience was essential and knowledge of yacht racing events a bonus. Experience in the RMSR was of course an added bonus but not essential. Although fewer people could participate as many as eighteen respondents over a two month period took part.

The majority of interviews took place during the race event, mainly before the race start during the preparation days. as conscious that participants would be more eager before rather than after as they might return tired or need to leave the island. The eight overseas race participants were experienced in yacht racing world-wide, and therefore part of the yachting fraternity. They had been recommended because they had completed the race several times and a couple of them were long-standing members of the RMYC. They consisted of British and Italian participants who had a reasonable degree of fluency in English. The next group chosen to be interviewed were two foreign yachting veterans, who come to Malta every year to watch the race leave, based on nostalgia.

The remaining eight local stakeholders interviewed were divided into 6 key professionals in a broad range of yachting related sectors with executive management skills and expertise in the field; two of which were senior officials
of the RMYC, one working in media for the RMYC, one senior executive part of the larger organisation working at GHM, one other a keen yachtsmen and part of the Malta Chamber of Commerce for Yachting and lastly an executive government official part of Transport Malta. The remaining two out of the eight local stakeholders interviewed were from the tourism industry a senior, official from the MTA and one from MHRA (Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association) both with experience in hospitality, sports and event tourism.

As suggested earlier, all respondents except the two tourism executives gladly participated in the interviews, all keen yachtsmen, well-respected and involved in the industry. The overseas visitors both enthusiasts and participants seemed well experienced in the subject of yacht racing and made a point of participating or supporting the RMSR year after year. According to Veal (2009 p. 295) the chosen sampling type was the stratified or purposeful one where a “selection of a range of cases based on a set of criteria” was essential. In this case with knowledge on yachting and yachting racing.
Interviews mainly took places on board the yachts which were based in a number of venues. Following a request on who to ask for, as recommended by the RMYC, a short briefing on the subject was necessary. Having confirmed their availability to be interviewed at a time that suited them they were reassured it would take thirty minutes. The participants ranged from yacht owners, to captains and skippers to professional race crew.

The interviews were all face to face and none of the participants had seen the interview questions beforehand. They seemed very comfortable with going straight ahead. Some of the interviews took slightly longer than expected but normally all were kept within the time frame decided.

As specified later in the questionnaire design, interview questions were slightly modified, in particular directed at the yachting executives as more precise information could be gathered depending on how the question was worded. Yachting executive interviews mainly took place in the executive’s respective personal office following an appointment. The views points varied depending on their area of expertise and experience in the subject.

Unfortunately the two executives from the Malta tourism sector were unable to follow through with interviews as questions were too industry or case specific and they rather give their own version of the topic. These two tourism executives knew very little about the subject, refused to answer the interview questions but were still included in the interview process in order to obtain a balanced and broad interpretation of the research. Confirming an interview with one of the tourism executives was very difficult but it was so important towards the substance of this study that it could not be avoided. This tourism executive
requested the interview questions be sent by email but after much persuasion an interview took place two months later. The respondent immediately highlighted the fact with regards the serious lack of data on the subject. The researcher got a brief interview of MTA’s position in context to sports tourism, sailing as a new tourism product and MTA’s role in promoting the RMSR, which coincidently is based on Rolex’s efforts, but unfortunately little knowledge on the value or potential of the RMSR (Appendix 8 & 9).

The difficulties with qualitative sampling methods is that it doesn’t involve statistical calculation demanding prescribed levels of precision like quantitative does (Veal 2006 p. 294) but is concerned with trying to present a working picture of the broader social structure from which the observations are drawn. Therefore that is why all steps in qualitative methods need to be well described.

The other interview with the executive from MHRA was immediately very off-putting, not only through the tone of his voice but in the way he delivered his speech, never allowing the researcher to pose any questions. Instead receiving his version of state of yachting in Malta, the acute lack of data collected and concluded by saying that it would be very difficult to measure the success of the event based on the fact that there is nothing to prove it on. Generally however, the choice of participants worked well with each participant fully engaging and contributing with the interview questions.
3:5 Data Analysis

The method of analyzing data depends on the style of data collection or method chosen in this case since the qualitative data is non quantifiable then adopting an interpretative response to analysis is recommended (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The analysis of such data may appear challenging as there is so much primary and secondary data to be analysed in a one to one interview process and in particular on a subject that most participants are very passionate about. With regards data collected on the subject, the most challenging stage was the analysis stage as opposed to the collection since there were no rules to be applied towards the best way to tackle the subject.

The choice to design the study under an interpretive paradigm using non-quantifiable methods was best towards the analysis of the qualitative data. Methods towards reducing the data were essential, “a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards and reorganizes data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified” (Miles and Huberman, 1994 p.11 cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009 p. 167).

The ideal detextualizing method for a rigorous and systematic process of this study was best displayed in a diagrammatic form using several role-ordered matrices. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p.91) cited in Collis & Hussey (2009, p. 171),

“A visual format that presents information systematically, so the user can draw valid conclusions and take needed action”.

147
The main aim of this research focused on drawing out a description of the characteristics that form the most critical issues behind the problem statement (Collis & Hussey, 2009). When analyzing data the researcher chose the quasi-judicial method as suggested by Bromley (1986 cited in Collis & Hussey, 2009 p. 174). It derives its name from the fact that the procedures are drawn from the legal profession and involve applying a rational argument to interpret evidence (Collis & Hussey, 2009). This diagram below illustrates the rules applied to analysing interviews.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bromley’s six rules</th>
<th>Legal equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Investigator reports rules truthfully</td>
<td>Testimony under oath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aims and objectives of the investigation are stated explicitly</td>
<td>Formal charges are laid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Assessment of the achievement of aims and objectives</td>
<td>Presentation of evidence in court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Investigator is properly trained</td>
<td>Legal qualifications required to play formal role in court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The person is placed in his or her ecological (physical, cultural, social, symbolic) context</td>
<td>Extenuating/mitigating circumstances are considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The account is written in good plain English</td>
<td>Case law/understandable to jury/as viewed by reasonable person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Fig 3.1: Table 9.4 Rules for the quasi-judicial method and legal equivalents](image)


Since the interview questions were structured in groups based on the research’s four objectives; the first exploring the role of the RMSR, the second identifying it’s benefits, the third evaluating it’s key challenges and fourth exploring the potential of yachting events as part of a stronger tourism product. There was therefore need for four matrices containing summaries of raw data.
sets to be analysed. Restructuring and presenting the data in the report analysis under each objective was the best method chosen in order to keep the study focused. A summary of the most essential view points of each participant’s interview question was recorded in a concise form and a final summary of all the participant views at the end of each question was presented in the form of key findings. A series of quotations and examples were kept in order to illustrate the findings and give the analysis a sense of dynamism. (Appendices 1-4).

At this stage in the research, the analytical or explanatory stage, facts are understood by “discovering and measuring causal relations among them”. (Collis & Hussey, 2009) Identifying and controlling these critical variables based on characteristic phenomena that can be measured, was essential towards explaining the outcome. In the case of this study it was important to examine and re-examine the data and search for the best explanations in literature to fit the data. “Theory gives qualitative data structure and application” according to Collis & Hussey (2009) and helps create discussion and alternative explanations on the subject. Understanding the patterns that can be hypothesized and ‘tested’ through identifying the beliefs and relating them to theory, creating theories from the data and using lateral thinking by examining and comparing with other concepts.

When writing the analysis report, the best way was to group the people who took part in the interviews; the race participants and veterans together as most of them had similar concepts, the yachting executives as another group and the tourism executives alone. The local stakeholders being the yachting and tourism executives were a bit more of a challenging group to analyse as each person had a very unique viewpoint based on their expertise and experience. The
tourism executives were by far the hardest as they didn’t stick to the interview at all and so couldn’t be included in any of the matrices. The choice where to slot important and relevant information in from the tourism executive’s presentations in response to key findings were brought forward by the rest of the participants. Main findings from the analysis were placed under each objective and later grouped into how they contributed towards tourism, from a micro or macro perspective towards conclusions.
3:6 Interview Design

The most appropriate tool chosen for gathering qualitative data when one wishes to find out how a participant feels or what they think about a topic is through in-depth interview (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It helps one explore data on understanding opinions and seeks to examine the subject more deeply than a questionnaire. “During in-depth interviewing one must be prepared to encourage the respondents to talk, ask supplementary questions and ask respondents to explain their answers” (Veal, 2006 p. 196) This therefore means that there is less structure than a questionnaire-based interview, where each and every interview will be different and unique. Typically the interview would take at least half an hour and since it was so detailed an audio recorder would be used apart from note taking. At a later stage the process of a verbatim transcription from an audio set would need to take place yet only amongst those who agreed to be recorded. The fact that the study would only be able to be answered by a very few people experienced in this specific field, taking place in a restricted amount of time meant that fewer interviews containing more in-depth information to be gathered was necessary. The interview focused on collecting large amounts of specific information relating to a real life event, a case study. The fact that information received would vary considerably and be quite complex with the plan to use the information gathered as a foundation towards planning a larger study at a later stage (Veal, 2006 p. 196).

An added issue with regards in-depth interviews was that often participants would answer more than one question in the same point meaning special attention was needed in order for the participant not to reiterate a point and lose
the flow or momentum. The fact that the interviews took on a life of their own placed them as increasingly more challenging and harder to keep them focused in order to cover all areas in the stipulated time-frame. In the case of the interview some questions were able to be answered more in-depth than others but one of the biggest difficulties faced was keeping the nautical detail to a minimum and focusing it towards the tourism potential. The design style of the interview consisted of fully-worded questions just in case the researcher needed assistance due to the time restriction to interview participants before the race. Drafting the interview questions based around the four research objectives was essential. A printed sheet with interview questions was handed to participants in order to assist those who may have language difficulties in particular. The sheet was then returned as the interview was confidential.

Although participants were interviewed in their own space and time, in order to keep the interview as relaxed as possible, the interviewer needed to maintain a high degree of professionalism particularly to demonstrate who was leading. Beginning by focusing on their personal experiences helped them warm up to the subject, allowing them to feel at ease while encouraging them to talk freely. The main aim was to approach each interview with an open-mind and in particular to keep attentive throughout should quick decisions need to be taken.

It was essential that the interviewer remained impartial to comments made and to never suggest answers (Veal, 2006 p. 196) as it would definitely influence participant responses. Therefore the least intrusive style of intervention giving the interviewers more time for note-taking and for the participants to expresses their feelings as opposed to engaging in debate (Veal, 2006 p. 200).
3:7 Pilot Study

A good pilot study was the first step to making sure the interview would run smoothly. The pilot study is such an important part of the interview protocol because it contributes towards testing its validity. A pilot study should be followed through before embarking on the main data collection exercise as it tests all aspects of the survey such as wording, question sequencing, layout, familiarity with respondents, time and analysis according to Veal (2006 p. 276).

In order to ensure the pilot study was assessed successfully, one committee member from the yacht club, part of the organization of the RMSR, volunteered to take part. The biggest amendment was the idea of modifying the interview questions to suit each respondent better, grouping them as described in the earlier section. Questions were shortened and made more direct. Two extra questions were added as part of the last objective in order to ensure the researcher received as much information as possible on each objective and in particular the last objective as it dealt with the potential of yacht racing as a tourism product.

3:8 Research Validity – reliability and limitations

“Validity is the extent to which the information collected truly reflects the phenomenon being studied” (Veal, 2006 p. 200). Therefore the fact that research is empirical makes it more challenging as it mainly deals with people’s attitudes and behaviour delivered through interviews. Yet the fact that theory
behind the case study tries to prove generalisability helps towards the validity of the research.

The Role of Theory in a case study:

Based on theory, the case study of a real life event and its academic value could tend to be rather specific and industry focused. “Theory development as part of the design phase is essential, whether the ensuing case study’s purpose is to develop or to test theory” (Yin, 2009, p. 35).

Yin (2009, p. 43) remarks that, “Critics typically state that single cases offer a poor basis of generalizing.” Yet he also argues that “Critics are implicitly contrasting the situation to survey research, in which a sample is intended to generalize to a larger universe.”

The case study does not rely on a survey research method but on analytical generalization, as stated by Yin (2009, p. 38),

“The investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory”. In this case the impact of RMSR to broader tourism principles, theories and practices.

Then a good research project should exhibit a high level of generalisability and results should be able to be applied to similar projects. Veal (2006, p. 117) also states that although “measures can be taken to ensure a degree of generalisability” he has found that many research findings relate only to the subject involved, at the time and place the research was carried out.”
While measures can be taken to ensure a degree of generalisability, any research findings relate only to the subjects involved and the time and place it was carried out (Veal, 2006 p. 41).

The process of recontextualising the data collected towards the process of generalization with particular attention to the role of theory as part of the case study technique. The value attached to analysis is essential and will affect the quality of interpretation (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Evaluating analysis following how the method has been applied is important with regard an interpretive study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) as cited in (Collis & Hussey, 2009 p. 182) state that issues concerning evaluating data focus on the credibility of the subject identified and described, the transferability as to whether findings can be applied to permit generalization, dependability as to whether the research has been systematic, rigorous and well-documented and confirmability as to whether the research has been described fully and possible to assess whether the findings flow from the data. In this case study saturation similar towards enhancing credibility was very important in order for the researcher to fully understand the topic.

Recontextualising the data through the process of generalization is particularly important in the case of this study since no other study had been done prior and it may well be used by other researchers to follow similar studies.

"Reliability is the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research were to be repeated at a later stage or with a different sample of subjects" (Veal, 2006 p. 41). Unfortunately this is rarely the case with tourism because they deal with human beings in differing and ever-changing social
situations. The concern that was adopted for the analysis stage was reliability as it involved discussing findings with participants in order to obtain their reactions and opinions giving confidence at the conclusions stage.

Limitations are where the boundaries of a study lie and are important to keep in mind throughout. The tendency to complicate the subject by posing too many questions and therefore making it too broad for the restricted time frame was a difficulty the study foresaw. The fact that only a limited selection of people could be chosen to take part in the interview due to the specific knowledge required put limitations on the study. Due to a language barrier Russian participants were unable to be interviewed this was unfortunate as their opinions on the race and the potential of the industry in relation to the yacht race would have been very interesting.

3:9 Research Ethics

Ethical issues are a very sensitive matter and must be addressed with adequate importance given. Therefore it is important that once participants agree to take part on their own free will they are given enough information about what is required and the time it will take. (Collis & Hussey, 2009 p. 45) Using a recorder in order to aid the interviewer with data collection needs to be dealt with very cautiously and only to be used when given consent.

Anonymity and confidentiality should also be given to all participants so that they are unidentifiable with any opinions they express. Reassuring participants of this will in turn encourage them to express themselves more freely. In the case of
this study being researched a brief description of the participant’s positions held
was specified in order to attach a higher degree of importance towards their
opinions which would eventually add appreciation to the implications of the
study. Yet no direct mention of names at any stage was available.

Confidentially on the other hand deals with the anonymity of the data collected
and therefore no data should be able to be traced back to the person who said
it. Referring to participants mainly divided into three broad classes; those racing
or the veterans in one group, the yachting executives in one group and tourism
executives in the other. In order to ensure those interviewed agreed with what
the interviewer had transcribed, interviews were sent back to the participant for
confirmation before agreeing to be used.

Ethical dilemmas were dealt with throughout the study as the subject being
discussed was a passion for many of the participants and executives. Some
executives in particular felt so strongly about the subject that it was sometimes
difficult for the interviewer to keep impartial. “Keeping covert when collecting
data was essential in order to achieve the best possible findings” (Collis and
Hussey, 2009 p. 45).
### 3:10 Research Time frame

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March – May 2012</td>
<td>Choose the topic of interest and look for journals and articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>Developing and preparing a detailed Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June – September 2012</td>
<td>Write the introduction Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare a skeleton literature review section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan the methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October – December 2012</td>
<td>Data collection phase 1 during the RMSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview yachting and tourism executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January – June 2013</td>
<td>Write the full report focusing on analysis and conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2013</td>
<td>Hand in final thesis report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>Take part in the Viva Voce</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The research aims to investigate how the RMSR can assist towards developing a stronger yachting tourism industry.

The objectives of this research aimed to:

- Examine the role the RMSR holds as part of our tourism product
- Identify the factors that make it so beneficial
- Evaluate the contemporary challenges and how they can be remedied
- Explore the potential of yachting events as part of a stronger tourism product

In order for the results and analysis section to develop into a logical sequence, the research findings were divided into four parts, each relating to a particular objective as mentioned above. An overall conclusion on the key lessons learnt in relation to its effect on the organisational structure (micro) and strategy for Malta (macro) formed part of the conclusion chapter.
4.2 Results – The Role of the RMSR

The initial aim of the interview was directed towards identifying:

i) The link between yacht racing, the event and visiting Malta.

ii) The concept of re-visiting Malta at a later stage following a visit to participate in the RMSR which proved very promising.

iii) The value of the yacht race as a local sports tourism event and more recently an essential part of the international yacht racing calendar.

iv) Placing it as a hybrid where each component is reliant on the other in order to prove its success.

v) Exploring the role of the RMSR and how it fits within the context of yachting and the tourism sector is crucial towards the foundation of this study.

The respondent’s interest in RMSR and how one first heard of the race

The key finding from the first interview question embarked on how key stakeholders interests are associated to the initial research objective. Through interviews with foreign participants, one respondent referred to the race as “iconic”. Fundamentally their link to Malta was through their attachment to the yacht event. It was clear that the majority of overseas respondents who choose to participate in the race were here for that very reason. These sentiments fit very well when referring to the key authors on the subject of event tourism. As stated by Goldner and Ritchie (2003),
“Events serve as a powerful tool to attract tourists during the off-season and to create an image and awareness of an area.”

A couple of respondents who had visited Malta previously on business reflected on their wish to return on holiday. Three respondents remarked on their wish to visit Malta due to its importance as a ‘maritime hub’.

The theory of destination image as discussed by Echtner and Ritchie (2003) based on “previously held images” comes into play very strongly here, demonstrating that those destinations with a positive image are more likely to be chosen for an event of this kind. Yet from another perspective a destination need to satisfy benefits (Filo et al, 2009 and Chen and Funk, 2010).

This ideology relates to the concept of push and pull. Pull being what initially stimulates one to travel for participation purposes, while push follows through to destination selection and its positive outcome. This therefore relates specifically to the individual’s decision to travel to a chosen destination, based on his or her perceptions towards catering for one’s specific and every need. This concept is very apt in the case of the RMSR as an annual occurrence and supports notions suggested by Weed and Bull (2009) and Getz (2008).
Participation in the race and interest to attend based on visiting Malta.

The majority of findings from the second interview question illustrate that almost all respondents, local yachting executives and visitors, had taken part in the event more than once. One respondent had participated in the race as many as thirteen times and had first completed the race as early as 1979. Literature according to Ioannides et Al (2001) suggests that,

“Malta’s newspapers frequently have letters from people who have been to the island twenty or thirty times”.

The concept of re-visitation is based on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the last of all human requirements self-actualization. This point relates in particular to the rites of passage that shape our lifetime, namely separation, liminality and incorporation towards attaining a new ‘identity’ that one passes through annually as part of the reaffirmation process. This idea can therefore be applied to the once a year challenge participants undergo as part of the RMSR.

This special interest luxury tourism of yacht racing is admittedly popular for the image creation it generates by attracting participants concerned with identity-making. Literature by Trauer (2006) suggest this notion of participating in activities as a status symbol.

The issue being discussed here is particularly relevant to the type of tourists this market attracts, namely well-travelled, affluent, high-earners who do not wish to be associated themselves with the mass tourism experience but a more specialised and personal niche tourism approach; Luxury Sports Tourism (Novelli, 2005).
Malta therefore tried to focus on attracting more affluent markets by constructing luxury accommodation, improving archaeological sites and debating the viability of golf courses towards cultural tourism. Yet according to Ioannides et Al (2001), the policy seemed confused. The tourism board then aimed at building an alternative response towards attracting a more discerning tourist by offering a more quality and varied product with a special focus towards long term sustainability (Pollacco, 2003).

As stated by Weed and Bull (2009) Malta’s yachting tourism market is still weak. Although government’s interest towards the development of yacht marinas over the past few years has been significant, the need to support growth and development of the Maltese yachting tourism industry as both competitive and recreational is still strong. One of the biggest challenges that remain nowadays is that marinas still run short of berthing space for yachts below 24 metres, as stressed by the yachting executives interviewed. Other literature by Sultana (2012), emphasise this issue.

Interviews with tourism executives show the severe lack of data and detailed insightful research on the subject (Ioannides et Al 2001). Due to the lack of statistical data, it was therefore made it very difficult for anyone to measure levels of growth, potential interest or success.

Issues contributing to this point are highlighted in particular with regards the 2010 PWC Study for Transport Malta where it has been identified that only 56% of marinas and 68% of yards are being occupied generating almost four million euro and eight million respectively in revenue. This therefore suggests much room for growth.
Three respondents highlighted the fact that they plan to lengthen their stay following the RMSR 2012. One respondent noted wish to sail round the islands of Comino and Gozo and take part in the sport of rock-climbing. Another respondent decided to keep his yacht in Malta for an extra month to enjoy visiting the island, while the third respondent came to Malta a week early in order to visit the island. A fourth respondent noted his interest to return with family. One other participant remarked that Malta is a part time base due to the connection to the RMSR. The latter shows the fundamental concept of a repeat customer as particularly relevant in literature; Ioannides et Al (2001) Chalip et Al (2003) and Chen and Funk (2010).

Re-visits too require less expensive marketing campaigns than those used to attract new tourists according to Chen and Funk (2010) yet it is more difficult to keep these tourists interested. Although the situation is slightly different with regards yacht racing as each event provides a totally unique experience keeping participants curious and focused towards challenging themselves each and every time. The essential nature of this sport participation belongs in a category of its own as an extreme sport that connects to images of strength, power and high quality achievements.

**Associations towards visiting Malta prior to the race**

One of the yachting executives responded expressing his good will towards offering his volunteer services as an essential contribution towards the event’s growing success. Five of the interview respondents forming part of the yachting fraternity had attended the RMSR several times and made a point of trying to attend every year. One Italian yacht owner who had participated every year for
the past eight years reflected saying it is a “must”. The concept of the yearly pilgrimage is particularly significant especially with regards one respondent’s wish to attend the RMSR every year. He added that it is the ideal opportunity for him to let go and meet like-minded people as studies by Getz (2008) re-affirm.

From the local perspective the yachting executive respondents were concerned with regards the lack of interest shown by MTA which complements Getz (2008) studies stating the need for tangible resources and political support. Remarks made by the yachting executives support the idea based on a lack of knowledge of the benefits that can be gained. Reflections concerned with the fact that although Malta wishes to attract luxury niche markets little seems to have been done towards developing the event. It seems clear to most participants that capitalizing on this event would eventually strengthen the industry.

Getz’s (1995) studies complement this idea, where,

“Unique events and themes should be highlighted, especially if they have a potential to attract niche markets or generate a strong image.”

**The RMSR as a valuable part of the sports tourism calendar and reason for visiting Malta first time**

One yachting executive pointed out that there were no coinciding events organized in conjunction with the RMSR and one particular event that the enthusiasts might have also enjoyed, the Malta Grand Prix, took place on the same day the RMSR started, 20th October, 2012. The respondent highlighted the need for better communication between entities and parties (Weed & Bull, 2009 and Vit ,2012). Most respondents felt that the RMSR is a “must do and is
an essential part of the yacht racing calendar. Several respondents are often curious and eager to visit Malta and like to participate in the RMSR year after year. The considerable media coverage world-wide that this event attracts highlights the opportunity of using the event as a show case for Malta’s yachting industry (Hughson, 2004).

The success of the event has led one yachting executive to propose the idea of bringing the America’s Cup to Malta. Attempts had been unsuccessful due to a lack of space by the foreshore to accommodate all the equipment needed and harm on a small island like Malta such a race would bring (Getz, 1995). One yachting executive part of the respondent selection added that by approaching the RMSR as a valuable tourism product would help give the island a competitive advantage, as supported through studies by Getz (1995).

**Summary**

Evidence from the research demonstrates some interesting relationships between the results from research questions and key literature. The RMSR clearly demonstrates that there is a strong link between the event and the destination. Malta as a maritime hub initially attracted overseas sailing enthusiasts to participate which nowadays has led it to become increasingly more popular. The concept of re-visiting or extending their visit beyond participation lends very well to the subject being discussed.

The other key finding in this section could be directed at the value associated towards this event. Although the event may have reached such heights placing it on the top of the international yacht racing agenda, its position within the local context still has not yet been established.
Main Findings

- Suggest there is a clear link between an event and visiting Malta as a destination

- The importance of re-visitation as part of the niche tourism

- The organisation, service and quality are essential components

- Positioning the event in a sustainable context with very few negative impacts.
4.3 Results – The Success Factors behind the RMSR

Objective two sets out towards ascertaining what makes this event such a success:

i) It’s “iconic” status and rising popularity for the past thirty years supported by Rolex as the sole sponsor;

ii) Enquiring what supplementary events participants might like to attend and how similar events overseas compare to the RMSR;

iii) Clarifying the position of the event

What factors contribute towards the RMSR’s rising popularity

The RMSR is best known amongst the sailing fraternity as one of the most exciting and unique offshore courses today, known for its unpredictable and challenging weather conditions that make it such an unforgettable experience. Many respondents remarked on Malta’s central location and its accessibility to the main European hubs by air and sea. The helpful and friendly attitude shown by the club towards building a great reputation and strong “race spirit” has encouraged international crew to participate. One respondent remarked saying “the more you come to Malta, the more you like it” while another reflected on the “warm welcome” he recieves from members at the RMYC and how he has made so many good friends throughout the years visiting. The same respondent added that this is a “bonus to such a prestigious yacht race” and included that he makes a point of promoting the race among fellow yacht owners overseas.

All respondents agreed that the race is an integral part of every professional yachtsmen’s racing agenda and that the event falls at an ideal time of the year.
when much of northern Europe is already heading towards winter. One member of the yachting fraternity interviewed, remarked that the race extends the Mediterranean season.

The “iconic” image of the yacht race as a result of the media coverage established by Rolex relates to co-branding concepts coined by Chalip. Media coverage as part of events is so important towards building the image of a destination in the mind of tourists who has never visited the place before. Efforts towards co-branding in the case of the RMSR are essential towards building the event and ultimately the industry especially since image is so crucial in tourism development. The image, event and destination should become inseparable and mutually reinforcing according to Chalip, and Allen et Al, who state that key themes associated with a destination's general tourism product can be reinforced through events. Getz’s (2005) research on the sponsorship of events shows that sponsorship too can result in a transfer of image or co-branding determined by the customer’s perception of the fit between the sponsor and the event. Therefore in the case of Rolex as the official sponsor of the RMSR it is particularly valid that the sponsorship plays a very strong role in the growth of the event and its image worldwide as has already been witnessed through its development over the past ten years since Rolex agreed to support the event.

One yachting executive responded adding that “Malta is ideal for the event offering adequate shore support and infrastructure” and supplemented this by recommending the RMSR be viewed as a sample product showcasing the capability of our yachting tourism sector. Getz (2005) studies support the notion that the RMSR should be handled as a product, viewed and managed as a marketable commodity should it succeed at sponsorship.
Most respondents agreed that this yacht race is the ideal opportunity to showcase and introduce yachting on the island of Malta, Getz (1995) and Hallmann and Breuer (2010) studies on how events effect island tourism support this concept. One yachting executive reflected on the fact that this race has managed to attract a new market to participate. The Russian market to Malta is important since it so economically stable and an essential constituent towards stronger niche markets and a valuable part of the tourism policy for the Maltese Islands 2012-2016. Since Rolex’s coverage output reaches as far as Russia, this contributing factor has made it increasingly important towards attracting the attention of this niche market. Arguably the media coverage that a giant sponsor like Rolex attracts is unsurpassable. Interviews with the two tourism executives reflect that MTA has been marketing the event overseas in outdoor fairs and to Russian tour operators.

**Developing the event and how it compares to other yacht races overseas.**

The majority of respondents remarked on the good facilities offered at the RMYC and how the events as part of the RMSR are particularly popular, terming the crew party as “legendary” and a contributing factor towards what the race is so well-known for.

The findings showed that there was no derogatory mention to the lack of organization but the inability to have all yachts in one location was of particular concern. When encouraged to compare the RMSR to other races respondents choose to strengthen their argument by adding a number of examples to explain the current global situation. The Rolex Sydney to Hobart yacht race is attended by throngs of tourists and locals who swarm Sydney Harbour to enjoy the start
of the race. The finish in Hobart, Tasmania’s capital, is celebrated by Tasmania’s largest food and wine festival “Taste of Tasmania”. This food festival has been set up to coincide with the tourism boost this yacht race generates.

Suggestions were made by a couple of the respondents towards bettering the event such as,

- The registration process.
- Supplementing the race website with further links.
- Suggestion towards creating a prize for the best web tracker.

One respondent and overseas participant based at Grand Harbour Marina on one of the maxi yachts was surprised at the little promotion taking place in areas like the airport or at the entrance to the GHM. The respondent suggested that in order to develop the event and capitalize on it, more would need to be done to make visitors and the local community aware of the event, which in turn would create a hype attracting numbers, proving itself economically favourable. As seen through literature on the America’s Cup Series in Newport were people paid to attend the event and not a failed similar what happened in San Diego (Yacht racing, 2012).

Preference on accommodation and activities

The yachting executives interviewed as part of the study highlighted the importance attached to spoiling the crew by giving them the “real yachting experience” and therefore the “fun factor” associated with the RMSR series of events. The event is a good opportunity for people to network, socialize and create business contacts as stated through studies by Garcia (2011).
The program of RMSR events such as the crew party, the start and prize-giving are all well-organized according to participants, attracting a very elite audience.

Two of the local yachting executives responded remarking that the RMSR events are an ideal opportunity to host corporate guests. One yachting executive took advantage of this occasion towards hosting the Major of St. Tropez for the start day of the RMSR in order to sign a twinning agreement between the locality of Birgu and St. Tropez as seen through research.

Research findings proved that even though so much has been done by the RMYC to make this event so special, the level of hospitality offered in catering establishments and hotels does not live up to the standards these visitors expect. All hotels offered on the race website with exception to the Preluna Hotel and Grand Hotel Excelsior were rated as very disappointing and not up to standard. The question behind the standard offered at three and four star hotels on the island is an issue the island faces.

According to one overseas respondent, nowadays more crew are staying on land. Crew requiring accommodation but are often disappointed by the quality of accommodation while in Malta. As seen through the findings of this research most respondents eat out every night and through experience they have learnt that, in order to avoid disappointment they should ask for recommendations.

Research findings proved that most respondents, particularly the paid crew, like to go out and enjoy local hospitality. This event is therefore an ideal opportunity to introduce the island, as a tourism destination, to family and friends accompanying participant crew, captains and yacht owners. This angle directed at the tourism gains that could be optimized on are particularly evident as
visitors are often left to enjoy the island for a few days. Therefore the concept of adding supplementary events that could coincide with the RMSR events would appear beneficial towards making the whole event a more holistic and sustainable one. Studies by Garcia (2011) supplement this idea.

This themed event could allow opportunities for the host community to demonstrate its skills and expertise in the maritime sector and also assist the local industry by creating business opportunities. Although the RMSR uses volunteer workers, job creation in the short term can often arise in other supplementary forms (Garcia, 2011).

One member of the yachting fraternity interviewed, who has had a long maritime experience in the industry, stressed the need to create more events from a tourism perspective and suggested involving sailing schools. This is an area the Tourism Policy 2012-2016 (MTCE, 2012a) aims to focus on and in particular following a recent enquiry to host an additional yachting event exposing sailing academies to the industry of yachting racing.

The main finding of this the second objective based on literature confirm that the sponsorship of Rolex has given this race its “iconic” status. The credibility, prestige and recognition of such a luxury brand like Rolex positions the race as one of the three top offshore yacht races attracting the big names and winning teams.

Summary

Evidence from research suggests that Rolex’s support towards the RMSR is what has transformed the race from a local event into one of the world’s top
yacht races attracting some of the most professional names in yachting. The span of Rolex’s media network coverage has contributed sufficiently towards reaching the Russian market. Air Malta’s regular flight schedule too has helped place Russia among the most popular audience frequenting the event.

The other key findings as part of this section of research highlights that although Malta is an ideal location to host such events, it lacks a satisfactory level of hospitality expected. Instilling the awareness of sailing amongst locals by reviving the maritime culture and introducing the importance of sailing academies could help attract the host community to become more acquainted with the event as an integral part of the tourism product, which could in turn lead to a stronger yachting tourism industry.

Key Findings

- Suggest there is much value in co-branding towards the popularity of an event

- The importance of competitive events and sustainable positive impacts – “The Trophee Bailli de Suffren” towards strengthening yacht racing as a tourism product

- Interest shown from the Russian market

- A need for higher quality of hospitality services.
4.4 Results – The Key Challenges behind the Event

The third objective aimed to identify,

i) What changes have occurred in the progression of the event;

ii) The difficulties faced and what improvements could be applied to developing it into a stronger product;

iii) Defining the factors that have assisted in the growth of the event towards improving the product and innovating on the experience;

iv) Identifying the difficulties behind the race and how these challenges can be overcome.

The changing face of the event

The majority of respondents agreed that the rising popularity of record entries over the past ten years was due to Rolex's brand image and therefore the explanation why the RMSR has reached such a status. This event has benefited Malta's tourism product enormously, in particular when identifying what has attracted Rolex to the yacht race, its unique attributes and the valuable assets placing it amongst one of the best offshore yacht races. The RMSR is an essential part of the Rolex Yacht Series and this helps elevates Malta's image. In this respect many respondents commented on the growing status of the race and remarked on the improving profile of yachts competing each year. One local yacht executive interviewed gave the example of the maxi yacht from Slovenia, Esimit Europa II, crewed by some of the most professional yachtsmen in the world participating for the second year consecutive. This yacht’s choice to set a record and link the RMSR to the Barcolana yacht race in Trieste, the “Medot
Trophy”, was merited by the good connections initiated by the RMYC (Weed & Bull, 2009). The respondent stressed his interest towards creating better connections with other yacht clubs; a good example was a sailing trip that took place in May 2013 organized by one of the RMYC overseas members based in the UK.

Some of the yachting fraternity interviewed also commented on the new RMYC premises which nowadays offer better facilities and easier accessibility contributing towards its success. Most of the overseas yachting fraternity interviewed remarked that the events taking place appear better organized. Another respondent added that in his opinion, the best RMSR took place in 2007 and was hosted at Grand Harbour Marina. The reason being all yachts were found in the same location and within enough space for the whole event to take place smoothly. Such notions supported by literature according to Arruda and Ferrand (2007) remarked that the Cascais region of Portugal has for the past sixty years prided itself on hosting a number of nautical activities.

Reflections on the progression of yacht racing over the past ten years making it more accessible to those enthusiasts known as “armchair sailors”. According to one yachting executive interviewed this has been accomplished successfully through the web tracker and blogging system. Another yachting executive remarked that the RMYC is working on updating this system and are in the process of creating a Virtual Race. Sailing enthusiasts understand the importance of making the sport more accessible and through research much has been done in this field. To allow the America’s Cup in San Francisco to becoming more popular amongst a new audience, the idea of sailing on the big screen was adopted. Through information gathered from a current yacht racing
website, the latest news and innovations in the business are focusing on stadium sailing which has now become a core requirement of commercially funded sailing events like the America’s Cup World Series in Newport. Research showed that visitors were happy to pay to be part of these events and added that they found it to be a great family experience. Making the sport more available and attractive to the public is crucial towards encouraging numbers, therefore increasing visibility to allow for participation towards yachting events is inevitable.

One of yachting executive’s interviewed reflected on the fact that the biggest development that has taken place so far has been due to the response towards marketing the event. In 2002 MTA agreed to work with the RMYC towards improving marketing strategies concerning the RMSR. One should note that MTA’s support to event started in 2002, following Rolex’s commitment to sponsor the race. Based on literature gathered from the Malta National Archives, evidence shows that there had always been much contact between the two bodies dating as far back as 1970. Hand written letters sent that year by the Commodore of the RMYC to the MGTB verifying that the tourism authority had always had regular updates on the progress of the RMSR and expressed hope that the authority would support the event due to increased expenses incurred following its rise in popularity from overseas participants.

Research findings show the RMSR is now a fixture in the Maltese event calendar. Evidence from these results suggest that the growing interest and support over the years has improved the general infrastructure for hosting the event and this in turn has established an international yachting profile in Malta.
Contemporary challenges for the race

According to participant feedback received from the interviews the main issues addressed with regards the planning and management of the event were:

- The need for a better registration process through the website
- A better introduction on registration day informing first time participants
- A more structured weather briefing for captains the before the race start
- Better facilities in particular berthing.

The lack of quality standards offered in Malta is an issue, as mentioned in the earlier section. A yachting executive interviewed suggested that in one regard the event should be seen as a 1,000 person conference allowing for the management, execution and quality of the event to be of a high corporate standard.

Malta’s unpredictable October weather can sometimes prove detrimental for both organisers and participants. Damage to pontoons in front of the club house due to the lack of breakwater allocated in the area is unfortunately inevitable. Therefore an immediate infrastructural remedy towards this issue is essential.

All respondents agreed that the biggest issue with the RMSR still remains its inability to have all the yachts together in one location. In particular with regards the RMSR, the issue regarding berthing has been apparent almost since its inception, and an example of this can be established through records found in the National Archives dating back to 1975.
Another yachting executive’s response to having yachts spread out in different locations has proved a logistical feat and discussions are well in progress towards making use of dock space close by the RMYC. An alternative solution to this issue is high on the agenda and soon to be reached in order to ensure success. Although a shuttle bus service was set up to and from the two locations there were other issues addressed such as accommodation in Birgu, since there are no five star hotels in the vicinity. Splitting the event into so many different locations presents issues which in turn could have caused it to lose its intensity. Many studies can be found on the regeneration processes cities and regions go through in order to host events (Smith, 2005, Getz, 2008 and Garcia, 2011) but the impact of spreading an event around in several locations on a national level is a little less researched.

Scarcity of local competent crew available is another issue that has been brought up earlier in research which is apparently the logic behind the decline in race participation in Malta over the past few years (Vit, 2012). The rationale behind this originates from a lack of yachting culture among its youths. As specified in literature, sailing is not a sport for the masses and therefore accustoming the host community is essential towards its growth as part of Malta’s sports event tourism. Through literature one can see that the Oman has been very successful at this from a cultural and tourism perspective (Yacht racing, 2012a)

Valid examples (Yacht racing, 2012) as part of the America’s Cup event associated with the lack of awareness amongst the population was apparent in Valencia in Spain when half the population were unaware of the event taking place and in San Diego the event even got lost due to a lack of information
provided to the host community. Yet research on why the RMSR was originally set up shows that the main scope was to stimulate the local host community, the British and Maltese (Borg, 2012a). Allen et Al (2008) state that similar events should be used towards the purpose of engendering pride in the host community.

Ultimately, according to one yachting executive interviewed, the largest issue relating to tourism is the lack of regard shown by MTA towards the event where, “MTA treat the event like an obligation.” He then backs his statement by explaining that the lack of interest shown boils down to the fact that yachting and in particular the race does not seem to generate bed nights as such and therefore is not given the regard it deserves.

Nonetheless, the respondent from the MTA notes that the authority’s are working towards a solution to overcome the limited cruising ground by including Sicily as part of a larger arena similar to a cycling trail recently initiated (medinbike). MTA’s choice to use the event towards promoting yacht charter holidays appears to be developing successfully, as there has been a rise in charter requests over the past few months as recorded by MTA.

**Evaluating these challenges and how they can be improved upon**

The majority of respondents agreed that the importance connected towards maintaining all the participating yachts in one location could not only help improve the event from a logistics point of view but assist it towards maturing into a stronger tourism product.
One yachting executive interviewed pointed out the severe lack of communication amongst the various stakeholders concerned and how this has affected several areas, namely:

- Catering for the needs of crew while focusing on the unique visitor experience
- The lack of local awareness about the event in society
- The apparent lack of local reportage surrounding this event.

According to yachting executive interviewed, improving the event from a tourism perspective would entail preparing packages and supporting activities for family, friends and enthusiasts visiting which would lead to a demand for more hotel rooms and car hire services, apart from an increase in hospitality and entertainment. Allen et Al (2008) backed this statement by literature claiming that revenue generated from tourism is crucial as there is much additional expenditure on travel, accommodation, goods and services throughout the region in a variety of industries and beyond the event itself. Supplementing additional events to the calendar week could be developed from a public and private perspective and could lead to many economic gains.

One yachting executive interviewed highlighted the need for better awareness, networking and connections between foreign and local industries in order to guarantee better international contacts (Weed & Bull, 2009). “Capitalizing on the event through a number of potential spin offs”, since it has the capacity to create a platform for more business prospects in a number of different areas with
particular attention towards the contributing factor in investment of the yachting industry and the opportunities that over wintering could create.

Yet according to another yachting executive interviewed, an essential first step would demand for an economic study to take place in order to measure the success of the event while at the same time acting as a method directed towards focusing attention on government support. As seen through analysis in the earlier section Getz (2008) supports the need for impact studies in order to prove their value, highlighting the fact that it is essential that these events are not only sustainably sound but must prove substantially viable and display political approval.

Another respondent interviewed was well-informed with the steps that have to be taken towards generating an economic impact assessment. This was reiterated by a tourism executive who was interviewed stressing the importance of compiling a study that would position the event and what would help identify its progress. Numbers are important in order to understand how much is spent. Unfortunately a sound estimation on the RMSR expenditure is not yet available which leaves room for further research.

The yachting executive interviewed included that the next step towards developing the event would be to profile the participants and attendees in order to understand the target market better. The latter supports studies by Allen et Al (2008) who suggest research into the trends of event visitor markets.
Summary

Evidence from research suggests that the transition of the RMSR from a local event to a top international event may not quite have been understood as of yet. Due to the credibility and reputation behind the event it would be difficult to argue where to place the event.

A positive observation is that the RMSR has caused very few negative impacts from an environmental, social or cultural perspective. The issues that remain are largely connected to industry problems, namely,;

- Lack of facilities for berthing of all yachts participating in race
- Lack of statistical data collected
- Issue of quality with regards three and four star hotels and hospitality
- Limited support from government and MTA.

More focus towards encouraging the host community to participate through government support could be a way forward and as Getz adds this could stimulate a competitive advantage for the host community with the, “Event and the destination becoming inextricably linked”.

Key Findings

- Suggest there are positive developments behind the RMSR
- Main challenges are the lack of data and adequate berthing
- A way forward based on better awareness amongst the community
- The value of research and event impact studies.
4.5 Results – The Potential of yacht events as a stronger tourism product

The aim of the last section of this chapter is;

i) To explore how yacht events can help towards offering a more quality tourism product

ii) Identify what could be done towards optimizing the benefits that could be gained from this event and other potential yacht events

iii) Ascertain what could be gleaned from a more a business directed approach

iv) Determine how to capitalize on the event in a more sustainably sound manner.

Re-establishing what makes the race so special

All respondents agreed that the race is so unique in every way and that very few races have all the attributes the RMSR has. The unforgettable start, as mentioned by most respondents, could be capitalized on further from a number of perspectives, in particular from business and branding point of view how media coverage has the ability to attract visitors adding to the concept of co-branding as discussed by Chalip earlier, Allen et Al and Getz.

One of the yachting fraternity interviewed stressed the fact that this event should be utilized to brand Malta’s country image. According to studies by Hughson (2011) a follow-up concept, “sports re-imaging” could apply even more appropriately in this context of Malta’s search for the ideal brand image,
choosing sailing and the RMSR as a focus for display which can be used to alter Malta’s image directing towards a more niche tourism approach focusing on yachting.

One of the yachting fraternity interviewed who visit especially for the race every year added that so much more could be done from a local perspective to capitalize on this it particularly from a tourism angle and suggests:

- Including the visuals as part of a tourism attraction
- Create a ‘Parade of Sail’
- Create a ‘Race Week’ to kick start the RMSR

The uniqueness of the course passing two volcanoes makes it so scenic too yet as one participant pointed out, much is lost for most who remain on land. The footage caught on the Rolex 26 minute film televised worldwide is a great mode of communication which could be applied to the big screen. As mentioned earlier through research, the concept of “stadium sailing” could be televised throughout, similar to the America’s Cup World Series and the Olympics in Weymouth in the UK.

The importance of the “race spirit” and Malta’s forte at offering a naturally hospitable enthusiasm should be highlighted for its contribution towards strengthening its product as reported by a key yachting executive. As earlier stated earlier by two participants, the RMSR is well known as a fun-filled race and according to one yacht owner who revisits year after year, “this is one of the reasons for coming back”. The volunteering community involved in the organization could be directed towards setting a precedent for the rest of the
host community’s approach and future development. In turn this might provide future opportunities for further community participation and local engagement.

The factors that contribute towards returned custom

The uniqueness of the race starting and ending in the same location, leaving family and friends on the island for a week offers Malta the ideal opportunity to capitalize on its tourism gains. Through research undertaken by Economist Edward Scicluna (Sultana, 2009) it is estimated that the average daily spend can be anything between 250 and 500 euro excluding flights, accommodation and airfares yet a more recent study is crucial in order to support these earnings. Weed and Bull (2009) support this statement by remarking on the wider tourism impact. Yet Barker et Al (2002) suggest that it is not possible to verify this.

Literature by Allen et Al (2008) suggest that choosing an event that has the potential to be developed into a major attraction and using it as a foundation for image building towards a destination’s advancement in tourism fits very well, as in the case of New Zealand (Kane, 2010) and could be applied appropriately towards Malta’s situation.

Most respondents agree that in order for an event to benefit from a wider commercial perspective there needs to be better communication between the MTA and the RMYC (Weed and Bull, 2009). One yachting executive remarked, “Why does the Fireworks Festival and Isle of MTV get more publicity than the RMSR? A key yachting executive interviewed suggested that a way forward would be to identify the profile of the visitors participating and what they expect.
Creating a week-long event, often referred to as “Race Week” was another suggestion put forward by a couple of respondents who travel overseas to similar events. During this week a variety of activities could be set with special attention directed towards the target audience’s interests. At this stage, communication between stakeholders is of prime importance in order to avoid disappointment (Arruda and Ferrand, 2007).

As part of the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (MTCE, 2012a) exposing sailing academies is crucial. Including sailing schools as part of the week-long event, as proposed by one yachting executive interviewed would help encourage sail and regatta training and demonstrate an active interest in participation from the host community, which in turn would appeal to tourism. Getz (1995) advocate the development of a portfolio of attractions and events that reflect national values, cultures and history, but due to change in people choices for travel things might shift, requiring constant and updated research.

A similar argument based on the successful development of major events comes from Garcia (2011) who focus their planning based on “grassroots consultations”, encouraging local groups to benefit through tourism and inward investment. Since most of the RMSR events are by private invitation only, organizing supplementary events could be organized in unison and made accessible to the local public and tourists visiting. One respondent stressed the fact that the events do not have to be solely maritime-related but there can also be shore-side festivals, giving the public the opportunity to get closer to enjoying the “race spirit”. A good example to complement this idea is the “Taste of Tasmania” vibrant food festival that takes place in Hobart which attracts
volumes of tourists to the island over the festive period end of the year and culminates at the end of the Sydney-Hobart race.

**Examine the probability of a return trip or over wintering.**

The concept of re-visitation has already been discussed at the beginning of this analysis, yet re-mentioning this point is unavoidable, given the nature of the subject and its value to tourism destinations. A couple of respondents stressed that they look forward to planning a holiday here with family as they feel Malta is particularly “child-friendly” with most overseas visitors making a point of attending the event every year and some have done so for the past ten years and more.

Through research one can observe that the RMYC offers a number of shorter weekend regattas. Many of the participant yacht owners interviewed seem especially keen to frequent Malta more regularly. When suggested by the interviewer, interest towards leaving their yacht based in Malta for the winter period seemed engaging. Better known as “over-wintering”, Malta as a destination is easily accessible, safe, offers a temperate climate all year round, has adequate infrastructure, services and skilled labour. One local yacht executive interviewed remarked on the uniqueness of such an audience as the yacht owner, who is mainly concerned with the property market, setting up businesses, tax benefits and over-wintering options for their yachts.

Over-wintering offers the opportunity for a yacht berth over the winter season while repair works can be carried out. It would also allow those interested to participate in locally organised yacht events that take place almost once a month throughout the whole year. This in turn would create business,
employment and help raise the level of yacht race participation (Vit, 2012). Yet Malta’s largest issue relating to quality and availability of berthing for the 24 metre and under vessel needs to be addressed first, before proposing over-wintering. The RMSR falls as the last international race of the season and therefore the idea of over wintering can be viewed as an ideal according to respondents.

Suggestions from respondents towards promoting Malta’s maritime culture through a boat show, a super yacht conference and exhibitions demonstrating local expertise and the skill of shipbuilding would assist towards inform those visiting about the local communities capabilities as has been done successfully in the case of New Zealand (Barker et Al, 2002). Similar procedures could be identified locally super yacht Network Group set up in 2007 or any through PPP (Public Private Partnership).

Most of the yachting fraternity interviewed remarked on Malta’s cultural setting, and interest in creating stronger links to Malta through investment. Two participants interviewed by the researcher now have their yacht and a second home base in Malta who coincidently were initially introduced to Malta through the RMSR. Another annual participant who sailed his yacht from Ireland remarked on the ease of accessibility to fly and from Dublin. The latter is a strong contributing factor towards considering Malta as a good wintering option. The respondent also made a point of adding the fact that the favourable climate throughout the winter would entice him to use Malta as the ideal weekend get away from his hectic life in northern Europe. This point is a prime example towards the main objectives of the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands (MTCE, 2012a).
Building a stronger yachting tourism industry

As seen through literature, yachting events have a capability to contribute substantially towards building a stronger tourism product. The most obvious benefit towards tourism is the world-wide media coverage this event attracts and Chalip’s co-branding theory which relates to Rolex’s sponsorship benefits. As one of the yachting fraternity interviewed remarked, “Developing the start into a top spectacle is of a great advantage to Malta as the Grand harbour setting remains so clear in every person’s mind - the ultimate branding identity.

Therefore in context to the RMSR, its contribution towards Malta’s yachting tourism brand places very highly as an ideal destination for yacht charter, in particular with regards the Russian market. As many yachting executives agree, with a fleet of almost ninety yachts from eighteen different countries there are obviously benefits reaped from a tourism perspective but there also lies a good opportunity to attract new markets.

Comparing Malta to the Oman and Cascais in Portugal would lead one to believe that Malta has the capability to follow suit and host similar yachting events. Keeping it smaller in size and recurring according to Ritchie (2005) uses existing infrastructure, lowers investment of funds, helps minimize seasonality while providing good marketing and economic benefits while at the same time keeping it sustainably sound.

One respondent, part of the professional yachting fraternity who participates in many overseas regattas gave the researcher some figures based on the kind of revenues that can be earned from turning a yachting event into a strong tourism product. Examples such as the “Voile de St. Tropez” in France was said to have
reached as much as 50,000,000 euro in revenue for the week the yachting event took place and during Antigua Race Week 115,000,000 euro was the indicated earning, encouraging room for potential local development.

Through the interview with one of the key yachting executives behind the event, much was revealed with regards future plans to create a livelier program, initiating more inshore races while other events were also mentioned:

- The Medot Trophy beginning 2012
- The Malta Knights Trophy in collaboration with the Livorno Naval Academy
- Malta and the RMYC as the new winter base for Sail Coach International
- A “Virtual Race”.

As recorded through interviews with key yachting and tourism executives, there have been several enquiries from the MICE tourism business to hold a conference during race days. This is particularly interesting since the MICE tourism business is a lucrative niche market (Allen et Al 2008). The RMYC understand the value in collaborating with MTA towards including the RMSR as a valuable MICE tourism product.

**Summary**

Evidence from research suggests that yachting has the capability of lending itself to so many different areas of investment and business that can be exploited towards gaining benefits not only from a tourism perspective but with a positive effect on all areas of industry, overwintering for yachts as one case in point. While acknowledging the purpose of the RMSR as part of a stronger
tourism product and its contribution aimed at the future MICE business will assist towards the potential development of a quality tourism outcome.

As Borg (2012a) reflects, and as seen through research found at the National Archives in Malta, “the early days were important in establishing the value of the race and providing stimulus for further investment in yachting as a tourism activity and event”. The focus towards attracting sailing events would therefore increase the opportunity to update and innovate on the existing infrastructure, while adding quality to the tourism product offered and the investment prospects.

Key Findings

- Evidence from the research suggests focusing on the uniqueness in particular the start and race spirit
- Increasing the popularity of yachting events – sailing academies
- Creating long-term business strategies such as over wintering

Sustainable and profitable advancements towards tourism.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction:

The scope of this dissertation was to analyse how Malta as a tourism destination is optimizing the benefits it could gain from the RMSR towards building a stronger niche tourism product. The research set out to identify its present day status as one of the three top offshore yacht races world-wide and what contributing factors have assisted towards it growing popularity. Research examined the contemporary challenges behind the event and how they affect the yachting tourism industry; analysing how the difficulties can be improved towards potentially building a stronger tourism product.

The reason for choosing this topic was to examine how best practices can be applied in strengthening the yacht tourism industry. The origin of the race occurred under the auspices of the RMYC as a local yacht race between two British yacht enthusiasts and Maltese yachting fraternity, in the late 60’s, when there was a distinct focus on offering yachting as a tourism activity. Unfortunately due to the lack of public awareness on the benefits that could be derived from this event and deprived of statistical data, the industry and the event has suffered likewise from a local perspective.

Yet through research, the study has indicated that the reputation this event has earned has led to the flourishing of many positive opportunities for Malta. It offers huge potential gains from an image, re-visit and business tourism perspective. The negative issues associated with Malta’s mass tourism could now be altered by attracting a more affluent tourist, the likes of the Russian and
MICE industry, who are keen on yachting as a niche market and in particular the RMSR as a yacht racing tourism event.

Since its inception the event has grown in popularity every year, survived a ten year break, and attracted the sponsorship of Rolex and its extensive media coverage network. This event generates limited negative environmental and social impacts on the host community. The event faces a lack of recognition, as an integral part of the sport event tourism calendar, due to the lack of information available on the potential gains towards developing the industry.

The reputation the event has earned attracted the government and tourism authority alike to look into the potential value of the yachting industry as a strong niche market with Malta being defined, “as a centre of maritime excellence”. (Superyacht news, 2013) Solutions towards altering the cultural maritime outlook, the quality of service offered and facilities updated like additional berthing can contribute successfully towards building a strong maritime tourism.

In order to keep the development of the RMSR steady while creating opportunities to capitalize on from a business investment point of view, the collection of statistical data is an essential first step towards creating an economic impact assessment. Better communication between stakeholders is essential and awareness amongst the local community is also necessary. Of utmost importance is the revival of Malta’s dormant maritime culture, revitalizing its boat-building skills to complement the services needed to boost the over-wintering industry. Integrating a more sustainable approach towards tourism by encouraging yachting could assist towards building a stronger blue tourism economy in Malta.
5.2 Final Implications of Key Findings –

From the results presented, clear micro and macro issues emerge. At a micro level the results, explore issues raised for the continued success of the RMSR in Malta. its contribution to Maltese tourism and the way forward for the future. At a macro level the results from the research explore general issues for the future of events and what can be learnt from hosting large events, yacht racing in particular.

The RMSR as the RMYC’s main event has proved its strength based on its exponential increase in race entries, from a number of diverse nationalities, crewed by the most professional yachtmen and their top class yachts which have attracted much media attention. Rolex’s image as the official sponsor offers much credibility to the event contributing towards RMYC’s ability to host similar events. The “race spirit” towards re-visitation; an invaluable tourism concept the RMSR is so well-known for. This has encouraged some participants to create stronger ties with Malta through property acquisition, business prospects and over wintering.

The awareness of yacht racing is highlighted here as a sustainable and integral part of Malta’s new sport event tourism product. It offers Malta the opportunity to revive its maritime history and cultural heritage whilst utilising local skills and existing infrastructure. Linking the maritime industry to the recurring themed event, the RMSR, has created a positive outcome in the destination’s advancement. The development of the yachting industry offers numerous benefits in a broad spectrum.
The event sets out to encourage the host community to familiarise themselves with the discipline of sailing as a life skill. Encouraging sailing academies and the awareness of opportunities that can be gained from the industry could help towards its development while simultaneously strengthening traditions. The 2012-2016 Tourism Policy (MTCE, 2012a) has supported this by encouraging sailing academies to form part of the event and similar upcoming events. This event at present mainly uses volunteer services and therefore offers very few employment benefits for the local community yet in the long-term employment it is visible through the development of the industry. This event offers the local SME community the chance to discover and approach business opportunities that can be gained. The RMSR has helped contribute towards the plausibility of developing the yachting industry, following a number of recent opportunities.

The niche tourism RMSR has not yet developed its full potential. There exists ample room for advancement. The reputation of the RMSR has offered Malta’s tourism industry the ideal opportunity to apply its best practices towards strengthening its tourism product. There are very few negative impacts associated with the event evaluating it as a highly sustainable one. Yet unfortunately the quality of hospitality services is still not up to standard with regards to three and four star hotels and restaurants. Facilities offered at marinas and yard services suffer issues of low quality as they require an update in infrastructure and services. The lack of training in the tourism and yachting sector is an issue that affects the industry.

The RMSR has also prompted to change Malta’s image as a sun, sand and sea and to add another of its greatest natural resources, the wind.

197
The lack of statistical data on the race and the limited local crew participation makes it increasingly more challenging to prove its success. Therefore this lack of interest in seafaring has resulted in a downtrend in the availability of professional local crew. The absence of an economic study and plan for the event’s development has curtailed attracting support from government. At present the foremost negative issue is the inability to contain all boats in close proximity of the yacht club decimating the fleet of participating yachts consequently detracting from the intensity of the team spirit. This issue is long-standing and therefore the need for better communication between the RMYC and MTA is a necessity towards the event’s progress. The yachting sector and the tourism industry need to synergise their efforts ensuring a better quality tourism product.

On a national level the lack of previous research and statistical data available on yachting in general is the main contributing factor towards this deficiency, exhibiting total disregard from the authorities concerned. Yet if the RMSR, as the last international yacht race of the season allows Malta the ideal opportunity to position itself as an over-wintering destination, then research into its development is crucial. The berthing issue as a key contributing factor is of pivotal importance as it hinders the industry from moving forward in so many aspects.

The RMSR fits very well as a sustainable tourism event as it creates very few negative impacts. From an operational perspective with regards to solving issues and management difficulties it is critical for further growth and success. Communication between stakeholders is of paramount importance in order to ensure challenges are dealt with in the most effective way possible.
The RMSR forms part of an international circuit of yacht races; the Rolex Series and therefore it is essential that quality global standards are maintained and achieved throughout the event.

The RMSR contributes significantly towards the requirements specified by the 2012-2016 Tourism Policy (MTCE, 2012a) directed at attracting quality niche markets, in particular the Russian market, following a concerted decision to operate more regular flights and the issue of visas. The event’s positive outcome initiated a request put forward by the MICE industry to choose Malta as venue. The positive image this event generates in top niche markets provides much credibility for Malta while assisting with Malta’s branding issue.

The program of events takes place in many locations which allows it to be developed on a nation-wide level, consequently offering a variety of prospects to be explored. The twinning agreement signed between the port of Birgu and St. Tropez towards sustainable maritime tourism proves that the government is conscious of the benefits that can be gained from developing the industry. The creation of stronger international links initiated by yacht racing, in particular the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” as a case in point, ‘cultivating a sustainable maritime approach’.

Other potential events that have helped create better international yachting contacts have resulted in upcoming events such the Medot Trophy which started in 2012 and a future enquiry, the Malta Knight’s Trophy, offering the industry much hope of growth.

The standards expected for an event of this global status encourage one to identify what the building blocks are for other international yachting events.
whether bidding for events or sustaining the event: An essential and initial component is a place’s suitability; ‘iconic’ as part of a well-known region or backdrop with temperate weather conditions and wind...There must be calendar consistency, for example the event happening on the same weekend and in the same place in order to assist with planning.

Clearer target market profiling assists better marketing strategies and raise sponsorship value. A solid regional and national marketing and communication strategies are essential in order to attain long-term benefits. Strong support from local government and tourist authorities is essential. The local community need to be active as part of the event. The insight required to innovate on the sport

The RMSR forms part of the Rolex Offshore Series and places it amongst other international offshore races of its kind that offer: Good training programs in the lead up to some of the most well-know offshore races such as the Fastnet, ARC Transatlantic and Sydney to Hobart. Unforgettable start supported by tourism authorities such as the Sydney Harbour and a well-planned finish offer supplementary events such as the Taste of Tasmania Food Festival in Hobart. A great ‘race spirit’ as part of shore side activities similar to the races in the Caribbean, like the RORC Caribbean 600

A maritime culture amongst its local community is not imperative but it would give an edge as seen through the example of the Oman. (Yachtracing, 2012b)
5.3 Recommendations

The following are a list of recommendations which have emerged from this paper;

Recommendations on a micro, national level are listed as follows.

- The creation of a common space is essential. This includes a better registration and briefing which should also be addressed by the yacht club. Enquiring how yacht racing participation amongst locals can be encouraged through better communication. Creating a tourism plan and comprehensive policy based on the event strategy would assist in development.

- Research suggests the need to collect statistical data towards placing an economic value on the industry. Such data would allow for a better appreciation of the market’s value and would inevitably lead towards an interest in creating more berthing options and updating infrastructure.

- Use the RMSR sailing events and over wintering option to update infrastructure in marinas and yards and up quality in hotels and hospitality establishments.

- Using the RMSR as part of sports re-imaging would assist Malta’s marketing strategy towards attracting more quality niche markets. Creating a profiling exercise amongst participants would help towards targeting who best to approach.

- Marketing Malta as a destination fit for hosting off peak yachting events and yachting tourism charters year round by creating increased yachting activity, incentives and attractive packages.
- Creating a more intense vibration by the shore-side similar to the start day of the Sydney to Hobart on Boxing Day on Sydney Harbour. The mid-week offshore race too can be developed into a tourist attraction as it takes place on the east coast where most hotel and hospitality establishments lie.

- Supplementary events, introducing stadium sailing and the Virtual Race could help make sailing more accessible to the public and tourists alike. Including the host community in such events and encouraging employment would add further value to the product as a means to attracting these various groups. This can be achieved through the organization of training workshops, activities for children and conferences to increase involvement by different groups in the week leading up to the race.

- Increasing stakeholder involvement and collaboration with ministries involved, MTA, MIA (Malta International Airport), MSTA (Malta Sail Training Association) and RMYC would establish better links. Developments in reviving a stronger maritime culture which could be initiated by encouraging sailing as part of youth education and the inclusion of sailing academies.

- Continued support towards other similar events such as the “Trophee Bailli de Suffren” is essential as part of the progress of the industry. Interest from MTA is vital and good communication between stakeholders of paramount importance towards sharing the knowledge of best practice.

- A list of recommendations from an international level, has also emerged which could be applied towards strengthening Malta’s yachting tourism product.

- Evidence highlights Oman’s success at branding its country based on its maritime culture and leading the way in Sport Business in the region.
Initiating its revival through the importance directed at its youth culture and sail training academies. First steps have been taken by the Tourism Policy 2012 – 2016 and the Malta Sail Training Association and this should be further encouraged.

- The Cascais region in Portugal has been very successful at building a good reputation towards hosting yachting events. Its focus on good planning, updated infrastructure and good communication between stakeholders has made it possible to build a strong foundation in the industry. This in turn has encouraged locals to feel responsible towards its success. Such a model could be applied towards the local scene in developing Malta as a yachting destination.

- In the case of New Zealand, observing how it has built a thriving business community based on its insight, passion and local skills in yachting is exemplary. Malta too could showcase its yachting expertise through a number of business strategies and tourism projects. The strength of Auckland’s destination brand and its ability to use its yachting infrastructure, the America’s Cup Village, as a tourist attraction is an interesting observation towards developing the RMSR as a tourism attraction.

Yacht racing events and the RMSR creates highly positive impacts and use many of Malta’s natural elements and cultural attributes. Based on the blue growth strategy, Malta’s yachting approach can ensure long-term benefits for the development of quality niche markets while contributing towards a better community outlook for the future of the island.
References


Borg, T. (2012c) Sailing Rolex Middle Sea Race. It’s 90…and still counting. Times Of Malta. p.34 08/10


Galea Debono, F. (2012).Vittoriosa to twin with St. Tropez.Times of Malta. 25/07


Hon Sec RMYC (1971) Letter dated 15/01/1971 to MGTB. National Archives Malta accessed 15/02/2013


“Il-Bizzilla” Air Malta In-flight magazine (2013) Substantial increase in flight capacity to Russia, issue 4 April 2013


MTCE (2012) Overview of Tourism in Malta, Research Unit, MTA, Malta.

MTCE (2012a) Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands 2012/2016


Peregin, C. (2013) Malta’s Tourism Boom: How the islands have hit a record in four of the past five years, Interview with Minister of MTCE, Mario De Marco, The Times of Malta 05/01 pg.5


RMSR (2013) Official Rolex Middle Sea race website www.rmsr.com


Super yacht news (2013) Yachting hub could boost Malta’s refit and services sector www.superyachtnews.com/business/19469/yachting_hub_could_boost_maltas_refit_and_services_sectors.htm accessed 12/06

The Sunday Times (2013) Reaching new tourism heights: interview with Dr Mario De Marco, Minister for Tourism, Culture and the Environment. 06/01 p.21


Times of Malta (2012a) Sport column 2012. Medot Trophy – in record time from Trieste to Valletta. p. 35 04/10

Times of Malta (2012b) Sport column 2012. Esimit Europa 2 sails into port. Sailing the Rolex Middle Sea Race. p. 3 19/10

Times of Malta (2013). More berths planned for Mgarr’s harbour. 15/03/


Weiler & Hall (1992) Special Interest Tourism. Belhaven UK


Yacht racing (2012b) Sailing as a development platform in UK and Oman. www.yachtracing.biz/blog/2012/10/sailing-development-programmes/ accessed 30/10/2012

Yacht racing (2013) The Volvo Ocean Race comes back to Lisbon Portugal http://www.yachtracing.biz/blog/2013/03/volvo-back-to-lisbon/ accessed 04/03/13

Yacht racing (2013a) Sailing Arabia the Tour Part of Oman Sail’s Tourism Strategy. www.yachtracing.biz/blog/2013/02/oman-luxury-tourism-supported-by-satt/ accessed 13/02/2013

Appendice list of supplementary literature


Louay, H. (2012a) Hurley & Boyle win double handed Middle Sea with only minutes to spare (podcast here) Retrieved 02/02/13 from www.afloat.ie

MTCE (2010) The Profile of the “Sports Tourist” in 2010 Research Unit, Malta Tourism Authority.


Muscat, R. 2006. Malta’s Potential in the Yachting Tourism Market. BA (Hons) University of Malta.

Rocco, S. 2008. Sporting Culture: The role of Sports Tourism in Inculcating a Sport Culture in Malta. BA (Hons) University of Malta


Appendices

Appendix 1: Calendar of upcoming yacht events organized by the RMYC


1st May, 2013 - Gewiss Marzamemi Weekend..

17th June, 2013 – Slam Regatta

28th June, 2013 – Citadel Ragusa Weekend.


26th September, 2013 – Oiltanking Vega Offshore Race..


13th December, 2013 – Medcomms Round Malta Race.
## Appendix 2 : Rolex’s List of Coverage Worldwide

### WORLDWIDE COVERAGE RMSR 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Reuters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUSSIA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAIN</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREECE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGENTINA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZECH</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALTA</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMANY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIA</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANCE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROATIA</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH AFRICA</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWISS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHINA</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONG KONG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLOVENIA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URUGUAY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAZIL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PORTUGAL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUTCH</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 3: Crew List RMSR 2012

| NAME OF YACHT   | No | AUSTRIAN | GERMAN | ITALIAN | CROATIAN | SWISS | RUSSIAN | MAORI | SPANISH | DUTCH | IRISH | BRITISH | S. AFRICAN | SLOVENIA | SAI | AMERICAN | AUSTRALIA | ISRAELI | GREECE | NZ | DANISH | LITHUANIAN |
|----------------|----|----------|--------|---------|----------|-------|---------|--------|---------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------|     |----------|-----------|--------|-------|     |--------|------------|
| Aqua           | 10 | 10       |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| AAG BIG ONE    | 15 | 2        | 8      | 1       | 1        |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Abracadabra    | 9  | 9        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Aliraja Bluorange | 10 | 10       |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Amber Miles    | 12 | 1        | 9      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Alexandra      | 8  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Dreams         | 8  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Artie          |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Aki Sport Three | 8  | 8        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| ATAME          | 2  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Azuree         | 2  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Bet 1128       | 4  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Bellamia       | 7  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Bcube          | 12 | 12       |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| 82 Natali      | 14 | 11       | 2      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Cuba Libre     | 1  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Cantankerous   | 10 | 9        | 1      |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Comanche       | 10 |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Raider II      |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Cippa Lippa    | 12 | 12       |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Du 4           | 4  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Dinah          | 2  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Elusive        | 13 | 7        | 1      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Elusive        | 13 | 7        | 1      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Elusive        |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Esimit Europa 2| 19 | 9        | 1      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| ELANKA II      | 8  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Fekruna        | 9  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Fulcrum II     | 5  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Foreign Affair |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Faiaoahe       | 2  | 2        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Galileo        |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Eh01           |    |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Geisha         | 10 | 1        | 7      | 1       | 1        |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Hi Fidelity    | 11 | 2        | 1      |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| JOKER          | 10 | 1        | 5      | 1       |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Jstorm         | 8  | 8        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Kohinoor       | 8  | 1        | 5      |         | 1        |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| KUKA LIGHT     | 6  | 5        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Le Cuq Hardy   | 9  | 9        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Little Emily   | 5  |          |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Uberteine      | 12 | 12       |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Lusitano       | 3  | 3        |        |         |          |       |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |
| Lupa of London | 19 | 2        | 3      | 1       | 6        | 3      |         |        |         |       |       |         |            |          |     |          |            |        |       |     |        |            |

212
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Wins</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
<th>10th</th>
<th>11th</th>
<th>12th</th>
<th>13th</th>
<th>14th</th>
<th>15th</th>
<th>16th</th>
<th>17th</th>
<th>18th</th>
<th>19th</th>
<th>20th</th>
<th>21st</th>
<th>22nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LISA</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Point</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAGIA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med Spirit</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICK 1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Child</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noonmark VI</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUNO</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otra Vez</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORION</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimum 3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POGO 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLIS PLAY</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pita Maha</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAN</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel Urban H. Design</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strekosa</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing Logic-Lancelot 2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stig</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SABRE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAKTI</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seawolf of Southhampton</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skipperclub</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speedy</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow Wolf</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCIARA</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing Team Belka</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ton Ton Kabestan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Sisters</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustmarque Quokka</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaquita</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varuna</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vento di Sardegna</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOSCIA’</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIKESHA II</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISCONTE</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vola Viola</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WinDriven</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XP-ACT Banks Sails Racing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zenhea Takesha</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>688</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Matrix 1: Explore the role of the RMSR on our tourism product.

<p>| Int 1    | Keen yachtsmen | 5 times | Duty to make sure the RMYC gives a good service - Interest to increase awareness through working with MTA - |
| Int 2    | Work placement | Must work | Media dept | More could be done to capitalize on it |
| Int 3    | Keen yachtsmen | 5 times | Used to be his duty to make sure the RMYC gives a good service - Part of the international but not much interest shown by MTA |
| Int 4    | Ex captain | 2 times | Duty to look after the larger yachts in alternate venue | No other events coinciding to help build the event. Identify the success of the suba-diving industry. |
| Int 5    | Passion for yachting | N/A | Position held | Unsure as to how seriously MTA take the event |
| Int 6    | Passion for yachting | 13 times | Position held – check safety | More could be done to capitalize on it. – America’s Cup |
| Int 7    | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Int 8    | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Int 9    | Proximity to Italy | By chance | 8 consecutive times, a “must do” | To try racing |
| Int 10   | Through the RMSR | Comes to race | 6 consecutive times | Challenging race, great scenery, good time of year |
| Int 11   | Through the RMSR | Been here on business &amp; to race. Would like to bring family | 2 times | Liked Malta on first visit. Wanted to return to race |
| Int 12   | Been here on a yacht before | Through yachting | First time racing | Owner like historical places. Curious - good opportunity |
| Int 13   | Childhood curiosity | Through the RMSR – | Once – the year | Part of the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Int 14</th>
<th>Trip as part of shipping industry</th>
<th>Lives in Malta part time. Yacht is here.</th>
<th>Many times</th>
<th>Based out of here so works!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Int 15</td>
<td>Through yachting</td>
<td>Through yachting</td>
<td>2 times</td>
<td>Owner interested to take part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 16</td>
<td>Through the RMSR</td>
<td>Interest to visit Malta and take part in the event. Arrived early to visit Malta</td>
<td>First time</td>
<td>Enjoy racing in a new location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 17</td>
<td>Through the RMSR</td>
<td>“Would not be here if it wasn’t for the RMSR”</td>
<td>8/10 times</td>
<td>Heard a lot about the RMSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 18</td>
<td>Interested in Malta as a location – British base</td>
<td>Through yachting and racing</td>
<td>3 times</td>
<td>Had been living in Malta for 5 years before racing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMON THEMES</td>
<td>Keen about yachting &amp; RMSR. Visited (liked) Malta previously on work.</td>
<td>Visited for yachting especially to race. Interest to visit Malta</td>
<td>Organisers want to make it a success. Likes to re-visit each year for the event</td>
<td>Lack of interest from MTA, Malta does not capitalize on the race. No coinciding events. Essential part of racing calendar. Owners curious to visit Malta. Yachting is a reason for living in Malta.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 5: Matrix 2: Identify the factors that make this event so beneficial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q5: What key factors have made this race increasingly popular? What factors motivated you to visit Malta and participate in the race?</th>
<th>Q6: Do you visit any other yacht races overseas? Please mention</th>
<th>Q7: How does the RMSR compare to these other yacht events?</th>
<th>Q8a, b, c, d: Do you like to take part in any of the RMSR events? What other activities do you like to take part in while here? Where are you staying? How often do you like to dine out?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 1</strong></td>
<td>Exciting &amp; unique course, unpredictable weather. Integral part of yachting calendar – an icon. Product. Malta is ideal for such an event</td>
<td>Commodores Cup in Cowes, Jury at IRC</td>
<td>RMSR offers personal service, fun factor &amp; unforgettable experience v.important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 2</strong></td>
<td>Rolex &amp; their media boost. Big foreign names want to compete, “iconic”. Begins &amp; ends in Malta. Opened the Russian market. Possible S. African.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 3</strong></td>
<td>Int event sponsored by Rolex. Unique integral to yacht racing. Image. Treat it more like a product.</td>
<td>Sydney Hobart, Rolex Maxi Cup, Swan Cup Porto Cervo</td>
<td>Compares well!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 4</strong></td>
<td>Rolex gives credibility. Big names= more exposure.</td>
<td>Voile de St. Tropez</td>
<td>Compares well! Need for more of an atmosphere on land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 5</strong></td>
<td>The event is a great opportunity to introduce Yachting in Malta. Ideal image coverage.</td>
<td>Baillii de Suffren</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 6</strong></td>
<td>ICONIC – one of the top 3 races. ROLEX. Attracts winning crew. Unique course.</td>
<td>Antigua Race Week</td>
<td>Unique cannot be compared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 7</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 8</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Int 9</strong></td>
<td>Malta is good location.- unique blend of cultures</td>
<td>Med races</td>
<td>Well organized, friendly staff. Like to PROMOTE IT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

216
| Int 15 | Good rep up with the best! Location as historical. Crew like to take part. | Giraglia, Roma per tutti, Med regattas. | Compares well! Good organization. Best RMSR event was held at GHM in 2007. Yacht together! | Happy at Excelsior. Like to visit Birgu, Valletta. Eats out on recommend a lot. |
| Int 18 | Malta based. The RMSR as showcase coz unique! Connectivity is key. | Voile, Cowes, Rolex, Maxi Cup | A lot going for Malta but more can be done! | Need more events happening for tourism. Involve sailing schools |
Appendix 6 Matrix 3: The key contemporary challenges for the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Int 2</td>
<td>Very stressful position to keep up standards</td>
<td>Must work long hours</td>
<td>Issues with the way the club works – lack of communication. Need for a manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 3</td>
<td>Rise in participation. Tracking system for armchair sailors. Int Coverage</td>
<td>Issues like berthing, needs own marina. Malta does not offer a high enough quality</td>
<td>More local media reportage to create local pride in product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Feel like “it is an obligation” for MTA. Lack of bed nights. Must appoint someone to look after yachting.</td>
<td>Look after crew &amp; offer visitors an experience. More EVENTS! Promote in Europe. Local need to feel part of the event like V18 project concept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Berthing issue. MTA encouraged find out! Better country brand.</td>
<td>Better connections – invite other yacht clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 6</td>
<td>Rolex has build the RMSR image</td>
<td>Berthing in one area to create more of a vibe. Lack of prof crew</td>
<td>Better hospitality quality – develop potential – spinoffs. Create more biz and investment for yachting industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 9</td>
<td>Club premises &amp; more yachts</td>
<td>Event spread out</td>
<td>Better Networking, be web esp registration. Better intro at registration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 10</td>
<td>A lot of change at club and in Malta more modernized.</td>
<td>Delivery to Malta. Weather, pontoons.</td>
<td>Facilities but not imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 11</td>
<td>Change of course anti-clockwise. Better organized. Bigger yachts.</td>
<td>GHM too far from 5 star hotels</td>
<td>All yachts same location. Needs to be more awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 12</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Event in diff locations. Shore support &amp; dock space</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 13</td>
<td>Island developed. Event better organized.</td>
<td>GHM too far at first! Moving location takes time.</td>
<td>All yachts same location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 15</td>
<td>In 2007 at GHM was best. A lot of development nowadays.</td>
<td>The successful management of the event</td>
<td>One location! Club must be aware of participant’s needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 16</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The organization but not relevant as all good.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 17</td>
<td>Anti clockwise now better.</td>
<td>The course, weather.</td>
<td>Yachts together. Make it more of a visitor attraction. Make more of start. Like Sydney!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 18</td>
<td>Changed sponsor to Rolex. Then moved from local to international!</td>
<td>Weather for yachts. Management and rigorous planning! Developing an event might cause issues that could lead to public disturbance and crime.</td>
<td>So much is lost! Must capitalize More awareness. Include the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMON THEMES</td>
<td><strong>ROLEX = race from local to international. Rise in record entries &amp; quality. Change to anti clockwise. New club better facilities. Malta modernized. Event better organized. Innovative tracking system. MTA came on board to promote in new marketing strategy.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Course &amp; logistics for crew. Issue of bad weather. BERTHING in one location. Several locations &amp; more events will build the event. Lack of a data collected. Scarcity of competent crew available. Lack of quality product. Growing an event could lead to social disturbance and crime in some cases.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yachts in one location. Would help give more of a vibe. An economic study is imperative towards measuring success. Offer better packages for family &amp; friends visiting. Take better care of crew. Awareness within local community. V18. Networking overseas – more business OVERWINTERING.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 7 Matrix 4: The potential of yachting events as part of a stronger tourism product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q12: What makes this race so unique?</th>
<th>Q13: What could be encouraged to make this event more popular amongst visitors? What other events might be able to offer at the same time?</th>
<th>Q14: Would you visit Malta again on holiday or leave your yacht here for the winter season?</th>
<th>Q15: In what way do you see yachting events improving our tourism product?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Int 1</td>
<td>The start is the best part – GH so unique. Sailing not great with spectator; great footage. Fun factor.</td>
<td>The Mid week coastal race</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>More inshore races. Include MICE biz. Sail coach. Medot, branding image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 2</td>
<td>The start. Malta’s location. Scenic course</td>
<td>Need for better communication between MTA &amp; RMYC</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Media dept. Over 90 yachts from 19 countries. Attracts new markets. Coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 3</td>
<td>The start.</td>
<td>MTA needs to see its worth. “Why do the fireworks festival and MTV get more publicity?”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Taken 13 years to generate half a mil. It generates more! Need to be seen as a conference of 1,000. Top events are effected by so many contributing factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 4</td>
<td>The start which remains in everyone’s mind.</td>
<td>More shore events. Include local events. Sailing regattas need to become more popular locally.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The quality of tourist yachting attracts will help create better tourism product. More y events will strengthen RMSR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 5</td>
<td>The start!</td>
<td>Include events – conference &amp; seminars.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Product quality – unfortunately issues locally!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 6</td>
<td>The start and scenic course throughout.</td>
<td>Create Race week &amp; other events coinciding</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The tourist is unique, who have an interest in property, setting up a biz (tax) &amp; overwintering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 9</td>
<td>Fun factor!</td>
<td>Locals first need to be aware of the event. Dinghy regattas.</td>
<td>Yes for another race. Overwintering is a good idea – work done &amp; use it.</td>
<td>Friends come to see start. Prize for web trackers – cyber race like Volvo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 10</td>
<td>Location, scenery &amp; course. The weather.</td>
<td>Inform tourism staff about the start event. Airport. Yacht accessible to public.</td>
<td>Plan to stay a month longer and sail around Malta. Wants to do Marzamemi. Wintering option &amp; use Ryanair</td>
<td>Rising popularity of RMSR must help tourism! Foreign crew needed so adds to tourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 11</td>
<td>The course starting and finishing in same great location.</td>
<td>Must add more events to coincide like food festivals/boat shows</td>
<td>Plan to come on holiday with family.</td>
<td>RMSR help dev areas. Attract family &amp; friends. Ex. Voile 50,000,000 Antigua Week 115, 000,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 12</td>
<td>The unpredictable course</td>
<td>Inform tourists. Create other events to draw everyone’s</td>
<td>Come again to race but otherwise prefers Palma</td>
<td>RMSR exposes Malta as a yachting destination. Attracts owners &amp; family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

220
| Int 14 | The start! The course. | MTA need to inform the hotels. Create a full week of activities. | All Malta based and happy to leave yacht here. | Many choose to revisit! Perfect image for yachting!! |
| Int 15 | Last of season. The start. | Activities first need to be open to tourists but maybe target the right audience. | Would revisit with family to discover. Would suggest over-wintering if price is ok. | Gives perfect image! Could attract affluent tourism market. Rolex events attract re-visits. |
| Int 16 | Location. Good time of year for a race. | Not sure if making more commercial is good. Better inform higher quality tourists. | Definitely revisit!! Cheaper to over-winter in Greece. | Rolex image & coverage attract the affluent market. Good promotion for destination. |
| Int 18 | Unique in every way!! Use the start for branding. | Create a whole week of events-food festivals, regattas, parade of sail. Call it Race Week. Approach clubs and similar yacht races. | N/A | Help towards a nice brand! Visuals!! Create a film. Major of St. Tropez visited inform people at voile before. MTA take advantage! Promoted & developed into a major event. Advertise it. Develop the start into a spectacle. Coastal race for tourism. |
| COM | Start – Opportunity for destination branding. Televise the course and create stadium sailing. Fun factor! | Starting opportunity is the perfect occasion to capitalize on a week full of events! Lack of communication between MTA and RMYC – Grand Prix. Target events to audience plus supplementary ones for family, friends, the public and tourist. | Revisit idea is very strong as seen in objective 1. Many see it as a perfect REVISIT opportunity. Otherwise the OVERWINTERING option – issue of berthing space needs to be remedied. Accessibility and connectivity | The top coverage puts Malta as the ultimate yachting brand. Making it an ideal option for chartering. Over 90 yachts from 19 countries allows for a good platform – intro to the affluent tourist interested in property, business and overwintering. $$ to be made put in comparison to other events. Presently it had led to the Medot Trophy, Sail Coach, MICE and an idea for another international event. |

THEMES
Appendix 8:

Interview with Tourism Exective 1 MTA- 1030 – 1130 (1hour)

Recently back from the Active Travel Show at the Excel in London (17-20 Jan) and The London Boat Show (11-19 Jan).
http://londonboatshow.com/2013/exhibitors_area/exhibitorsearch.aspx?&Category=0

Government has decided to support Sports Tourism by allocating a bigger fund.

MTA’s interest in the event started when Rolex decided to sponsor the RMSR – wanted to be affiliated with the brand to attract a better visitor.

RMYC & MTA riding on Rolex’s brand, experience & PR ability for international coverage. “We choose to ride on Rolex’s PR machine”.

MTA’s role in the RMSR event is to use the race to promote Malta as a destination
The RMSR start in the Grand Harbour an unbeatable location!
- Apply for funding for sport tourism ventures
- Use the event as promotion for sailing in Malta – cover page Visit Malta’s latest brochure.
- Include and promoted the RMSR through the website. A banner closer to October.
- Market the event to the main source markets and in particular Russia this year.
- Create awareness through adverts in overseas lifestyle publications.
- Promote sailing as family holidays/ sailing to youngster is school holidays.
- Establish contact with the Commodore regularly with regards funding allocated by MTA
- Bring journalists – (hosted them myself through GHM) Names mentioned in Diary appendices

RMSR has helped build a stronger MICE product – request for outdoor sports.

The www.u-sail.com incentive set up by the RMSR Race Officer Peter Dimech could work as a ripple effect.
Told Suzanne about my meeting with Tamas at the RMYC [www.sailcoach.com](http://www.sailcoach.com) choosing Malta as it’s present location to teach professional yachts people how to coach sailing and yacht racing. The business prospect to set up a part of the course to be done at UOM for accreditation purposes.

Suzanne encouraged me to look into the aspect of berthing opportunities for yachts wishing to visit Malta.

Suzanne told me that the biggest issue with yachting in Malta is the lack of cruising ground, so the plan is to include Sicily or offer a number of other outdoor sports like cycling, walking and rock-climbing as a package. My response was one not use the RMSR course as a proto-type for what a trail one might like to follow (see heritage trails/ pilgrimage travel)

Football gets the largest amount of requests and lately dancing, marshal arts, snooker and even hockey. Unfortunately there are no local hockey opponents so it cannot be offered as part of sports tourism.

Biggest problem with Sports Tourism is the lack of data collected. For example the departure questionnaire has no mention of Sports Tourism.

MTA & KMS has come up with a strategy to give an incentive of 5 euros to encourage foreign sports clubs to send their sports people here to train.

The opportunity to collect data and encourage a better sports culture.

KMS is promoting sailing – contacted Chairman Bernard Vassallo on tourism projects.

I asked if there was any more consideration for other yacht races. Last year MTA had been approached about creating another yacht race but everyone is holding off until the elections are through in March. Malta is a great location as it’s en route to all yachting hubs but the issue would be to find a spot in the yachting calendar and the funding for the event. (See yachtingbiz.net – how yacht races demand destination to pay for such events)
* Asked if there were any intentions to create other events around the same time as the RMSR like the classic car [www.vallettagrandprix.com](http://www.vallettagrandprix.com)

There unfortunately had been little communication as been done as the start coincided with the start of the RMSR but more would be done to co-ordinate next year.

Mr Puli underlined the strong interest that there is in motor sport. He said that sports tourism last year attracted 41,000 tourists, pumping €2.2 million into the economy, twice the amount in 2009 when a scheme to promote sports tourism was announced.


Largest overseas participant event to happen locally is the Land Rover Marathon end of February with about 2,000 visitors, double the amount of tourists visiting for the RMSR.

The RMSR is great for destination marketing. This year is attracted some new markets like the Russian market.

Rolex’s exposure has helped increase yacht charter enquiries.
Appendix 9:

Interview with tourism Executive 2 MHRA - Private Office – 40 mins

Write a product plan for MTA – Malta Policy

Framework to be followed

Biggest handicap no statistics held for yachting! NO DATA COLLECTED!! No interest?!

I should have interviewed random local & tourists during the time of the event

October is still a month when a lot is happening – must look at an event in relation to what is happening at the same time – Potential is great!

Look at the customer base in October – all airlines operating with full capacity.

Event is very good for the MICE business – mix of tour operators & single travelers. 1 MICE visitor= 3 regular visitors

He recommended that I must look at diving as a segment.

Who do you target for the RMSR? Understand the profile of the customer.

Travel alone or with family? Is Oct a good time to travel with a partner??

Analyse the RMSR as a sport product and how it can be marketed & promoted-

What can be done to increase its popularity?

What can be done to improve it?

Analyse where it fails -

Why is there such a lack of interest?

Measure interest – people who are not participating

Do the vast majority not even know it is taking place?
Important to be specific and focus on answers-

1. Where we are today.
2. What can be done to improve it.

Any event relies on how the visitor can get here – accessibility is key.
Focus on the destinations where there is interest and then look at the flights next…

Organisers should be the motivators – MTA should realize the importance of this research

Yachts increasing every year – how does that translate?
How do they measure success?
Numbers are important to us and how much is spent.

**IMPORTANT STEPS TO TAKE -**

Look at the progression over the past 10 years.

1. How success is measured
2. How the event is marketed/communicated.

3. What is the profile of the customer – participants & observers.
   a. where do they come from? b. do they stay in hotels and for how long?

Look at Croatia and benchmark – [www.upuhh.hr](http://www.upuhh.hr)
Appendix 10: DIARY of events and interviews

Tuesday 9th October
Pilot Study with member of RMYC

Saturday 13th October
Interview with yachting participant at RMYC

Monday 15th October
Interview with yachting participant at Excelsior.
Interview with yachting participant at RMYC

Tuesday 16th October
RMYC all day 12.30 Press Conference followed by interviews
Interview with 2 yachting participants at RMYC

Wednesday 17th October
COASTAL RACE leaving at 10am

Thursday 18th October
Interview with 2 yachting participants at GHM
Lunch at Tate café – restaurants and cafes all empty. Tourists unaware that it was were all the Maxis were berthed for the RMSR. No banners, NOTHING!
CREW PARTY held at the RMYC – very well frequented

Friday 19th October
Interview with yachting participant at GHM
Captains briefing at the RMYC at 5pm

Saturday 20th October
START OF THE RMSR
Hosted the journalists for MTA to the Rolex party at Upper Barrakka Gardens
Lunch with journalists at GHM rest. GHM hosted Major of St.Tropez.

Tuesday 23rd October
Interview with media personnel at RMYC
Interview with yachting veteran his home in Malta
Saturday 27th October
PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY AT Mediterranean Conference Centre.
Followed by party at the RMYC

Sunday 28th October
Interview with yachting participant at the RMYC

Wednesday 12th December
Interview with 2 yachting executives in their private offices
Interview with yachting executive at RMYC.

Thursday 20th December
Interview tourism executive from MHRA

Monday 17th December
Interview with yachting executive

Saturday 5th January
Interview yachting veteran

Wednesday 23rd January
Interview with executive from MTA

Friday 25th January
Interview with executive from Transport Malta.