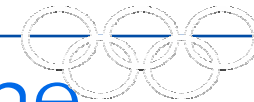




ATHINA 2004



Telecommunications for the Athens 2004 Olympic Games

Lessons Learned from a Consultant's Perspective



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Significant Delays in Construction

- **In almost all the venues (especially at the Olympic Stadium)**
- **In the road infrastructure in the greater Athens area (especially at the Marathon run)**

Huge Impact on:

- **OTE's Master Plan for the Games**
- **Construction of the Olympic fiber-optic rings**
- **Inside cabling construction**
- **Timeline for deployment tasks**
- **Timeline for test events**

Significant Delays in Construction

Lessons Learned

- **Telecom sponsor should be mindful of the huge risks taken by implementing inside cabling of the venues**
- **The media will expose your deployment delays regardless who is the true source of those delays**
- **Venue construction may be delayed for a myriad of reasons but the Games cannot be delayed!**

Construction of inside cabling “overnight” put tremendous pressure on the telecom sponsor and chewed up precious resources (labor and \$\$\$) at the worst possible time!

Change of Plans at a Late Stage

- **Ancient Olympia named as venue 9 months prior to Games**
- **Collapse of a cable conduit from the Olympic stadium to the International Broadcasting Center (IBC) building**

Big Impact on:

- **Construction of diverse paths**
- **Provisioning of services at an archeological site**
- **Employee safety**
- **Allocating resources (human and \$\$\$)**

Change of Plans at a Late Stage

Lessons Learned

- **Telecom sponsor should be mindful of the political decisions that may change “signed & sealed” plans**
- **The media is hostile to technical arguments when dealing with big attractions (return of Games after 1,693 yrs)**
- **Never reason with archeologists (work around them)**
- **You get “great publicity” by supporting political decisions**

From “beauty camera” to venue status:

Three diverse paths (two via fiber-optic cables and one via a radio link) were in place to ensure uninterrupted coverage of the events from the Ancient Olympia!!

A Surprise Visit by the IOC President (Jacques Rogge)



A Surprise Visit by the IOC President Lessons Learned (Have a jacket and a tie!!)



ISSUE 1: State of the Art Technology vs. 2-yr Freeze

Myth: The IOC wants state-of-the-art technology for the Games

Fact: The IOC wants mature technology that will be reliable during the Games (2-yr freeze on technology is a common rule of thumb)

ISSUE 2: “To Freeze or not to Freeze”

Myth: The sponsor company will adhere to a 2-yr freeze of technology

Fact: The sponsor is using the Games as a “showcase for new technology” and a unique opportunity to raise its international profile

Case Studies: OTE vs. COSMOTE (2004), Qwest (2002), BellSouth (1996)

NOTE: Software “4-month freeze” (100-day Olympic window violated), UMTS (3G Wireless)

ISSUE 3: Love-hate Relationship

Myth: The Organizing Committee and the sponsor will work smoothly toward the common goal of successful Games

Fact: Constant friction

- The telecom sponsor has paid the money and wants full control of telecom preparations
- The Organizing Committee, as a watchdog of the IOC, wants constant reassurances that everything is going fine and according to the Master Plan
- A third party is usually brought in to smooth out the friction

ISSUE 4: Perceived Threats

Myth: Biological, radiological, “asymmetric threats”

Fact: Probability of bomb exploding :

- in the Athens metro (like in Madrid) by foreign terrorists
- on a public bus (like in Israel) by foreign terrorists
- in a government facility by Greek anarchists

Probable Timeframe:

Not during the Games; rather but 3-4 months before (*i.e.*, just before the 100-day pre-Olympic Games security measures take effect)

Various Observations

1. Organizational Models:

- **Qwest (2002 Games):** Separate Olympic Dept. with:
 - many dedicated SMEs to plan, build, and operate the Olympic Network, and
 - its own budget to act autonomously
- **OTE (2004 Games):** Small Olympic Dept. with:
 - few SMEs acting as the interface with outside world and masking internal processes
 - without its own budget but relying on the traditional internal organizations to plan, build and operate the Olympic Network

Various Observations (Cont.)

2. Language & Culture:

- **“That’s all Greek to me”**
- **English the “official” language at ATHOC; Greek at OTE**
- **Translation nightmare of the Sydney 2000 documents**
- **Tasks done by “networking” & SMEs’ mutual agreement and understanding; not by the Master Plan**
- **Deadlines, commitments were not honored; a heroic, last-minute rush that made the Games a great success (“dream Games” according to the IOC President) was something expected according to the Greek culture but gave an “ulcer” to the IOC and the international community**

Parting Thoughts...

If you can make it in Athens....

You can make it in any Olympics!!!