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Paris 2024: the excellence of France’s events sector on full display

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Olympic Legacy

In terms of event design and creation, the success of Paris 2024 was firstly encapsulated by its opening and closing ceremonies. The Olympic Torch Relay, the highlight of the Olympic tradition, was orchestrated like a complete show on its own, involving artistic and technical prowess and an immersive mise en scène. The decision to host certain sports in legendary venues – such as equestrian events at the Palace of Versailles – enabled organisers to combine France’s cultural heritage with cutting-edge logistical precision.

This excellence also extended to temporary facility specialists tasked with transforming a variety of spaces into competition sites in record time. The installation of modular grandstands and optimised crowd flow management processes also enabled strict safety and comfort requirements to be met. As an example, a single French company installed no fewer than 160,000 grandstand seats. The use of pre-existing structures, in particular a number of exhibition sites, also enabled ten sports events to be hosted without the need to build four or five additional venues, which significantly reduced the event’s environmental impact. Designers, architects specialising in temporary structures, and installation and dismantling specialists came together to prove their extraordinary ability and efficiency to pull off this huge challenge.

Paris 2024 - Play Extra Time

Innovation – the driving force behind connected events

To make the Games unforgettable, the event sector also made full use of digital transformation technology. The use of paperless ticketing, algorithm-enhanced video protection, and the “My Paris Je T’aime”?app all illustrated a desire to create a streamlined yet safe experience. Augmented reality enabled the public to enjoy new and unexpected views of competitive events, while real-time crowd management simplified the movement of spectators to and from venues.

This digital revolution required a solid technical network behind it. The International Broadcast Centre, which was installed at Le Bourget, was staffed by 3,000 technicians working 24/7 to manage flow data equivalent to that of the City of London over a one-year period. Orange connected 120 Olympic and Paralympic sites to ensure high-performance network coverage, and 500km of optic fibre were laid for the opening ceremony alone. The broadcasting aspect of the event involved over 7,600 professional staff to ensure that every single moment of the competition was relayed to the entire world.

In terms of spectators, over 16,500 security staff were employed every day along with 10,000 more for the Paralympics. Automated counting and control systems, requiring a total of 4,000 staff on the ground, enabled the easy arrival/departure of spectators, fluid crowd movements and the cleanliness of the different venues. The festive spirit was far from neglected, with creative and event design specialists adding their own touch to every event through spectacular decor and hospitality spaces – encapsulated by the completely white costumes at the Paralympic opening ceremony.

A lasting legacy

While the competitive aspect of the Games was a great success, their long-term legacy is just as valuable. And in this respect, environmental certifications, such as ISO?20121, provided a framework for implementing the event’s responsible management strategy and addressing its environmental impact. Through initiatives ranging from reducing waste to the choice of renewable materials and the construction of modular infrastructures, organisers were keen to combine sporting performance and ecological awareness.

Behind the scenes, consulting and engineering specialists provided support for the whole event, from planning for the ceremony on the River Seine to logistical coordination between the different host venues. In addition to technical and environmental aspects, there was also a strong focus on the art of French hospitality. The 10,000 professional catering staff recruited for the Games were able to serve 40,000 meals per day, in so doing enhancing the country’s gastronomic heritage through a combination of refinement and attention to specific dietary requirements.

Buoyed by this experience, event professionals are now preparing to embrace new challenges, ranging from sporting competitions and international conferences to cultural festivals. Through a combination of technical excellence, bold creativity and social engagement, France is perfectly placed to host leading international events and to promote its expertise to a global audience.