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2013

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/51231/>  
MPRA Paper No. 51231, posted 05 Nov 2013 19:01 UTC

# Using Critical Path Analysis (CPA) in Place Marketing process:

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## **Abstract:**

The article awards the use of CPA as a methodological tool in Place Marketing implementation. Taking into account that Place Marketing is a strategic process based on ‘project’ meaning with particular actions in specific time horizon, the article proposed that CPA has the capacity to satisfy this hypothesis. For this reason, the article creates a hypothetical scenario of CPA in four phases, planning, programming, implementation and feedback, taking as a case study the city of Rostock in Germany. The analysis shows that CPA is an important tool for Place Marketing since Place Marketing implementation receives the character of ‘project’ in particular time horizon.

**Keywords:** Place Marketing, CPA, project, hypothetical scenario, Rostock

**JEL:** R50, R58, O18, O21

## **Introduction: Place Marketing as Strategic Process**

The last almost thirty years, place marketing as a strategic process, received much attention since many places globally uses promotion policies to support their images, based on their distinctive characteristics and become competitive among other places (e.g. Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; Kotler *et al*, 1993; 1999; Ward, 1998; Warnaby *et al*, 2005; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005; Metaxas, 2009; Hospers, 2011). Place marketing based on Strategic Image Management (SIM) [Kotler *et al*. (1999: 160)], always starting from the identification of place vision and the primary development objectives that have to be satisfied, including tactical planning actions (e.g. Amdam, 2004; Prague Strategic Plan, 1998; Glasgow Tourism Action Plan, 2002-2007). As in traditional marketing, in place marketing 'final produced good' which is the image of the place, we identify potential target markets, the existence of distribution channels as well as the selection of the appropriate promotional means, strategies, tactics and alternative scenarios. In this framework, several studies focus on segmentation of target markets, particularly in tourist destinations (i.e. Bowen, 1998; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2002; Litvin, 2000; Kaufman and Upchurch, 2006), the development of distribution channels (i.e. Weitz and Sandy, 1995; Chevrant-Breton, 1997; Nuttavuthisit, 2007) and specific promotion strategies (i.e. Paddison, 1993; Nel and Binns, 2002). A crucial point is that, the effective implementation of place marketing requires the active involvement of public and private sector of the place, as to its inhabitants (Insch and Florek, 2008).

The additional value of the article is exactly at this point. It offers a methodological strategic planning process based on 'project' operation, in order Place Marketing actions to be scheduled in particular time horizon, where control or rescheduling of the plan to become effective any time. The meaning of a project is strongly depended with the meaning of time schedule. The time schedule is a set of dates related with the work of the project, which record both forecasting and monitoring of project duration. According to Turner (2009), the

purpose of recording these dates and times is: a) to ensure the benefits are obtained at a timescale which justifies the expenditure, b) to coordinate the effort of resources, c) to enable the resources to be made available when required and d) to predict the levels of money and resources required at different times so that priorities can be assigned between projects.

## **Identifying Main hypotheses**

Based on the above, the following hypotheses are taken for granted:

*H1: The nature of the Place Marketing as a strategic process, which is characterized as any other strategic action in certain specified parameters.*

These are: a) the design and the development of identified actions, b) the determination of the significance of these actions and their hierarchy and c) the implementation of these actions in specific time horizon.

*H2: The design and the development of Place Marketing, as a 'project' has specific phases (planning, programming, implementation and feedback) in the time horizon within which taken placed the selected actions (Mastop and Faludi, 1997; Pinson, 2002).*

*H3: The development of Place Marketing requires an 'entrepreneurial and organising capacity' from local actors, especially in management and control level (Hall and Hubbard, 1998; van den Berg and Braun, 1999).*

*H4: CPA could become an effective tool of Place Marketing development*

Following the hypotheses above, we defining the Place Marketing, as a very important 'tool' of local development and competitiveness, which is effective if designed and implemented strategically. For this reason, it is proposed Critical Path Analysis (CPA), which has the potential to satisfy the above, having been applied in various cases of design and scheduling (e.g. Charnes *et. al.*, 1964; Berztiss, 1980; Anderson and Hales, 1986; Friedman and Seaton, 1998; Saidi, 2009).

## Using CPA in Place Marketing

CPA is a mathematical procedure that calculates a project's schedule. Taking each action in turn it firstly calculates how quickly the action can be accomplished - its early start and early finish dates. Once all these dates have been calculated, the project finish date can also be determined. With this finish date known, CPA can then calculate how slowly each action can be accomplished (late start and late finish dates). Once all this information is known for each action, CPA will also calculate the slack (or float) of the task possesses. Consider that the following values need to be calculated (table 1):

**ES** = Early Start, **EF** = Early Finish, **LS** = Late Start, **LF** = Late Finish, **TS** = Total Slack

.....[insert Table 1 about here].....

As duration (d) we mean the time required to do the work. It is common to treat a work element's duration as a fixed given. For some, it is dependent on external factors beyond the control of the team. Once work starts, but before it finishes we can estimate remaining duration. This may be equal to the planned duration less the time since the activity started, or we may re-estimate remaining duration based on the knowledge gained from doing the work so far. More particularly CPA based on the identification of three basic factors: a) *Hierarchical Presentation of activities*. Characterizes each activity with a particular name (code), b) *Immediate predecessor*: Presents and distinguish primary and secondary activities and c) *Time horizon*: The time of each activity to be finished. CPA has four phases of development: Planning, Programming, Implementation and Feedback. More specifically, in a hypothetical scenario of Place Marketing process, these phases are the following:

*Planning*: The first step is the creation of the Executive Management Group (EMG), which will take the responsibility to plan and to perform the Pilot Marketing Plan. The crucial point is that the effectiveness of the whole project based on planning phase. Any kind of steps delay, means delay of the following phases and consequently delay of the whole project. In

our scenario, the overall time horizon of this phase is *120 working days* that include primary and secondary actions.

*Programming:* In this phase, the EMG has to schedule a number of core actions that have take place before the phase of implementation. Programming requires brainstorming methods and discussions between the participated actors, In our, the overall time horizon of this phase is *60 working days* that include primary and secondary actions.

*Implementation:* This phase is the promotion one. The time horizon of each action is a potential time and mainly concerns the time of schedule of these actions. The phase of Implementation is the longest one. In our scenario, the overall time horizon is almost *175 working days* that include primary and secondary actions.

*Evaluation – Feedback:* It is related with the evaluation of the actions that take place in the phase of the implementation. The main aim of this final phase is EMG to come up to the final decisions in order to continue the programme by preparing the ‘Official Place Marketing Plan’, or to reject the whole effort. The umbrella of this process is the vision of the place and the major development objectives. EMG needs to implement a plan flexible, innovative, and according to the evidence. In other words it’s necessary to provide an official plan that faces the demands of the potential target markets on the one hand and place development objectives on the other. In our scenario, the overall time horizon of this phase is almost *55 working days* that include primary and secondary actions.

### **Choosing a place marketing model: the ‘8ps’ by Morrison**

Essentially, the marketing mix models, range from the traditional model of ‘4Ps’ (product, price, place, promotion) by Kotler (1986) and its performance in place marketing. Moreover the model of ‘7Ps’ is evaluated (Ivy, 2008; Constantinides, 2002; Martinez-Caro and Roemer, 2006). This study proposes the model of ‘8Ps’ (Morrison, 1999) [product, partnership, people,

packaging, programme, place, price, promotion], which is primarily used in the tourism, but it may be applied in other sectors as well. The choice of this model was based on the following reasons: a) in relation to the model of '4Ps', which is clearly a business model, the model of '8 Ps', is more detailed and includes parameters such as 'partnership', 'people' and 'packaging', which are essential for the successful implementation of a place marketing plan, b) in relation to the model of the '7 Ps', it is more representative as it focuses only on the services sector, since the promotion of a place image is much more complex in design and implementation c) the marketing of the region due to its specificity, in order to be effective, it requires the cooperation among the local actors of the place and d) this model was used in four European regions within the research program *CultMark*, with considerable success and therefore we argue that this experience has a great added value to the relative regions, always taking into consideration that special characteristics and the dynamics of each region (Deffner and Metaxas, 2006). For these reasons this model is proposed in this paper. Acting methodologically we should incorporate the phases of '8 Ps' model, the development of CPA. The reason for doing this is very important. The '8 Ps', model should be integrated functionally and temporally in similar stages of CPA development in order to design and implement specific actions at specific time horizons, without time delays to cause problems to the entire implementation of the project.

## **Rostock in brief**

The choice of Rostock it was supported by the following two reasons: Firstly, the participation of Rostock in European program *CultMark*, which provided a substantial opportunity of studying the region deeply. Secondly, after a completely new start in the wake of the political change of 1989 the Rostock economy is now on the right track. The region's excellent areas of economic competence include: maritime commerce, logistics and transport

infrastructure, food technology, renewable energies, bio-medicine and bio-technology and tourism.

.....[figure 1 ].....

The basic features of a culturally-based city marketing development dynamics in Rostock are presented in Table 2. These would enable policy makers to make comprehensive decisions with regard to the development of place marketing. Using SWOT analysis particular determinants, related to Rostock’s *internal* and *external environment*, raised and based on them, the image of Rostock as a ‘final provided good’, is combined. This combination reflects the development of two primary production sectors: *culture* and *business* (Figure 2). The combination of activities in common between these sectors is a difficult, but consists of the overall concept of the competitiveness of Rostock and tourism sustainability. Rostock has to invest in the investigation of market research and target market segmentations. The city has also to develop its promotional policies in two geographical areas. The first area covers the Baltic States region, in which Rostock tries to support its position and dominance among other similar cities, and the second area is Western Europe, mainly, and Europe as whole (Final Provided Good Report, *CultMarrk*, 2004).

.....[Table 2 ].....

.....[Figure 2].....

**Critical path and Morrison ‘8ps’ model in the case of Rostock**

The analysis of the internal environment of Rostock shows a dynamic development of two axes, business and culture. The city might be a very attractive destination for FDI, due to its very important geographical position (very close to the region of the Baltic countries). The above data derive from studies and field investigations conducted during the research program *CultMark* (2004a, 2005b).



Table 3 presents activities of *Planning* phase of CPA. In the three columns of the table are presented the codes of each action, from the total 12 actions (A, B, C, D ... L), the immediate predecessor refers to the codes of the actions which must necessarily precede (primary actions) for the subsequent implementation of other actions (secondary actions) and the last column presents the duration that is potentially required for the completion of each action, expressed in days. The aim is to identify the actions and their duration which have to be developed as soon as the previous is completed and the actions that should be developed in parallel with the primary. The chosen actions of the present phase are considered general because they are the first actions that represent the overall planning framework within which will be realized the other phases of the following actions. Thus we could say that these actions may be common to any region wishing to develop a marketing plan regardless of the particular features that it has. The basis for the selection of these actions is the specificity of the characteristics of each region and in this case we refer to the characteristics of the city of Rostock. It is noted for example that action C refers to the analysis of the competition in the Baltic region and in the wider region of the Western European countries. The choice of this action is related to the geographic location of the city of Rostock

.....[Table 3].....

It is observed that the actions of the Planning refer to the composition of the wider framework within which the actions of the next phases will be developed. In the planning phase as in the following ones it is also adapted the model of '8 Ps' depending on the type of the action. Therefore, for example in action A the composition of the EMG requires the development of *partnership* between people – more specifically between the groups that participate on this action (i.e. local decision - makers, citizens, firms etc.), while action H is related with the *place*, concerning the distribution channels of Rostock's image. Finally, each action is potentially planned within a time horizon of certain days. The time horizon of each action is

determined by the type of the action and by the difficulty degree regarding its implementation. For example, action E is scheduled to be implemented in 15 working days, because it requires innovative design of specific 'cultural and business packages' which will be the main components of the composition of Rostock's image as a final provided good. In Figure 3 are presented the actions of the Planning and it is created the Critical Path between primary and secondary actions. From the 12 actions, 8 are primary, so their development requires the completion of the preceding ones, and 4 are secondary, which means that they can be developed at the same time with the others. Following figure 3, we enter an ES value of 0 for action A that has no predecessor. For each of the following action, their EF value will be calculated from the ES value plus the activity's duration (for example; E action has ES=15 days derives from D and EF=30 days (ES=15 days + E (d) = 15). B and C actions have a common predecessor, the ES value for both of them will be the same as the EF value for their common predecessor, action A (where EF= 5 days). Similarly are structured the actions until the last one. On the other side, working through the network (figure 2) from right to left, the backward pass calculates late start and late finish dates for each action. To calculate slack values for each action, use the formula:  $LS = LF - ES - \text{Duration}$ . For example, the last action of *Planning* phase is L with duration (d) 5 days. Following the formula  $TS = LF - ES - \text{Duration}$  we have:  $LS = LF (75\text{days}) - ES (70\text{days}) = 5\text{days} - (d \text{ of L action}) = 5 - 5 = 0$

The same procedure is applied in all phases of CPM. The actions A and D are considered important because they must be implemented and as soon as they are implemented the rest of the actions will be realized. And this is logical if we consider that action A is the starting point of planning, while action D refers to the composition of the final provided good from depend the pricing, the distribution, the promotion and the evaluation of potential target markets. All phases are completed with the meeting of EMG in which is evaluated the entire

progress of the phase per action, are varied or withdrawn scenarios and generally is prepared the ground so as to continue to the next phase.

.....[Figure 3].....

Similarly are synthesized the following phases of CPA, *Programming, Implementation* and *Feedback*. Throughout all these phases the project ends at having a time horizon of 410 days, of which 220 are related to primary actions and 190 to secondary actions. Particularly, in the *programming* the actions that will be realized at the implementation are programmed. More particularly, during the programming stage (table 4, figure 4), the evaluation and the organization of the procedures related to the communication, the analysis target markets, the actions of supporting the image of the city and the creation of business and cultural packages take place. Attention should be paid on R action, whose implementation requires the development of all previous phases. The programming phase is the shortest regarding the time compared to the other phases of the project and it is the one that sets the framework and the axes on which the action will take place in the next phase, that of implementation.

.....[Table 4].....

.....[Figure 4].....

*Implementation* phase (Table 5, Figure 5) is the executive part of the overall project and therefore it includes more actions and time. During this phase are developed several actions that are planned in the previous phase. For this reason, it lasts longer than the other, that is to say 175 days, 100 primary and 75 secondary actions. The main feature of implementation is that almost all actions are associated with the promotion of Rostock's image in continuous and repetitive initiatives such as advertising, participation in various events at national and European level, public relations programme, media, etc. Actually, during this phase it is

developed the tactical planning (McClamroch *et al*, 2001; Petrakos *et al.*, 2004), because it includes the implementing of actions throughout the implementation process.

.....[Table 5].....

.....[Figure 5].....

The last phase is *feedback*. In this phase, during which ends the whole progress of the project, EMG is required to evaluate, support or reject the progress and the effectiveness of the actions that have taken place, particularly during the implementation phase (table 6 , figure 6). In order to reach to final decisions, the data and the reports that have been collected will be evaluated, under the condition that firstly the appropriate databases are created. Based on this process, the experts and the decision-makers have the opportunity to possess organized and measurable important data so as to determine and plan the development of their areas in the future.

.....[Table 6].....

.....[Figure 6].....

**Discussion and Conclusions**

CPA is based on the fact that the planning and the implementation of a Place Marketing Plan is a strategic process, characterised by specific phases, actions and evaluation methods, which are fitted and controlled in specific time horizon. In this context, it can guarantee, to a great degree, the successful implementation of place marketing thus providing to it the character of a *project*, during the progress and the completion of which there will be no randomness, procrastination and important omissions or errors.

However, in this study it is suggested that CPA’s successful development is related to the capacity of EMG and local decision makers to implement it. In fact, this is the contribution of

the study to the existing rich literature. The adoption of CPA has an innovative and pioneering character in Place Marketing process, supporting directly the effective contribution to the economic development of the region that applies it. Of course the whole proposal of CPA has a main limitation. The model of CPA does not take into account any of the contingencies of a political, social, institutional and economic nature which affect strategic planning or, for what sake, policy making in real life. This fact will be a subject of future research.

In the case of Rostock, it has been proposed a methodological approach for the successful implementation of Place Marketing, which has been accepted from the managers that promote the image of the city.

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**Table 1: CPA values**

ES	d (duration in days)	EF
	A (Task name / activity code)	
LS	TS	LF

**Table 2: SWOT Analysis for Rostock**

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High accessibility and centrality of location (in E.C. terms)</li> <li>• Substantial cultural infrastructure</li> <li>• Large local market (urban agglomeration with potential of supraregional significance)</li> <li>• Ideal hotel and host infrastructure</li> <li>• Museum with a rich stock in its storehouses, first class exhibitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not marked cultural identity</li> <li>• Too weak tourist industry</li> <li>• Inadequate place-promotion and tourism-development policies</li> <li>• Relatively unfavourable climate/weather conditions</li> <li>• Political mistakes in culture and tourism development policy</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globalization, European integration and new emergent markets</li> <li>• Participation in place and thematic networks (national and international e.g. <i>CultMark</i>)</li> <li>• Public-private partnerships and new governance</li> <li>• E.C. and national funds</li> <li>• Technological developments in support of city marketing</li> <li>• Integration of the German economy bridging east-west divide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing place competitiveness</li> <li>• Reduction of funds available (local, national, E.C.)</li> <li>• Institutional inflexibility (lack of PPPs)</li> <li>• Unfavourable macroeconomic conditions</li> <li>• Politically imposed depreciation of the rich cultural infrastructure, repeatedly wrong priority selection</li> <li>• Mismanagement, lack of management and fundraising competence, ignorance of E.C. grant opportunities and international networking</li> </ul>

Source: own construction



**Table 3:** Planning phase of CPM

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Activity code</b>	<b>Immediate predecessor</b>	<b>Time (days)</b>
1	Composition of the executive management group (EMG) (Morrison model: <b>partnership</b> and <b>people</b> )	A	-	5
2	Analysis of competition in regional and national level	B	A	10
3	Analysis of competition in Baltic's area and the wider West European countries	C	A	15
4	Identification of the 'final provided good' (Morrison model: <b>product</b> )	D	A	10
5	Creation of Culture and Business 'packages' (Morrison model: <b>packaging</b> and <b>pricing</b> )	E	D	15
6	Re- Evaluation of the selected target markets based on their characteristics analysis– Choose the appropriate sample (internal environment)	F	D, E	10
7	Re- Evaluation of the selected target markets based on their characteristics analysis– Choose the appropriate sample (external environment)	G	D, E	10
8	Selection of the distributors for each part of the 'final provided good' (Morrison model: <b>place</b> )	H	F	10
9	Evaluation of the selected strategies and tactics per target market (internal environment)	I	F	10
10	Evaluation of the selected strategies and tactics per target market (external environment)	J	F, I	10
11	Evaluation and final selection of the promotional means (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	K	D, E, I, J	10
12	EMG meeting 1	L	K	5
<b>End of the first phase</b>				<b>120</b>

**Table 4: PROGRAMMING** phase of CPM

Activities	Activity code	Immediate predecessor	Time (days)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> phase: PROGRAMMING (13 – 20)</b>			
13 Selection the appropriate communication process (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	M	L	<b>10</b>
14 Organising the focus group analysis (internal environment – phase A – 4 groups) (Morrison model: <b>programming</b> )	N	L	<b>5</b>
15 Organising the focus group analysis (external environment – phase B – 4 groups) (Morrison model: <b>programming</b> )	O	L, N	<b>5</b>
16 Creation of the appropriate questionnaire (Morrison model: <b>programming</b> )	P	N, O	<b>5</b>
17 Creation of a mini advertising and public relations plan (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	Q	P	<b>10</b>
18 Positioning of the culture and business packages to distributors	R	N, O, P	<b>15</b>
19 Creation of a guide-mini seminar to the participant groups and the selected distributors	S	R	<b>5</b>
20 Group executives meeting 2	T	S	<b>5</b>
<b>End of the second phase</b>			<b>60</b>

**Table 5:** Implementation phase of CPM

	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Activity code</b>	<b>Immediate predecessor</b>	<b>Time (days)</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> phase: IMPLEMENTATION (21 – 36)</b>				
21	Implementation of focus group analysis [internal environment]	U	T	<b>5</b>
22	Implementation of focus group analysis [external environment]	V	T	<b>5</b>
23	Primary market research (using questionnaire)	W	T	<b>25</b>
24	Creating or improving Web Site (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	X	T	<b>10</b>
25	Advertising action 1: Media (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	Y	X	<b>10</b> (creating scenarios)
26	Advertising action 2: Magazines (1) [national] (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	Z	Y	<b>10</b> (creating scenarios)
27	Advertising action 3: Newspaper (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AA	Y	<b>10</b> (creating scenarios)
28	Advertising action 4: Magazines (2) [foreign] (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AB	Z	<b>10</b> (creating scenarios)
29	Participation in an event (i.e. exhibition) [national level] (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AC	Z, AA, AB	<b>10</b>
30	Participation in an event (i.e. exhibition) [European level] (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AD	AC	<b>15</b>
31	Implementation of P/R activities (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AE	AD	<b>10</b>
32	Participation on a TV programme – documenter (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AF	AD	<b>15</b> (creating scenario)
33	Info kiosks and info centers (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AG	AF	<b>15</b>
34	Creation of VIDEO – DVDs (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AH	AF	<b>10</b>
35	Creation of Investment and Tourist guides (Morrison model: <b>promotion</b> )	AI	AF	<b>10</b>
36	Group executives meeting 3	AJ	AI	<b>5</b>
<b>End of the third phase</b>				<b>175</b>

**Table 6:** Evaluation phase of CPM

<b>4<sup>th</sup> phase: EVALUATION and FEEDBACK (38-44)</b>		<b>Activity code</b>	<b>Immediate predecessor</b>	<b>Time (days)</b>
38	Evaluation of the advertising and public relations plan	AK	AJ	<b>5</b>
39	Evaluation of the selected communication process	AL	AJ	<b>5</b>
40	Creation of a data base	AM	AJ	<b>5</b>
41	Data Analysis	AN	AM	<b>10</b>
42	Decision making analysis, based on the outcomes and the anticipated profits per action	AO	AN	<b>10</b>
43	Final decisions	AP	AO	<b>5</b>
44	Preparation of the official programme (the level of its difficulty depends on the evaluation of the outcomes derived from pilot programme)	AQ	AP	<b>10</b>
<b>End of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase</b>				<b>55</b>
<b>Whole project time horizon</b>				<b>410</b>
<b>Primary actions</b>				<b>220</b>
<b>Secondary (parallel to primary)</b>				<b>190</b>

Figure 1: The Federal State of Mecklenburg Vorpomern



Source: [www.mapsofworld.com/germany/](http://www.mapsofworld.com/germany/)

**Figure 2:** Shaping the final provided good of Rostock

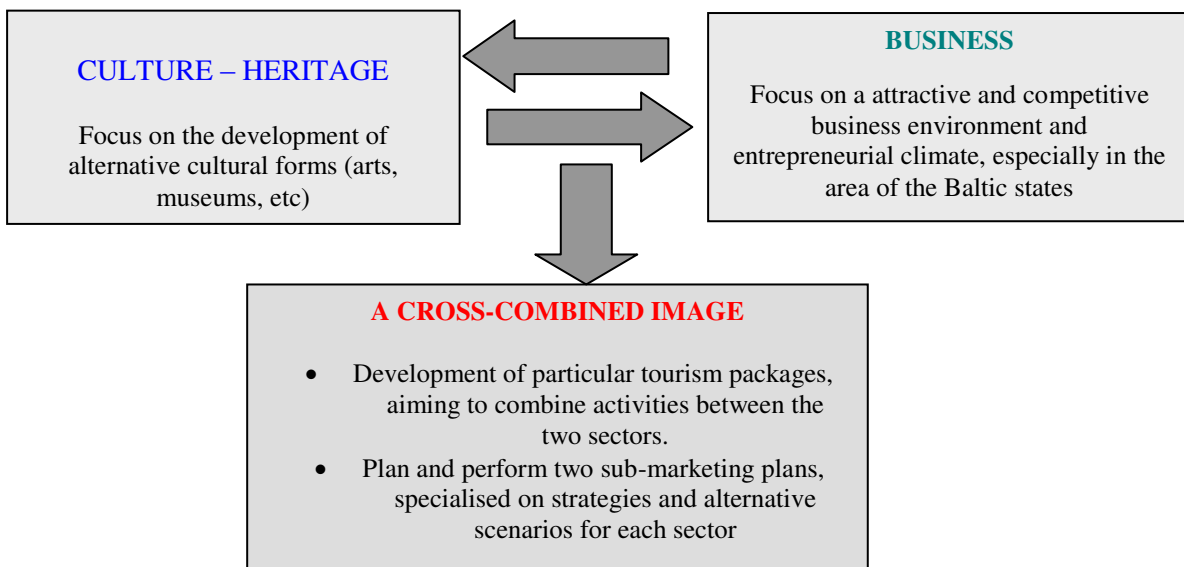
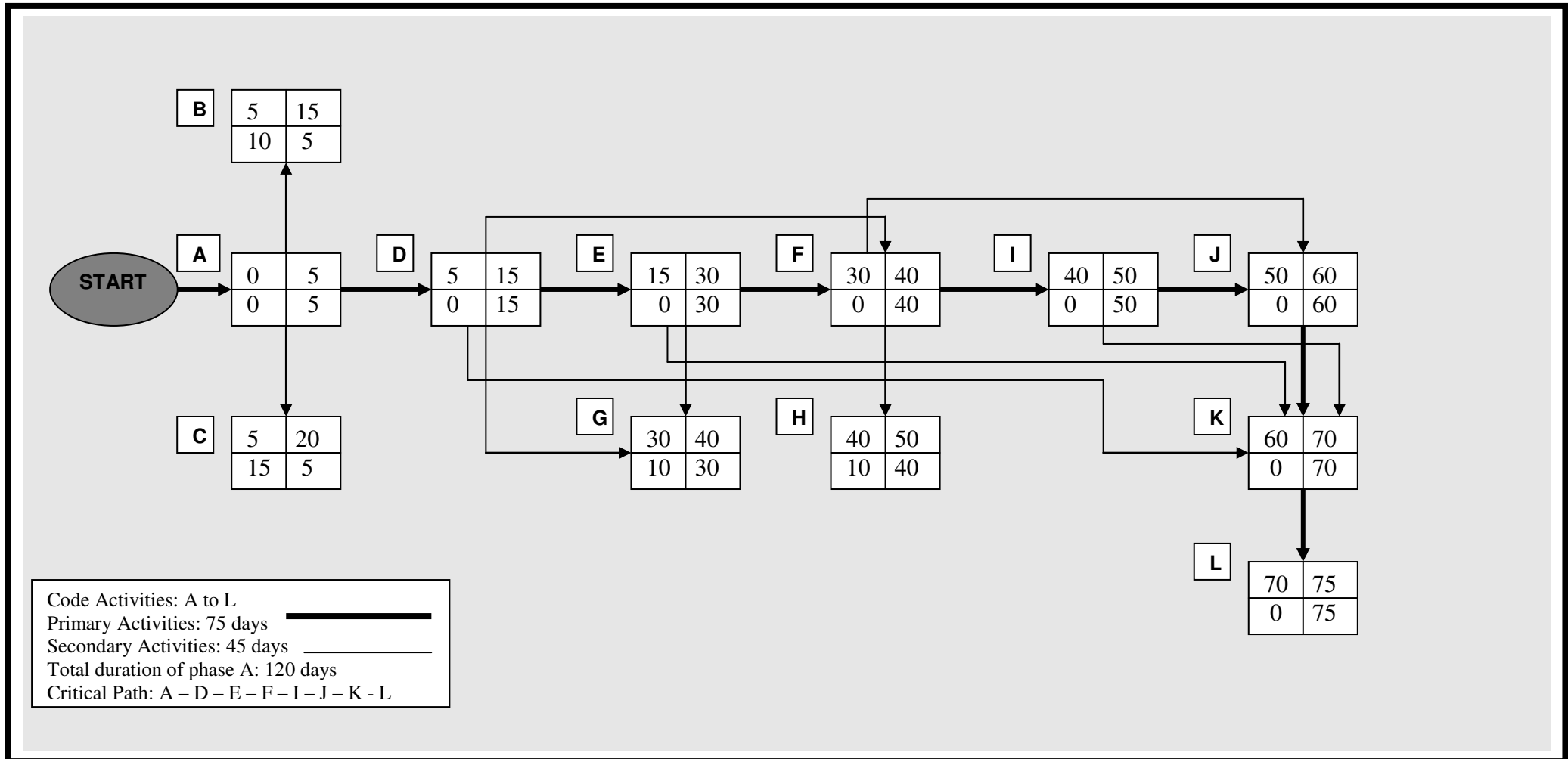


Figure 3: Critical Path Diagram of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase



**Figure 4:** Critical Path Diagram of the 2<sup>st</sup> phase

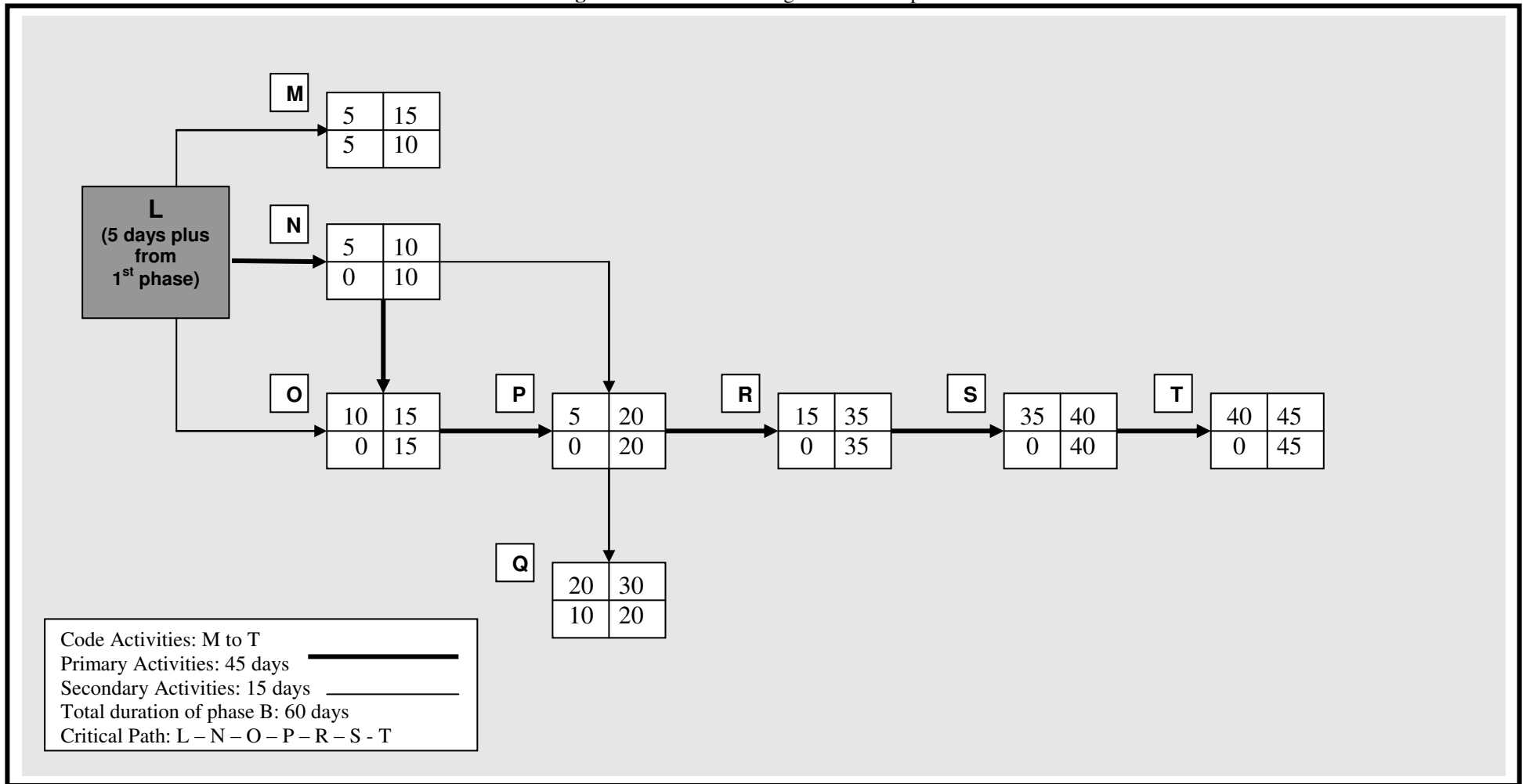
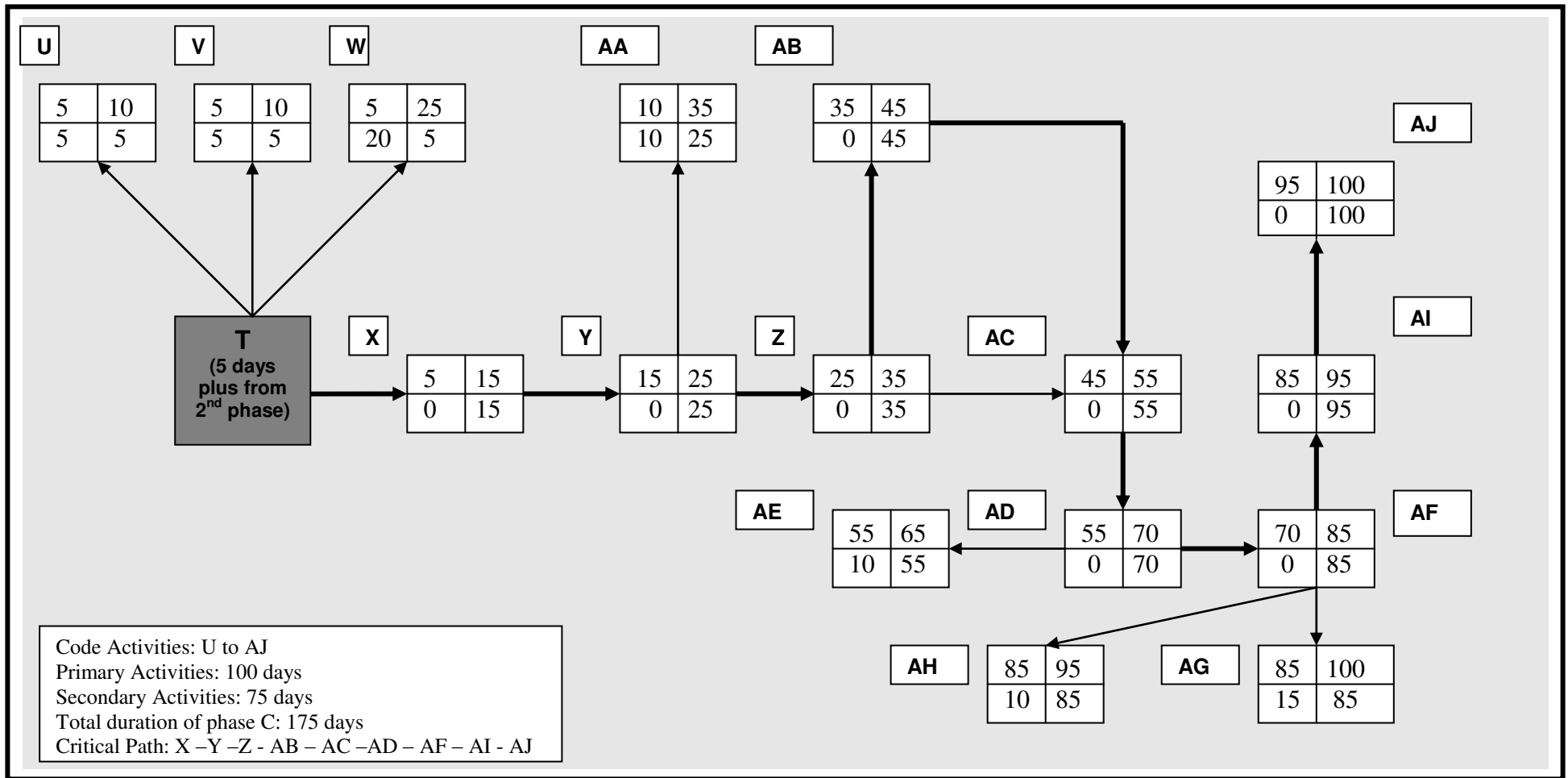




Figure 5: Critical Path Diagram of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase



**Figure 6:** Critical Path Diagram of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase

