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Rapport de stage LEA 3

How does international sourcing influence the daily organization of events at Optima Live ?

Optima Live Sàrl

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Introduction

From March 11, 2026, to July 06 2026, I completed my third-year internship for my Bachelor's degree in Applied Foreign Languages (LEA) at Optima Live Sàrl and Yatouland, located in the industrial area of Les Acacias in Geneva. The event management sector in the Canton of Geneva is an incredibly dynamic and highly competitive market. To distinguish itself from traditional planning agencies, Optima Live relies on a unique business model built around brand synergy and the optimization of its own more than 1,000 square meter modular venue, OptimHall. This infrastructure allows the company to balance a B2B corporate events flow under the Optima Live brand with a B2C family entertainment stream managed under the well-known Yatouland division.

A major financial and operational stake for a small to medium enterprise in this local market is maintaining venue profitability during quieter periods and constantly renewing rental inventory without suffering from expensive Swiss sub-rental costs. To overcome these limitations, the agency has integrated international sourcing directly into its core business methodology. Buying equipment and custom products from overseas manufacturing hubs, particularly China, has become essential to maximize the gross margins, expand the catalog variety, and offer complete creative customization to the clients.

However, relying on a global supply chain introduces complex operational variables that extend far beyond simple local purchasing. This reality leads directly to the formulation of my central research question : How does international sourcing influence the daily organization of events at Optima Live ? The boundaries of this study focus specifically on the linguistic, temporal, and logistical workflows that connect our commercial planning office in Geneva to our foreign manufacturing partners, examining how these international dynamics impact our on-field operations and project execution. To analyze this topic, I implemented a research methodology based on participatory observation. Being fully integrated into the daily operations of the company allowed me to gather qualitative and quantitative data directly from the field. I evaluated our economic parameters by building financial matrices and quotations on Microsoft Excel under the guidance of Paola and Lou-Ann. I also engineered visual proposals, moodboards, and detailed floor plans on Canva, and established a strict qualitative tracking system for our communications with Chinese suppliers through WhatsApp. Furthermore, I conducted comparative sourcing research by contacting alternative

industrial manufacturers in Poland and Spain to evaluate the real trade-offs between European and Asian procurement lines.

The main findings of this study reveal that while overseas sourcing offers an unbeatable unit cost advantage that can be up to ten times cheaper than European quotes, it also introduces structural vulnerabilities. These friction points include a particular written English on WhatsApp, asynchronous workflows caused by a 6 to 7 hour time difference, and highly volatile production and transport lead times. My research shows that to protect our gross margins while securing the unmovable deadlines of the event industry, the agency must implement standard 30% time buffers, institutionalize a "Ready-to-produce" catalog for repeatable assets, and formalize a contingent dual-sourcing framework using European backup suppliers for last-minute corporate requests.

In alignment with the structural guidelines of the university, this report is organized into two primary sections :

- Part I (The Organization and its Environment) outlines the history, internal structure, and commercial offers of Optima Live, provides a detailed analysis of the competitive landscape in Geneva, and details the specific professional skills I enhanced during my integration.

- Part II (Development of the Research Question) deeply explores our global supply chain by analyzing our trilingual linguistic and temporal challenges (Chapter 2.1), examining how a commercial offer translates into physical handling on the field through concrete case studies (Chapter 2.2), and presenting my final strategic management recommendations to optimize the agency's procurement efficiency (Chapter 2.3).

Part I : The agency and its global environment :

Chapter 1.1 : What is Optima Live ?

1.1.1. The history, the structure and the identity of the agency

Optima Live Sàrl is a Swiss limited liability company (Société à responsabilité limitée) based in Geneva since 2016. The agency's headquarters are located at Chemin de la Gravière 4, in the industrial area of Les Acacias, a very active business area in Geneva. Founded by Yan Favier and partners/co-founders, the original goal was to build a versatile event company that could serve both corporate clients (B2B) and individual customers (B2C). At the very beginning the event agency was mainly specialized and based on children's events

Optima Live has an innovative business model, unlike usual event agencies only handling planning, Optima Live is based on brand synergy and the optimized use of a venue dedicated to the agency's brands. The agency relies on three complementary pillars :

The agency, Optima Live : This is the main company and brand. It manages the overall business, including strategic planning, large scale events, logistics, international sourcing and client relations.

The venue, OptimHall : OptimHall is not a separate company, incorporated in 2019, it is the physical venue of Optima Live. With more than 1000 sqm, 600 sqm combining the "MainHall" and "StudioHall" on the ground floor, mainly used for presentations, product launch, cocktails, parties, concerts and where Yatouland's main playground is set up. There is also the upper floor, about 470 sqm with 10 breakout rooms and perfect spaces to host guests, workshops, small groups presentation or work and Yatouland's birthday parties...

The family and children brand, Yatouland : Well-known in Geneva for children entertainment, with 20 years of experience, Yatouland is the public division of the agency (B2C). Yatouland is mainly focused on hosting families and children at the OptimHall organizing a playground of inflatables in the MainHall and StudioHall and birthday parties in the several breakout rooms. It also organizes events with service providers such as magicians, balloon artists..., at the place the customer wants, renting them inflatables, games and activities. Every summer a water park is installed, being an exclusive feature in Geneva.

From a managerial point of view, combining these three brands helps the agency optimize its venue capacity and avoid financial losses during quieter periods. In the event industry, keeping a venue profitable when there are no large corporate bookings is a major challenge. Optima Live solves this by using a weekly rotation schedule. On Wednesdays and during the weekends, OptimHall is transformed into an indoor amusement park under the Yatouland brand, which generates regular income from families. When events are booked for example with parties during the weekend, the venue reserved for the client and the team tidies everything and puts in place the scene, tables, cocktail tables, sofas...

A concrete example of this flexibility is the agency's work with institutional clients like the State of Geneva (République et Canton de Genève). When the local government rents the entire facility, they use every room of the venue. For instance, they organize seminars and workshops every two months for the new employees. The State uses the "MainHall" for large presentations and introductory speeches, the StudioHall is used for catering, while the ten breakout rooms are used for smaller, interactive training workshops. This case study shows how Optima Live successfully handles both massive crowds and smaller corporate meetings within the same optimized infrastructure.

1.1.2. Internal organization

In order to plan and make tailored events efficiently, Optima Live is based on a horizontal structure where information can circulate quickly between commercial planning and field operations. In each brand, Yatouland's main events are handled by the Yatouland's team and

OptimHall booking, Optima Live events and unusual Yatouland events are handled by Optima Live.

The corporate and administrative core :

Managing director, Yan Favier (my tutor) : He oversees the overall strategy, a big part of his job is meeting clients and trying to sell or rent them products, services and especially trying to search for new clients. He also finds new products to add at the catalog or even events such as Yatousplash (an aqua park). Thanks to his more than 20 years of experience he can always help us when we are struggling, for example on the strategic/commercial plan than the logistics challenges. My tutor contributed to the creation of the company in 2006 and later fully acquired it in 2016.

Accounting, HR manager and administration, Vanessa : She is in charge of making the invoices of the company, managing the finances and administrative tasks. Vanessa is the HR manager of the company, so she ensures the well-being of the employees and she handles conflicts resolution. She also plans and books who will be in charge of logistics and the animators if the events need some.

Event project managers Paola and Lou-Ann, (apprentice) : They manage projects from A to Z. They handle clients' requests coming from phone calls, emails or even requests made directly on the website. They make offers, if it is a large-scale event they make a presentation on Canva for example to make the offer more attractive rather than the standard text document. Once the offer is signed and validated, they plan its organization making the "event sheet" to guide the logistics, animators, service providers... telling them what to do, when and where to avoid any problem.

Graphic, AI optimization and web designer, Christian : Christian understands AI well and tries to optimize everything to make the agency as efficient as possible, he creates and continuously upgrades the agency's website to make it attractive and nice looking. He handles

both Yatouland and Optima Live websites, but he also might create ones for the customers of Optima live who would like some. He also makes visuals like signs, flyers, tickets for Yatouland for example, giant advertising posters...

The crew in charge of Yatouland :

Yatouland manager, Richard : He manages the daily operations of the families/children's entertainment brand. He animates at Yatouland, takes customers' bookings, checks if everything is set up and supervises the overall daily activity of Yatouland and its playground at the OptimHall.

Reception and animation team, Hamida, Emerick, and Michelle : Hamida organizes and schedules the birthday parties at the OptimHall and Yatousplash during the summer, she often sets tables and the breakout rooms to host the parties and as Michelle and Emerick she animates the children's parties.

Logistics and handling team, Abdel and temporary staff : Abdel works as the part-time logistics manager. He is responsible for transporting and installing inflatables and furniture or activities at the client's place, he also works a lot at the OptimHall, removing/putting inflatables, setting up events like cocktails or parties for example, carrying and places furniture and installations that are needed (following the event sheet), the venue is metamorphosing into something new and special at each event. When large-scale setups such as preparing the OptimHall or building an event somewhere, require more manpower, the agency hires temporary extra staff (extras), such as Jamel, to help Abdel, the extra staff is essential for mid to large events otherwise it wouldn't be possible to organize them.

My integration and my missions as an intern : As defined in the official internship agreement, my main objective is to contribute to the agency's business development and commercial communication. To bridge the gap between theoretical training and operational reality, my weekly working hours are strategically divided into three key areas :

Project management support (60% of the time) : I work closely with Paola and Lou-Ann to process client requests. Based on their guidelines, I calculate costs (Excel and quotations), draft commercial proposals (Word and Canva), and establish the final event sheet once a contract is validated and signed. I am also often asked to help in designing visual presentations on Canva specifically tailored for English-speaking corporate clients.

I can plan events for 2027 as for the next day, making phone calls to ask for urgent needs in materials, service providers, specific items...

International sourcing (30% of the time) : This mission is the focus of my research question during the second part of my report. I am in contact with some usual suppliers the agency works with, depending on the needs of the agency, I am asked to contact them and order some products. It can be usual products as it can be products designed from scratch, especially made for Optima Live. I do research and contact to try to find some possible European alternatives. I coordinate the production of custom-branded tableware for Yatouland (cups, plates, napkins and wooden spoons), promotional items like silk bracelets for clients and the Yatousplash water park, and for some client I ask to produce custom inflatables, including tailored changing rooms and movie themed structures.

Digital and web optimization (10% of the time) : I assist Christian with website maintenance for both Optima Live and Yatouland brands. My tasks include enhancing visual assets with higher-quality photographs using AI or real pictures, verifying products' technical specifications online, and proposing user-experience improvements. Several of my suggestions regarding web display and layout have been validated and executed by Christian.

1.1.3. What does the agency offer ?

Optima Live distinguishes itself in the Geneva event market through its ability to deliver a massive range of services, moving from usual equipment rentals to complex, tailor-made event productions. One of their priorities is to provide a "turnkey" service, and for whatever

order you make, for the customer not having to worry about anything. By merging the corporate expertise of the agency with the entertainment catalog of Yatouland, the company can perfectly handle both needs of the business sector and private customers.

Yatouland's turnkey children entertainment :

The Yatouland brand is at the same time a place and a service provider for children's entertainment and family events in the region. Its commercial offer is divided into three main options :

The indoor playground : As explained earlier, the agency utilizes the OptimHall on specific days to set up a fully equipped indoor amusement park (inflatables, wooden games, birthday parties...), providing local families with a secure entertainment space.

On-demand entertainment and birthdays : Yatouland organizes fully managed birthday parties at the OptimHall. This includes access to the playground, private breakout rooms, and birthday cake... For more complex, high-end private requests, the team collaborates closely with Optima Live to organize, design personalized decorations and custom accessories making really special events.

Rental and external events : Yatouland provides a turnkey rental service, people can order inflatables, activities, wooden games... to go directly to their houses or a place chosen by the client (a park, a company's premises...). The catalog is very large and includes wooden games, traditional activities such as archery, sack races... dozens of inflatables (even water slides inflatables for example).

A website has been created for the clients to have an easier way to find information and better visuals of the catalog, the online platform is legonflablesuisse.ch, the equipment is available across Switzerland. And to perfect its offer, Yatouland can also provide artists and service providers such as a balloon artist, a magician, a make-up artist...

Optima Live's bespoke event management :

On the corporate side, Optima Live is a full-service event production agency, for basic and high-end events. The corporate value proposition is built around flexibility and custom solutions :

Corporate logistics and furniture rental : The agency owns an inventory of professional event furniture and technical equipment. Its commercial offer includes the rental and installation of modular stages, corporate dining tables, high cocktail tables, lounge sofas, and outdoor tents. This allows the agency to handle the complete layout design of events of every kind without relying heavily on local sub-renters.

Tailor-made corporate events : Optima Live positions itself as a company capable of managing projects, from simple meetings, gatherings, cocktails to unusual large-scale events.

The agency oversees every step of the process : from spatial planning and digital visual proposals on Canva to international product sourcing, customs clearance, catering..., and final technical assembly on the field.

In this commercial ecosystem, the physical asset of the OptimHall venue represents a major competitive advantage. Having at its disposal a modular 1,000-square-meter facility in the center of Geneva allows Optima Live to offer competitive pricing packages, guarantee venue availability and even event's recurrency (every week, month...), and maintain total control over the logistical setup, making the global offer highly attractive in a demanding local market.

Chapter 1.2 : The environment of the agency and its market

1.2.1. Characteristics of the local market and the competitive landscape

The event management market in the Canton of Geneva is competitive, dynamic and is often correlated to local corporate and institutional organizations.

Operating in 3 different business segments : Making and planning custom events for both companies and private clients, Venue rental and children and family's entertainment, Optima Live is in a fragmented competitive landscape.

The agency has to face direct competitors specialized in each of those 3 business segments.

Main entertainment competitors (Yatouland rivals) :

In the family and children entertainment and equipment rental sector in a city such as Geneva, it is an active and competitive sector, making it a challenge every day to stay relevant in front of the competitors.

Airloop : Airloop is a trampoline and activities indoor park, being an indirect challenging competitor to Yatouland's playground at the OptimHall.

Airloop is mainly focused on open-play sessions and offers to organize birthday parties at their more than 1 700 sqm premises making it a serious Yatouland alternative.

Yatouland differentiates itself by offering a larger variety of activities in both its catalog and its playground and even offering to bring the party and the equipment to the client's place.

Château Rigolo : Château Rigolo is a company specialized in the rental of a large variety of equipment, especially inflatables and games. They are a serious competitor thanks to their several years of experience and work in all the region.

To respond to it, Yatouland relies on its strong reputation of over 20 years of experience at Geneva, but also its capacity to provide a complete turnkey service, including a playground at the OptimHall, equipment, service providers such as animators, magicians, face painting and other artists they can also bring at the customer's place. Yatouland's special asset is the water park they set up every year being an exclusive kind of activity in Geneva as they are the only one to offer it.

Venue and infrastructure competitors (OptimHall rivals) :

Positioned as a versatile venue able to handle private events, corporates events or even large events such as parties and concerts. The venue faces strong competitors.

Palexpo : Palexpo is known as Geneva's giant event venue center, offering outstanding spaces. They dominate international large-scale events. While Palexpo is managing massive international flows, OptimHall is more a strategic alternative of 1000 sqm of "blank canvas" possible to adapt at the client's needs, human-sized and more affordable for regional businesses not needing as much room as Palexpo offers. Furthermore, as Optima Live is an agency offering complete turnkey solutions, it shows its flexibility and ability to manage and create special and unique events for each of its clients, even when called to install equipment inside Palexpo for either Optima Live's events as an external equipment provider

Event agencies (Optima Live rivals) :

In the business segment of event planning, Geneva hosts several event agencies such as Revibe (who calls us to work on some of their events), Nepsa...

Usually, the other agencies mainly focus on event planning, project design, consulting and client coordination but they can't rent their own venue, making them rely on several factors and other companies to completely outsource their services.

This is where Optima Live establishes its main competitive advantage in the local market. By combining an active agency, an inventory of professional furniture and custom inflatables at OptimHall and another local stockage place, and a private modular venue, Optima Live is not affected by any sub-rental costs. This business plan makes the logistics and organization much easier, allows the agency to be faster, highly reactive to urgent requests, and more competitive in its pricing proposals for local, large-scale companies or even private clients.

1.2.2. The role and importance of international partners

To remain competitive in the Geneva event market, Optima Live Sàrl strategically relies on several international partners and suppliers. It is not just a way to buy equipment, this international reach is a real pillar of the agency's commercial advantage and proposition.

Cost optimization and competitive pricing :

The main objective of this network of international partners is to avoid the agency to source itself in the local Swiss market to save costs. By working directly with suppliers and partners in China, the agency greatly decreased its purchasing and manufacturing costs.

By doing so, the optimizations of costs and margins enable Optima Live to offer competitive prices to its clients while being able to constantly expand its variety of products and equipment in its catalog.

Advanced personalization and custom production :

Beyond the financial benefit of having international partners, they also provide technical and industrial possibilities to the agency to differentiate itself even more than Optima Live's competitors. While most of the competitors are limited to renting standard and usual products, Optima Live is able to offer uncommon products such as personalized inflatables or even the creation of unique products from scratch based on the client's wishes.

Thanks to the flexibility and the experience of the foreign suppliers, the agency can produce almost everything that the customers request. The sourcing is wide and can go from specific items such as a precise type of colored bracelets for some events, Yatouland's customized tableware (dishes, cups and napkins) to massive, unique inflatables (water slides, fitting rooms, Giant LEGO...). The capacity to turn a unique project into reality is a major advantage, making international supply an important process due to the augmentation of this kind of product.

Chapter 1.3 : Skills and experience enhanced or acquired during the internship

An internship within a fast-paced event agency like Optima Live is an ideal environment to bridge the gap between academic theory and operational reality. During this semester, my daily responsibilities and missions enabled me to develop concrete professional skills, moving well beyond simple observation to active project participation.

1.3.1. Bilingual commercial management and international sourcing

To work in an international and multicultural city such as Geneva requires high adaptation abilities in professional relations. During my internship, my commercial management skill progressed thanks to the creation of basic and complex business proposals, in both French and English for foreign clients. This mission has had successful outcomes as several of the offers I made were accepted, signed and some have already happened.

Negotiation with foreign manufacturers :

Regarding international sourcing, I successfully applied the intercultural and linguistic techniques I learned during my LEA formation, especially the business and technical vocabulary that are useful to be understood and handling a project without bad surprises. To have discussed mostly about tableware and inflatable structures also made me look and learn how to say specific terms in English to be more easily understood.

Technical nuances : When designing inflatable products with the supplier I had to learn new technical concepts I had never learned, such as know the difference between the structures needing continuous airflow from the air blower and those which only needs to inflate once, the airtight inflatables (air sealed), for example I didn't know the term "airtight" before my internship. Using the right words is primordial as a misunderstanding can easily lead to manufacturing errors, budget and time waste.

Linguistic adaptability : Negotiating in English with non-native speakers sometimes required me to simplify my syntax, avoiding idioms and using an ultra-descriptive way to ask what I wanted them to do. I managed the production of tableware for Yatouland (searched for an alternative in Europe (Poland and Spain) but it was too costly), promotional products as silk

bracelets personalized with the logo of the clients and some other for the water park of Yatouland “Yatousplash” but also some inflatables structures, the creation of fitting rooms, followed a previous order of an LEGO astronaut of 5 meter high, and search to make 10 to 15 inflatables to re-create an Avatar theme for a foreign client in 2027.

Supply chain and financial comparisons :

I used a structured and analytical approach to supply chain management by researching alternatives to China in Europe, I especially contacted manufacturers in Poland and Spain.

Polish and Spanish cases studies : I searched online which manufacturers could make what we were interested in, especially in tableware. I called a Polish company in English to ask him precisely what he can do and the time it would take but eventually it was too costly even though it was faster it wasn't interesting. It was the same for the Spanish ones I checked. It was always quicker but at least 5 to 10 times the price we usually pay in China.

Strategic decisions : After assessing both advantaging and disadvantaging of Europe and China, due to the price difference we rather chose China for the urgent order we had, sending 30% of the tableware by plane to have it as soon as possible and have enough to wait for the last 70% coming by sea to make it cheaper and still quick to deliver.

1.3.2. Digital tools for event design, logistics, and administration

The modern event industry relies heavily on digital tools and competences. During the past few months, I have improved my skills on professional software, being taught by my co-workers, it made me realize that digital tools are just as important as relational skills in securing commercial success.

Canva as a strategic and logistical tool :

While I already initially utilized Canva for basic layout tasks for some presentation during my LEA formation, working at Optima Live enabled me to go even further by learning how to use features necessary for high-end customized offers and visuals.

Moodboard creation : I learned some image editing techniques, such as background removal, to isolate a specific item from our catalogs to highlight it by removing its background and only leaving the product. By separating chairs, sofas, and technical gear from their original backgrounds, I then organize and put them into cohesive visual "moodboards" that helped clients visualize the aesthetic theme of their events. The moodboard is something I didn't know before my internship here and I now understand its use and capacity to help the client to project themselves in the offer.

Spatial layout plans : In addition to standard marketing visuals, I used Canva to design detailed spatial layout plans based on the structural blueprints of OptimHall's 1,000 square meters. I used both ground floor and upper floor blueprints to make precise plans and help the logistics teams to put everything in its right place. These plans served as an essential operational roadmap for Abdel and our temporary handling staff during event setups, indicating exactly where every stage module, high cocktail table, lounge sofa, inflatable structures, basically where every piece of furniture or products the client rents must be positioned.

AI prompting and digital asset optimization :

Working with Christian, the graphic and web designer, opened new perspectives and helped me having a better understanding on how artificial intelligence can optimize a company's efficiency.

Christian trained me in advanced generative AI prompting techniques. He taught me how changing specific descriptive keywords, lighting variables, and structural styles within a prompt could generate clean, professional marketing images tailored for our digital catalogs. Making realistic AI photographs and helping me to optimize the prompt in case of problem or incoherence in the picture as children not playing in the inflatable structure but on its roof for example.

Additionally, I took charge of optimizing the visual and textual data on the new official websites for both Optima Live and Yatouland combining both of their catalogs, Legonflablesuisse.ch. I reviewed technical product descriptions, updated low-resolution visual files with higher-quality photographs, and proposed layout modifications to improve user navigation. Several of my user-experience suggestions were successfully validated and implemented by Christian on legonflablesuisse.ch.

Quotations and basic Microsoft Excel :

To understand the financial management of a small-to-medium enterprise in the event sector, Paola and Lou-Ann trained me on Microsoft Excel for cost calculations.

I learned how to build and maintain pricing matrices to create an accurate commercial quotation. Paola gave me her quotation model for me to use it, I then optimized it to make it easier and quicker to fill, and even clearer to read to me. I didn't know how to use Excel so Paola and Lou-Ann taught me to and then could give me the information I needed to make a quotation, the venue rental costs in function of the rooms and time of the rental, the catalogs with the prices of all the products, the price of the animators, service providers, the manutention/delivery and the target margin to make on the product we don't have in the catalog and that we buy to sell it to the client.

1.3.3. Professional communication and field adaptability

During my internship, one of the most valuable skills I enhanced is self-confidence. Working there at both the office and on the field helped me to develop my personal and professional confidence.

Overcoming communication obstacles :

At the beginning of my internship, receiving and making professional phone calls with unknown clients or shops, service providers... was at first a little bit stressing as I never did it before this experience. It made my first calls shy and full of hesitations, not spontaneous at

all. At the beginning I wasn't confident at all and would have preferred if my co-workers could call instead of me but after a few phone calls, I realized it wasn't such a big deal and were quickly more at ease and less stressed. I understood that it was also important to prepare a few possible important information beforehand making the call, speaking slowly and not rushing it and everything was easier then.

Through my internship I mostly called customers to ask questions when we needed information to make their event, shops near Geneva but also far like in France, when we needed items quickly to know if they could give us enough products and in time. And once I called a Polish manufacturer in English to ask some questions but most of my exchanges with foreign suppliers were written.

The reality of field logistics and handling

Finally, my vision of the event industry was completed by the field, the agency's work is not just in the office planning events, the next step is the realization of the event. The logistics team and some of the office team, depending on the needs of the event, go on the manifestation's place and build it.

Participatory observation : Following my supervisor and working with Abdel and temporary staff members like Jamel allowed me to see the field side of the event, carrying equipment and all the material the client rented, installing everything and once the event is done uninstalling it and bring the material back to OptimHall or the storage.

The biggest part of the job is usually before the weekend if there is an event booked at the OptimHall, the logistics team then come and start to remove everything from the Yatouland playground such as the inflatables and even tables and pieces of furniture from the breakout rooms of the upper floor for some private room for the client or it can also be used as dressing rooms for the artists. The team sets up tables, scenes, chairs, bars and takes care of many other tasks.

From the very first phone call, business proposal, managing international sourcing to the logistics and installation of events on the field, gave me a real overview of what the event planning sector is, its challenges and its international side.

Part II : How does international sourcing influence the daily organization of events at Optima Live ? :

Chapter 2.1 : Technical, linguistic challenges and cultural differences with non-French speaking partners

Integrating an international supply chain into our local event agency brings several operational variables that go far beyond standard logistics. Working with overseas manufacturing partners outside of our usual French-speaking zone (mostly with factories and old employees of the agency based in industrial areas in China), requires me to daily deal with linguistic barriers, big time zone differences, and different business cultures. In this chapter, I will analyze how these friction points affect the agency's responsiveness and show the practical and efficient management methods I put in place on the field to ensure data accuracy and product quality.

2.1.1. Linguistic Barriers and Asymmetric Communication Strategies

In international purchasing, communication rarely happens in the native language of either side. Instead, we use English as a shared workplace language, an academic concept known as Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) (Kankaanranta et Louhiala-Salminen, 2010). In my day-to-day missions at Optima Live, almost all my BELF exchanges with suppliers take place through mobile messaging networks, specifically WhatsApp, rather than formal emails.

Looking closely at our WhatsApp chats, I noticed a clear linguistic asymmetry between the agency and the factories :

Syntactic Approximation : The written English from the Chinese export managers is often non-standard, with grammatical shortcuts, structural anomalies, and literal translations from Mandarin. The general business intent is usually clear enough to understand, but the poorly written text creates a kind of background noise that can easily lead to severe operational mistakes or bad surprises if I leave it unchecked.

Informational Simplification : To avoid any risk of misunderstanding, I had to adapt my own way of communicating by adopting a strategy of accommodation (Seidlhofer, 2011). This means I choose to write in a very simple, direct, and clear style, completely avoiding French idioms, complicated passive structures, or professional metaphors that could confuse the foreign supplier.

To completely secure our data exchanges before making any financial commitment or launching production, I created a strict "feedback loop" protocol. Before validating any final order, I always send an itemized summary message with bullet points to recap the exact technical sizes, colors, quantities, and shipping details of the transaction. Asking the supplier for an explicit written confirmation on this summary ensures that both Optima Live and the foreign factory agree on the exact same parameters, which dramatically reduces mistakes before they start cutting or printing the raw materials.

2.1.2. Temporal and intercultural management : The challenge of time zones and operational responsiveness

The event management sector demands immediate reactivity, but sourcing manufacturing assets from Asia introduces a deeply asynchronous timeline because of the 6 to 7 hour time difference between Geneva and China. This geographical separation directly shapes how I organize my weekly internal workflow at Optima Live's commercial office in two main ways:

Asynchronous Message Flows : Because of this big-time gap, a large volume of supplier messages, production updates, and digital designs arrive on my phone during the night, typically between 2:00 AM and 3:00 AM Swiss time. If I leave these queries unaddressed

until late in our standard European working day, a full 24-hour cycle is completely lost, which slows down the overall project timeline for the agency.

Strategic Window Optimization : To get the best operational momentum and maximize our time, I chose to restructure my daily schedule. I now concentrate all my manufacturing oversight, design alterations, and factory correspondence during my morning hours in Geneva. This specific time slot works perfectly because it corresponds to the late afternoon and early evening in China. By focusing and working with the suppliers during this shared window, enable us to achieve real-time problem resolution with the suppliers right before the factories close their daily administrative shifts.

It is also interesting to highlight a distinct cultural attribute of our Chinese industrial partners, their remarkable temporal flexibility and dedication to professional availability. This is often linked to the "996 working hour system" (Wang, 2020). In my daily work, I see that overseas sales managers routinely answer my inquiries very late into their local night, showing they work a lot and don't let us down until the next day if there is a problem. For Optima Live, this cultural trait is a great advantage because it allows us to maintain a highly agile supply chain during urgent, short-notice event requests. Managing these emergencies relies on a precise, temporary alignment of our working hours, turning what could be a tough geographical constraint into a highly continuous operational workflow.

2.1.3. Currency and financial complexity in international negotiations

Looking at the economic environment of our international sourcing, I noticed a clear currency disconnection. Our agency is fully anchored and based in Geneva, which means we draft 100% of our local client invoices and financial forecasts in Swiss Francs (CHF). However, the Swiss currency is completely absent when I negotiate with our international suppliers.

Foreign partners instead require us to use "vehicle currencies" (Goldberg et Tille, 2008). In my daily sourcing duties, I have to handle this monetary management across three different dynamics :

The Euro (EUR) : Several Chinese manufacturing partners prefer invoicing us directly in Euros. This is likely due to the currency's deep liquidity and historical stability within European trade channels, making it a very strong currency to use currently.

The US Dollar (USD) : Other suppliers give me their initial pricing structures strictly in USD. Whenever this happens, most of the time they systematically already include a converted Euro reference directly on the quotation layout. Having this conversion on the quote allows us to immediately evaluate the real impact on our gross margins.

The Renminbi (RMB): Less frequently, initial raw material prices for specific custom components are given to me in local Chinese Yuan. However, the sales manager usually converts it to Euros or USD a little bit later so we can finalize the transaction smoothly.

Because of this, we rarely or never speak about Swiss Francs with overseas factories. Optima Live settles its international manufacturing debts exclusively in Euros or US Dollars. This multi-currency environment exposes our firm to indirect exchange rate risks when we convert our raw purchase costs (in EUR or USD) back into our localized operational accounting (in CHF). Vanessa, who manages the accounting pole, is the person who pays those invoices and chose the best payment option.

2.1.4. Technical and logistical perception mismatch : production lead times vs transit lead times

One of the most persistent operational challenges encountered during my integration into the agency's workflow was a structural misunderstanding about what "delivery time" means. In the industrial culture of our overseas suppliers, the deadlines they initially give us almost always refer strictly to the fabrication delay, meaning the time they need to physically make the product inside their factory walls. They often didn't tell at first the real delivery time, the actual international transport duration.

To fix this perception gap and make sure we don't compromise a hard event deadline in Geneva, I decided to integrate transport and shipping details directly into my mandatory WhatsApp feedback loop summaries. Our logistical choices now follow a strict trade-off between cost and time, which perfectly mirrors the classic supply chain distribution models (Christopher, 2016):

Air freight : This channel is the fastest way to get our products because it completely avoids maritime and rail delays, but it is also the most expensive option. We strictly reserve it for high-urgency projects or last-minute custom modifications requested by corporate clients.

Ocean door shipping : This door-to-door maritime shipping method is the most cost-efficient and represents the best solution to optimize our margins for items we add to our long-term rental catalog. However, the main disadvantage is that it demands a very rigid planning schedule because it often takes a 60 day transit time to clear European customs and Swiss entry points.

Rail transport : This is a good intermediate choice as it is faster than the maritime shipping taking around 15 to 20 days, costing more than the maritime shipping but still less than the air freight. This constitutes an interesting alternative to the air freight for short delays.

In this international logistical setup, managing basic administrative papers is what makes our daily operations work. Words like quotation, invoice and proof of payment might not sound very technical, but they act as essential operational gates in these situations. Each document signifies a specific step: the signed quotation locks down the final technical dimensions and the price, the invoice then is given to Vanessa who will make the administrative payment clearance, and sending over our proof of payment is what officially tells the factory to start physical production on the floor. Managing this data flow is vital to ensure that our international orders arrive in Switzerland right on time to match the technical setup schedule on the field.

Chapter 2.2 : From the commercial offer to on-field reality and event logistics

The daily operational success and financial viability of an integrated event company like Optima Live Sàrl depend heavily on how we bridge the gap between a nice commercial proposal on paper and the real physical layout on the ground. Moving a project from initial offers, negotiations in our offices to real physical labor on the field requires a lot of administrative work and clear technical communication. In this chapter, I will examine the cost-calculation mechanisms we use for corporate offers, how we design our spatial floor plans, the way we use our internal "Event Sheet" to avoid operational risks, and the hands-on realities of handling physical material through two concrete case studies from my internship.

2.2.1. Commercial proposal engineering : Budgetary processes and visual modeling

Every event project starts by gathering the client's raw requirements. Quite often, I need to make follow-up phone calls to ask the customer for additional information or specific details to clear up the brief. Once I have collected all the parameters, my main responsibility is to calculate the costs and build the financial structure of the project using Microsoft Excel. I have to adapt my Excel formulas and cost calculations depending on which customers and brands we are working with:

The leisure flow (Yatouland) : When calculating prices on Excel for Yatouland, I have to integrate several specific cost modules. This involves checking our catalog prices to calculate the rental rates of the inflatable structures and wooden games, budgets for specific interactive activities, the wages for our animators, the labor costs for the setup crew, and our specialized administrative file fees. The brand can handle both B2C (business to customer) and B2B (business to business) requests and events.

The agency flow (Optima Live) : This brand is also able to treat both B2B and B2C requests, from the private client renting a breakout room for a party, to corporate/institutional clients planning large-scale events, the budget framework on Excel is often much more complex. I

have to calculate the room rental costs for privatizing the OptimHall based on the spaces and time used, the rental prices for our corporate furniture and technical gear, the payroll for the hosting staff, decorations, and the target margin we want to make on custom products that are not in our catalog and that we buy internationally specifically for the client's event.

Once the budget is mathematically ready on Excel, I use a specific presentation strategy depending on how big the budget is and what the client expects (Johnston et Clark, 2008). :

The standard approach (Word format) : If the request is for a small/modest budget and needs to be done quickly, I just compile a standard quotation using Microsoft Word. This document simply outlines Optima Live's corporate details, the client's information, a basic breakdown of the products with quantities and prices, a short summary of the event schedule, the general contract conditions, and screenshots of the products to give them a quick visual of what they are renting.

The strategic approach (Canva presentation) : For more important or large-scale corporate events, standard spreadsheets or simple text documents are not enough to sell the project. I design a comprehensive visual presentation on Canva to make the offer much more attractive. I use image editing techniques like background removal to isolate our catalog items and create cohesive moodboards or simple presentations of products and I write detailed explanations to show the client exactly why they need to rent specific furniture pieces or custom inflatables to match their goals. For our international and foreign accounts, I make these proposals entirely in English using clear, professional vocabulary and tone. International sourcing affects greatly this part, as I make an offer to a client looking for a large-scale event, I always make some optional propositions when it is possible in terms of delays. Mostly personalized accessories which are not too costly to attract the client or even some customized inflatable structures designed for the client. In both cases, for my offer to be professional and attractive, I use AI or Canva to create realistic and doable pictures of personalized products. By doing so, the client can have a better idea of the offer and project himself into it thanks to the visuals.

2.2.2. Spatial Engineering: Spatial Layout Plans and Geometric Optimization

As soon as a client signs and validates the contract, the project shifts from financial calculations to spatial layout design. My task here is to create the physical floor plans directly on Canva, transforming the venue's technical blueprints into visual maps that show our logistics team exactly how to organize the furniture and equipment on the ground.

To do this, I take the architectural blueprints of OptimHall's 1,000 square meters and place basic geometric shapes—like squares, rectangles, or lines—directly onto the floor plan. I adjust these shapes to an estimated size based on the room's real dimensions and write the name of the object right inside them so the team can visualize the setup. This includes plotting out the exact positioning of our technical stage modules, aligning long rows of rectangular dining tables, or choosing the best orientation for high cocktail tables and lounge sofas depending on what the client wants. I need to be careful in case a product is from international sourcing and is brand new, as I need its exact dimensions, needs (air blower and electricity source for an inflatable for example) and where to place it. Clear communication with the supplier is important to have the best result possible, I often ask for pictures of the products for example to have a better idea of it.

The main challenge when designing these layouts is organizing guest traffic flows to prevent any congestion, which is a concept heavily studied under the Servicescape framework (Bitner, 1992). It requires a lot of thinking to properly optimize the space, especially when the requirements are highly restrictive. For example, trying to fit a large-scale corporate conference alongside catering and buffet stations within the 600 square meters of our ground floor (the MainHall and StudioHall) can be quite difficult. One of the most likely problems to happen is to organize an event in a room where all the guests can't fit in it. When I struggle to find the best layout or need to double-check structural pathways, I ask for some help to avoid any mistake. I can always ask my colleagues for advice to optimize the pathways and the furniture disposal before the final validation, preventing layout mistakes that could easily disrupt the final event.

2.2.3. The “event sheet” as an operational risk management tool

In our daily operations, creating an internal guiding roadmap, known as the event sheet (fiche event), is one of the most important tasks I handle. It acts as the most critical communication link between our planning office and the team on the field. I must be as careful as I can when making this document because even a small error or an unclear instruction can completely ruin the execution of an event and cause severe logistical failures during the rush.

When an event sheet is poorly written, it introduces immediate risks that can disrupt the whole manifestation, for example : incorrect delivery locations, misaligned timetables, loading mistakes at our warehouse, or not having enough personnel on-site. Furthermore, if the steps are forgotten or instructions are not clear, the handling crew needs to interrupt their work and call our office in an emergency to get precise clarifications not to make any mistake. To avoid these vulnerabilities and make sure everything runs without facing any problem, I make each event sheet using a strict protocol that answers the following essential questions :

Contact protocols : It is essential to always include the full coordinates of the client and the exact name of the person in charge of the event at Optima Live. This establishes a clear person to call in case of questions or unexpected on-site issues to find a solution as quickly as possible.

Geographical and temporal precision : The exact physical address of the manifestation and the explicit arrival times for our staff must be clearly explained. It is crucial that I specify exactly where the team needs to meet, for example if they need to go at the warehouse or at the usual office to load the furniture, meet at OptimHall, or go straight to the external event's place.

Task allocation matrices : I create a detailed breakdown explaining exactly who does what, when, and where. I have to clarify whether Abdel and our temporary staff need to remain on-site during the actual event for operational supervision, even animating some activities, or if they are only scheduled to install or uninstall the material.

Technical and access specification notes : I add useful logistical info that can save a lot of time on the field. This includes specific details about handling fragile gear, parking limits for the company's truck, or site-specific data like a gate code or portal password to access the loading docks.

The impact of internal sourcing : During the process of creating this important document to fully finish to organize an event, if an activity, products or inflatable structures are from internal sourcing it can change its whole creation. If the products are still in production/delivery, you cannot know when to take it and where, it needs to know when the product will be delivered and especially where it will be stocked. If you know the date and the place of delivery, for example at OptimHall and if it is not taking too much room in the intern stock, it can be stocked here until the event for example, in that case it is simple to implement it to the event sheet, though if it you don't know where it will be stocked, it is more complicated to indicate the team if they need to take it at OptimHall or at the warehouse. Making it hard to prepare early and in some cases even make it a last-minute organization.

The other complicated aspect is if you don't already have enough information about the product, its actual weight, its dimensions etc... In this case it is hard to assume how many people need to carry the product for example, making it also hard to prepare the event sheet early.

By centralizing all these operational data points into a single sheet, the document secures the autonomy of our handling staff. It allows Abdel and the extras to execute their tasks efficiently without needing to constantly call the agency's office for directions, making it easier for both teams, acting as a strong control barrier against unexpected field challenges.

2.2.4. On-field material handling and logistical flows: Empirical case studies

To truly understand how Optima Live's corporate ecosystem operates, it is necessary to look directly at the physical realities of material handling. Even though my main missions are commercial and analytical within the office, I regularly join our operations crew on the field during intense setup windows. Two specific case studies from my internship perfectly illustrate the real operational challenges and physical constraints of this industry :

The weekend operational turnaround and institutional seminars :

OptimHall's entire business model relies on asset flexibility. This physical infrastructure can change very quickly between its usual B2C layout (the Yatouland playground) and its B2B corporate events. In my daily work, I do not often pack or clean the inflatables myself, that heavy physical labor is mostly handled by Abdel and our temporary crew members, like Jamel, unless it is a massive structure and the team needs extra hands.

For a standard transition, the logistics team removes the inflatables from the MainHall and StudioHall, coordinates with an external specialized cleaning company to wash and sanitize the empty floors, and immediately installs the corporate furniture, such as building a modular technical stage.

However, this logistical challenge peaks when high-profile institutional clients, like the State of Geneva (République et Canton de Genève), privatize the entire facility. For instance, every two months they organize training seminars for their new employees, using all 600 square meters of the ground floor and the 470 square meters of our upper floor with its ten breakout rooms. In this situation, the entire agency staff is mobilized on the floor to help the logistics team. We work together for a whole day deflating, folding, and moving massive PVC inflatable structures into our dedicated storage zones before resetting every single room with corporate furniture based on the spatial layout plans. As soon as the event concludes, the entire flow reverses under a very tight timeline : we remove everything and return them to the stock and re-inflate the complete Yatouland playground, so it is ready for the opening hours, demonstrating a tight, just-in-time operations management cycle.

The "Village Ressource" project at Palexpo during the G7 summit :

The "Village Ressource" project, deployed for a major public safety department inside the massive Palexpo exhibition complex during the G7 summit, represents the most complex spatial planning and field assignment of my internship. For this international project, I designed a portion of the visual spatial layouts to determine the optimal configuration of the

spaces, seating arrangements, entry arches, decorative plants, and furniture. To resolve the client's difficulties in visualizing a 1,300-square-meter blank exhibition box, I worked on integrating artificial intelligence image renderings into our presentation offer, providing photorealistic perspectives of the proposed scenery.

Regarding visual communication, I originally created the textual layouts for the venue signage and information boards in a bilingual French-German format to fill institutional criteria, though a late change by the client narrowed the final print run to French only. My colleague Christian then finalized the graphic files for industrial print production. On the ground, I actively assisted with the physical setup at Palexpo. This physical challenge required laying down 1,300 square meters of ground carpeting and assembling our technical furniture under strict security protocols, teaching me how to manage the operational constraints of large-scale international event spaces.

Chapter 2.3 : Management of international sourcing and analyzing its benefits and inconvenients to have the best efficiency possible

For an agency like Optima Live, implementing an international purchasing strategy, it is continuously balanced between financial optimization and operational risk. Sourcing our assets globally is not just a simple commercial tactic to buy equipment and save costs, it is a complete business methodology that directly enhances the catalog's variety, the pricing which is important due to the competitiveness in Geneva, and the brand image. In this chapter, I will evaluate the economic and strategic advantages of our global sourcing. I will also analyze the operational vulnerabilities and supply chain disruptions that I personally observed during my field experience and offer practical management recommendations to make the sourcing as efficient as possible.

2.3.1. Strategic and economic benefits of global procurement

The Unit Cost Advantage and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) framework : The first goal behind Optima Live's decision to source equipment from overseas manufacturing hubs, most of the time from our suppliers in China, is the massive reduction in production costs. When

working on our cost calculations on several option in China and Europe, I noticed that for both specific inflatable structures and customized items, the Chinese production costs can be up to ten times cheaper than the manufacturing quotes we get from local European competitors.

To have an academic point of view of these prices perspectives, our agency must look beyond the simple purchase price and analyze what is known as the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) (Ellram, 1993). The TCO concept calculates the comprehensive cost of an asset by combining the initial factory price with all the hidden expenses, such as international maritime, rail transport or air freight, import tariffs, Swiss customs clearance fees, and final warehousing costs.

In my daily activities, I observed that the economic viability of our global sourcing depends directly on the volume of the order :

High-volume procurement : For large-scale orders, such as the mass production of our custom Yatouland tableware or a full renewal of our inflatable catalog, the low unit cost easily absorbs the fixed overhead of international shipping and Swiss import customs. This scenario is highly advantageous because it maximizes the agency's gross margins and gives us a strong competitive advantage in the local market.

Low-volume procurement : On the other hand, for small, isolated orders, this economic advantage shrinks very rapidly. When you add up the maritime or air freight fees, customs duties, and the administrative time, the financial gains may vanish completely., losing all financial interest and lead to complex logistics. This proves to me that global sourcing must be managed strategically by the office team rather than being used as a default option for every single purchase.

Competitive differentiation and asset lifecycle management :

Beyond direct financial savings, global sourcing serves as a real engine for corporate differentiation (Porter, 1985). In a saturated local market like the Canton of Geneva, event agencies that rely solely on standard European rental catalogs end up offering highly predictable, identical setups to their clients. By sourcing directly from Chinese factories, Optima Live completely bypasses these creative limitations. It allows us to offer our clients total customization and the ability to produce unique physical assets based entirely on their wishes.

During my internship, I could observe how this procurement model delivers distinct commercial advantages across both business streams :

Entertainment and leisure innovations (Yatouland asset renewal) : In the family entertainment sector, to keep a customer's fidelity is important, and to do so, novelty is an efficient way. If an indoor amusement park displays the exact same attractions year after year, clients are likely to lose interest and might not come back anymore, declining the brand's profits. Sourcing directly from Chinese manufacturers allows Yatouland by optimizing the costs, to renew its inflatable structures and games every 3 to 4 years, without Optima Live's Chinese partners this wouldn't be doable. This prevents asset obsolescence and keeps the catalog exciting for local families. This strategy allows the agency to purchase high-end and premium oversized items such as the custom 5- meter- high LEGO astronaut (that I was asked to follow the fabrication and delivery) or specialized James Bond themed structures, those being uncommon items available to easily rent in standard Swiss market. These exclusive items can then be rented out to prominent local commercial hubs, such as the Balaxert shopping mall in Geneva, generating strong brand visibility and alternative revenue streams.

Premium branding via custom supply chains : For the Yatouland birthday parties hosted at the OptimHall and every Yatouland event needing tableware, I personally managed the procurement of the custom branded tableware, including our proprietary cups, plates, napkins, and wooden spoons. From a commercial point of view, it helps greatly differentiate the brand among its competitors, thanks to these branded items, the user experience is enhanced. It gives Yatouland's guests the feeling of a premium, professional venue with its own custom accessories, which enhances the overall client experience and greatly boosts Yatouland's corporate image.

2.3.2. Structural vulnerabilities and supply chain risks

The quality control asymmetry :

Even though buying equipment from overseas gives the agency clear financial benefits, relying on a long, extended supply chain introduces some important vulnerabilities, especially when it comes to keeping the product quality consistent. When you do global sourcing, there are always risks of material nonconformity or a cheaper quality than expected. Even if you check all the technical specifications beforehand and approve the designs through digital photos or videos, a margin of error always remains. The final physical product can still end up feeling quite cheap or less durable than what you originally anticipated. This risk is not only about Chinese suppliers, but this is internationally wise.

In this sector, the products we set up on the field are subjected to a lot of intense wear-and-tear from the public, whether it is children jumping on inflatables or corporate/private guests using our furniture. If a material is too fragile, it can break much earlier than expected, which directly compromises customer safety and forces us to retire the product early from our catalog. This vulnerability is even worse because of the long geographical distance, if we receive a defective or under quality item, returning it to Asian factories is practically impossible due to the costly shipping costs and long-time constraints.

Lead time volatility and the zero-tolerance event environment :

To me, the most critical disadvantage of global sourcing is how unprecise and unstable the production and transport timelines can be. In a standard manufacturing environment, the fabrication delay for highly customized or unusual items is almost always based on broad estimates rather than a fixed, guaranteed date. Because it is never really sure when they will finish if it is not a product they often produce, our commercial team always needs to build extensive time margins security into every project schedule. This lead time volatility interacts directly with international transport channels, presenting distinct challenges depending on the method we choose :

Ocean freight constraints : Door-to-door maritime transit from Asia to Switzerland requires an incompressible window of approximately 60 days. This long timeline means global sourcing can only support projects planned months in advance, removing any option for short-term operational reactivity.

Rail freight constraints : Door-to-door rail transit between Asia and Switzerland typically spans an incompressible window of 15 to 25 days. While faster than ocean freight, this mode remains highly vulnerable to geopolitical disruptions at border crossings, gauge-change bottlenecks, and severe winter weather conditions along the Eurasian corridors, which can unpredictably stall the supply chain.

Air freight limitations : Even when utilizing expedited air freight, shipping cycles routinely take 9 to 10 days due to consolidation delays, export paperwork, and customs backlogs.

This structural rigidity creates a lot of friction with the core nature of the event industry, which operates in a strict "zero-tolerance" environment. In this business, event dates are completely fixed and unmovable. In a traditional corporate company, a 5 day shipping delay might just cause a minor inventory shortage in the warehouse. But in event management, even a 5 hour delay on the day of the manifestation can completely ruin the whole project. It inflicts severe damage on the agency's reputation and can also lead to heavy financial penalties for breaking the contract.

I experienced this operational anxiety firsthand when managing an order of custom piñatas from an external supplier in France, due to transport delays, the piñatas arrived at our facility on the exact day, a few hours before the event, leaving zero margin for error or quality adjustments. More recently, we received the packages of the tableware we ordered, our Chinese partner had forgotten to put 2 000 cups, I talked to her and she sent the rest by air but it will take 7 working days to arrive, complicating the project we had, so in case of

unexpected problems, the long distance from the factory might makes last minute solutions impossible.

2.3.3. Strategic management recommendations

To optimize the agency's global efficiency, supply chain and manage the operational risks I detailed above, I suggest three structured, actionable management recommendations based directly on my field observations and daily work at the office :

1. Implementation of standardized time buffers and safety margins :

I think the agency needs to implement a mandatory procurement margin that always adds a fixed administrative and logistical security to the fabrication delays given by foreign factories. For instance, during my internship, a recurring order of dishes and tableware that we ordered for Yatouland experienced an unexpected manufacturing delay. It took at least two weeks longer to produce than what was initially planned, which can be a massive problem when you have events coming up fast.

To prevent these types of factory delays from threatening our live event deliveries, we should mandate a minimum 20 to 30% safety margin on all overseas production calendars. If a Chinese manufacturer quotes a 30-day production window, Optima Live's internal project management sheets must calculate the operation using a 40-day baseline for example. This simple buffer ensures the agency remains completely insulated from unexpected factory backlogs. The following of an offer proposing items coming from international sourcing is also important, if the client takes a long time to sign the offer, and that we didn't pay attention to the delays, it can be undoable.

2. Institutionalization of a "Ready-to-produce" procurement catalog :

To reduce our administrative fees and completely eliminate upfront design delays, I recommend that the agency expands its use of "Ready-to-produce" (RTP) procurement protocols. This method was really efficient and convenient when I managed the reordering of

the Yatouland custom tableware. Because this tableware is something the agency buys very often and from the exact same supplier, the entire design blueprint and quality standards are already locked in the factory's database.

When reordering, my role was simplified to communicate the desired quantities. It was much easier and quicker because I just had to ask the sales manager for the exact same product as usual, without wasting any time making new designs or waiting for prototypes. The agency should try to optimize the same setup for other highly repeatable catalog assets such as our standard promotional items, silk bracelets (for the Yatousplash water park for instance), or uniform inflatable modules. By preserving these pre-validated technical blueprints with trusted suppliers, Optima Live can instantly initiate production runs and cut down administrative lead times by several days or weeks.

3. Formalization of a contingent dual-sourcing framework :

Finally, to balance financial optimization with operational agility, Optima Live should transition from a single-source model to a contingent dual-sourcing strategy, a framework strongly supported by supply chain agile theories (Christopher, 2016). While China must remain the agency's primary source for high-volume, long-term catalog investments due to its unbeatable prices, and must establish a pre-vetted network of secondary European backup suppliers (especially located in Spain, Poland, or France for example) to handle last-minute emergency orders.

As my comparative sourcing research and phone calls showed, European manufacturers operate in a premium price tier that reduces the net margins and its competitiveness, costing at least 5 to 10 times the price we usually pay in China. However, they offer incredibly short transit lead times (often 7 to 14 days via land transport) and operate within our same time zone. If a premium corporate client requests a highly customized modification on short notice and is completely ready to pay the higher price for speed, we should consider it and activate our European backup supply lines, start to try to find partnerships in Europe. This dual-sourcing methodology allows Optima Live to maintain its strong reputation for absolute

operational reliability on short notice while keeping its primary global supply chain focused on long-term profitability.

Conclusion

This semester spent as an intern within the fast-paced ecosystem of Optima Live Sàrl has provided me with a complete, multi-dimensional view of the event management industry and its international dependencies and needs. By addressing my core research question, this study has successfully demonstrated that international sourcing is not an isolated administrative task, instead, it completely influences and reshapes every single step of the daily organization, moving directly from initial desktop negotiations to the physical labor on the ground.

Sourcing our inventory globally directly shapes how I build budgetary formulas on Microsoft Excel, forces me to master technical nuances like the difference between continuous airflow and airtight structures, and dictates how I design visual moodboards and detailed spatial layout plans on Canva to help clients project themselves into the venue, project or even just the products. On an operational level, I experienced using English as a shared business language, especially on WhatsApp by establishing a strict, bulleted "feedback loop" protocol before launching any production run, Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) (Kankaanranta et Louhiala-Salminen, 2010).

Furthermore, we managed the asynchronous friction of a 6 to 7 hour time difference by optimizing our morning schedules in Geneva to achieve real-time problem resolution right before Chinese shifts concluded. Finally, my participatory observation during major assignments such as the weekend operational turnarounds for institutional seminars, parties, concerts... at OptimHall or laying down 1,300 square meters of carpet under strict security protocols for the "Village Ressource" project at Palexpo proving that the internal event sheets must be drafted with absolute geographical, temporal, and technical precision to avoid structural lead-time volatility of global transport channels to the logistics team.

Of course, it is necessary to recognize the specific limits of this study. Because my internship was bounded by a single semester, my practical sourcing data was mostly focused on specific product streams, such as the mass procurement of custom-branded Yatouland tableware and promotional items, alongside a few specialized custom inflatable structures shapes.

Additionally, international maritime freight rates and customs clearance backlogs are subject to highly unstable macroeconomic shifts, meaning that the logistical timelines and financial

calculations evaluated during these few months represent a snapshot in real time rather than a permanent operational certainty.

On a personal and professional level, this experience has been incredibly rewarding and marks an essential milestone in my development. At the beginning of my internship, making professional phone calls to unknown clients, suppliers, or local shops was a little bit stressing for me, which made my first exchanges hesitant. By preparing my files thoroughly beforehand, speaking slowly, and confronting the daily realities of the office, I successfully overcame this communication obstacle and gained massive personal confidence.

This internship allowed me to perfectly bridge the gap between my academic training in Applied Foreign Languages (LEA), where I learned the importance of trilingual commercial management, cultural adaptability, and linguistic precision, and incorporated the concrete operational demands of the corporate world. This total immersion has completely confirmed my career project. To build upon the financial, digital, and supply chain skills I acquired at Optima Live, I now plan to continue my academic path by applying for a Master's degree in International Business and Tourism Management in Chambéry, aiming to ultimately master the management of global logistical networks within the international event and hospitality sectors.

GLOBAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- **WANG J.**, « The "996" working hour system and its impact on international supply chain agility in Chinese manufacturing sectors », in *International Journal of Production Economics*, Vol. 221, Elsevier, Pays-Bas, 2020 (pp. 107-115).

3. Internet Sources / Références Internet

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Appendices

Mid-intership report :

Name : Enzo Magnenat

Host Organization : Optima Live, Geneva

Date : 11/05/2026

Subject : Mid-Internship Report

My integration in the event agency is going well and I am not facing any problem, everybody is nice with me and they all teach me continuously and help me if I have a question or don't know how to do something

My internship supervisor sometimes brings me to places or companies to help organize, carry and set up things such as pieces of furniture, inflatables, technical materials etc...

He explains to me how technical materials work and why and how we set them up.

We often take time to check everything he asked me to do, for example to contact Chinese suppliers to ask for a new inflatable design and order some new tableware for local events, or also making offers and contacting customers. We also for instance meet some customers at a restaurant to speak and conclude deals.

During my internship I made significant progress in both my business and relational skills,

To develop client and business management I can now make business proposals to clients in both French and English for the international customers. This has already led

to successful outcomes as several offers of mine are already validated and signed. I keep in contact with clients and call them or write to them to tailor as efficiently as possible their event for them.

Communication wise, I actively try to find ways to optimize the agency's website to make it more attractive, optimized and easy to use. I have enhanced my Canva skills to for example make visuals or business proposals. To make visuals my coworker also taught me how to use IA with strong prompts to make images for the website. I proposed visual adaptations for the website which had been accepted and implemented. Excel is also a tool that a coworker of mine taught me how to use, and to make quotations for the customers.

On the international point of view, I am charged to order some products for special events. I speak with Chinese suppliers, check their design and ask them to change it or not. I study other options like for example in Spain or Poland to see the prices and delivery time differences. And with my coworker we will visit a 5 star hotel in Geneva with clients to meet customers and speak of an event, this visit is meant to be in English.

Comparing my current activities with the goals of my internship convention, I follow the goals well and I can even do more especially from an international point of view.

My goals are to prospect and help with communication. I could do more than just observing and proposing by myself business proposals for instance, or also advising changes on the website.

The 'international environment' competency initially identified has become part of my daily operations thanks to my interactions with foreign suppliers or customers. And with the other part of the work which is to set up the event, like for example meeting the customers, carrying the pieces of furniture we rent them, putting the decorations, the activities... This helps me to have a real vision of what the event world really is.

I haven't really faced or had any issue during my internship so far, everything is clear and if not I am helped by my coworker so everything is fine.

Here is the research question I have in mind for the moment for my final internship report :

Research question :

"How does international sourcing influence the daily organization of events at Optima Live ?"

Plan :

Introduction : Overview of the Geneva events market and my missions at Optima Live.

Part I : The agency and its global environment :

1.1. What is Optima Live ?

The history, the structure and the identity of the agency.

Internal organization -here-

What does the agency offer ?

1.2. The environment of the agency and its market.

Characteristics of the local market:

Competitive landscape

The role and importance of international partners

1.3. Skills and experience enhanced or acquired during the internship.

Bilingual commercial management

Digital tools for event planning and communication purposes

Communication : meeting customers, phone calls, emails

Part II : How does international sourcing influence the daily organization of events at Optima Live ? :

2.1. Technical, linguistic challenges and cultural differences with non-French speaking partners.

English as language and linguistic barriers

Intercultural business and exchanges, adaptation (time-zones , currencies ...)

Technical specifications and custom requests

2.2. From the commercial offer to the reality and its event logistics (tailored for the customer, handling and setup) .

Designing the digital offer (depending on the kind of offer and needs to be attractive and competitive)

The international supply chain and customs constraints (delivery time, problems we may encounter...)

Field reality: Handling, technical assembly, and setup (verifying everything, fixing potential problems...)

2.3. Management of international sourcing and analyzing its benefits and inconvenients to have the best efficiency possible.

Benefits in competitiveness and catalog diversity

Inconveniences and risk management

Operational recommendations for future project management

Conclusion : Synthesis of results and personal perspectives.

Creation of custom inflatable fitting rooms and its several steps :

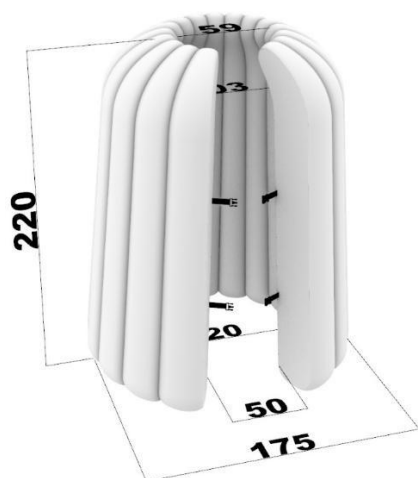
First designs from the supplier :



Creating AI visual to have a better understanding of what we are looking for, also adding a closure system :



The final design :



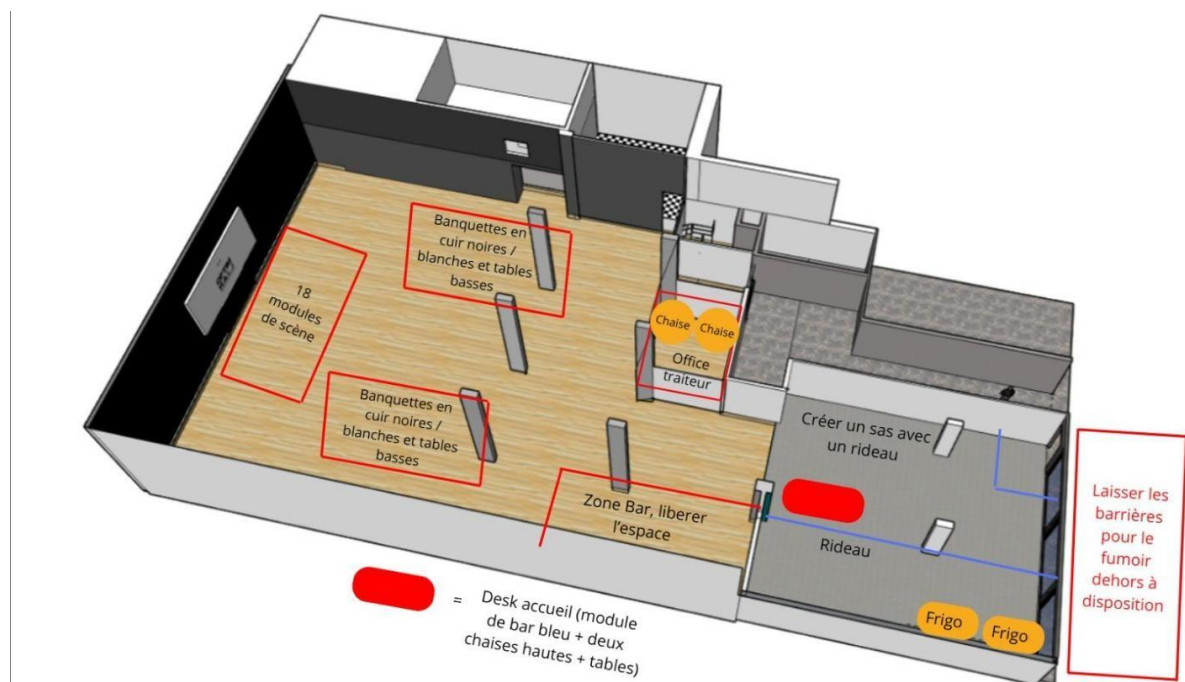
Qutoation example from a Chinese supplier :

		www.yoyoinflatable.com						
INVOICE								
NO:	YY-24111353	DATE	2026.6.4					
SELLER	Guangzhou YoYo Amusement Toys Co., Ltd							
ADDRESS	[REDACTED]							
TEL:	[REDACTED]	FAX						
BUYER:	Yan Favier							
ADDRESS	Chemin de la gravière 4, 1227 les acacias Geneva, Switzerland							
E-mail:	contact@yotoland.com							
TEL	+41 76 570 05 47	FAX						
Item NO.	PICTURE	Description	Size	QTY	UNIT	PRICE	AMOUNT	Mark
YOYO-001		Material: Oxford cloth Accessories: Repair kit, carry bag, include blower	1.75*2.2m	2	SET	\$353.00	\$706.00	
TOTAL							\$706.00	
				\$1,286.00=€1,107.00				
PRICE TERMS:		EXW price, 15 days validity						
DELIVERY WAY		By express						
DESTINATION		Chemin de la gravière 4, 1227 les acacias Geneva, Switzerland						
DELIVERY FEE		\$580.00 (WITHOUT INSURANCE, THE EXACT DELIVERY FEE DEPEND ON THE FACTUAL SHIPPING CHARGE)						
TOTAL VALUE		\$1,286.00						
SAID US EUROS ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SEVEN ONLY								
PAYMENT	1/75% OF THE TOTAL VALUE IN ADVANCE.THE OTHER 5% SHALL BE PAID BEFORE DELIVERY. ALL BANK CHARGES ARE BUYER'S RESPONSIBILITY. (IF THE ORDER IS URGENCY, IT IS BETTER TO PAY 100% OF THE TOTAL VALUE IN ADVANCE BY BUYER).							
Bank Information								
Beneficiary(Account Name)		[REDACTED]						
IBAN (EURO) Account		[REDACTED]						
SWIFT/BIC Code		[REDACTED]						
Beneficiary Bank		[REDACTED]						
Beneficiary Bank Add		[REDACTED]						
COUNTRY		[REDACTED]						
SELLER		BUYER						
REMARK:	THE PI SHALL BE SIGNED BY FAX OR BY EMAIL THROUGH SCAN THE ORIGINAL COPY.							
	THE BUYER SHOULD PAY OFF THE DELIVERY FEE BEFORE LOADING THE GOODS							

The biggest signed project I have worked on during my internship :

Designation	Quantité	P.U.	Montant Total
Ressources TOP – Santé et Prévention Projet Village Ressources à Palexpo			
STAND 1 : Accueil et orientation (70 m²) :			24 960,00 CHF
Desk d'accueil * 4m linéaire	1	3 200,00 CHF	3 200,00 CHF
Desk conciergerie * 1m50 linéaire incluant mobiliers, service conciergerie et l'agent de 08h00 à 20h00	1	5 515,00 CHF	5 515,00 CHF
Arche d'entrée personnalisée de 4m de longueur par 2m50 de hauteur	1	5 850,00 CHF	5 850,00 CHF
Plan en forex du Village Ressource	1	1 250,00 CHF	1 250,00 CHF
Panneau de signalisation personnalisé	1	490,00 CHF	490,00 CHF
2 espaces lounge avec 1 canapé (3 places), 5 fauteuils et 2 tables basses : style osier, été ...	1	2 450,00 CHF	2 450,00 CHF
3 tapis sur le thème de l'été pour l'habillage de la zone	1	1 425,00 CHF	1 425,00 CHF
Plantes végétales diverses et variées (notamment 5 palmiers avec 3 grands et 2 moyens) <i>naturel non artificiel - livraison et entretien inclus</i>	1	1 975,00 CHF	1 975,00 CHF
Olivier avec guirlande lumineuse comme pièce maîtresse de l'espace - <i>arbre naturel non artificiel - livraison et entretien inclus</i>	1	2 690,00 CHF	2 690,00 CHF
Cailloux blanc décoratif pour accompagner les plantes	1	450,00 CHF	450,00 CHF
Support d'information digitale noir 2m x 75 cm	1	2 100,00 CHF	2 100,00 CHF
Pack éclairage d'ambiance avec bandes leds pour le desk et pourtour des plantes, spots lumineux ...	1	2 100,00 CHF	2 100,00 CHF
Fleurs artificielles décoratives pour habiller l'espace	1	980,00 CHF	980,00 CHF
Hôtes/esses de 08h00 à 20h00 du 09 au 19 juin 2026 incluant 3 hôtes/esses et 2 hôtes soit 605h de présence	605	58,00 CHF	35 090,00 CHF
STAND 2 : Lounge et détente (220 m²) :			56 240,00 CHF
6 espaces VIP (1 set de canapé d'angle avec fauteuil et table basse + tapis)	6	2 450,00 CHF	14 700,00 CHF
Zone assises x4 (fauteuils, poufs, tables basses et tapis)	4	1 985,00 CHF	7 940,00 CHF
Îlot central incluant 15 transats, 5 parasols, 3 palmiers au centre + décoration cerclage de bois, sable et spots lumineux	1	11 450,00 CHF	11 450,00 CHF
Etagères pour la bibliothèque : disposer des livres, casques anti-bruit, tapis de yoga ...	2	3 450,00 CHF	6 900,00 CHF
Bancs végétales pour délimiter les espaces soit 45m linéaire	45	295,00 CHF	13 275,00 CHF
Plantes végétales diverses et variées (notamment 5 palmiers avec 3 grands et 2 moyens) <i>naturel non artificiel - livraison et entretien inclus</i>	1	1 975,00 CHF	1 975,00 CHF
STAND 3 : Hydratation et nutrition (130 m²) :			9 795,00 CHF
Bar pour le service des boissons * 6m linéaire, personnalisé selon le thème	1	6 200,00 CHF	6 200,00 CHF
Comptoir pour la nutrition sportive, les snacks ...	1	1 990,00 CHF	1 990,00 CHF
Friges x5, congélateur x2, vaisselles et autres	1	1 000,00 CHF	1 000,00 CHF
Poubelles x5	1	95,00 CHF	95,00 CHF
Table de 6/8 personnes nappées noires	6	35,00 CHF	210,00 CHF
Mange-debout nappés noirs	10	30,00 CHF	300,00 CHF
STAND 4 : Jeux et activités physiques légères (260 m²) :			37 330,00 CHF
Terrain de Beach Volley avec signalétique, parterre de gazon et matériel de jeux 5x15m	1	2 450,00 CHF	2 450,00 CHF
Terrains de pétanque indoor avec signalétique, parterre de sable et matériel de jeux	2	675,00 CHF	1 350,00 CHF
Terrain de basket/badminton avec assises	1	1 450,00 CHF	1 450,00 CHF
Tables de Ping-Pong	2	450,00 CHF	900,00 CHF
Espace gaming/arcade - 2 machines	1	1 390,00 CHF	1 390,00 CHF
2 baby foot Borzini 4 personnes et 1 baby foot XXL pour 8 personnes	1	3 290,00 CHF	3 290,00 CHF
Espace de musculation/sport détente pour remplacer les espaces au Hilton : cf.	1	26 500,00 CHF	26 500,00 CHF
STAND 5 : Récupération mentale (100 m²) :			17 515,00 CHF
Zone assises x3 (fauteuils, poufs, tables basses et tapis)	3	1 565,00 CHF	4 695,00 CHF
Zone Yoga incluant 6 tapis chacun et tout le matériel nécessaire	1	975,00 CHF	975,00 CHF
6 hamacs auto-portants propice à la détente	1	2 090,00 CHF	2 090,00 CHF
Cloisons acoustique - 20m linéaires	1	3 900,00 CHF	3 900,00 CHF
Cloisons décorative boiser afin de scinder l'espace * 6m linéaire	1	2 180,00 CHF	2 180,00 CHF
Etagères/bibliothèque afin de disposer tout le matériel nécessaire à la détente	1	1 200,00 CHF	1 200,00 CHF
Plantes végétales diverses et variées (notamment 5 palmiers avec 3 grands et 2 moyens) <i>naturel non artificiel - livraison et entretien inclus</i>	1	1 975,00 CHF	1 975,00 CHF
Casque anti-bruit x10	1	500,00 CHF	500,00 CHF
STAND 6 : Récupération physique (80 m²) :			10 525,00 CHF
4 tables de massages	4	980,00 CHF	3 920,00 CHF
2 espaces lounge avec 1 canapé (3 places), 5 fauteuils et 2 tables basses pour l'attente	1	2 450,00 CHF	2 450,00 CHF
Plantes végétales diverses et variées (notamment 5 palmiers avec 3 grands et 2 moyens) <i>naturel non artificiel - livraison et entretien inclus</i>	1	1 975,00 CHF	1 975,00 CHF
Cloisons décorative boiser afin de scinder l'espace * 6m linéaire	1	2 180,00 CHF	2 180,00 CHF
LOGISTIQUE ANNEXE			38 110,00 CHF
Moquette beige ou couleurs de votre choix sur toute la surface de la Halle 6 soit 1130m²	1130	10,50 CHF	11 865,00 CHF
Cloisons 2m50 de hauteur pour 1m de largeur : cf plan pour plus de détails	1	16 745,00 CHF	16 745,00 CHF
Luraison/Installation/Montage pour tout l'événement	1	9 500,00 CHF	9 500,00 CHF
Frais de dossier	1	500,00 CHF	500,00 CHF
Total HT			194 975,00 CHF
TVA 8,1%			15 792,98 CHF
Total TTC			210 767,98 CHF

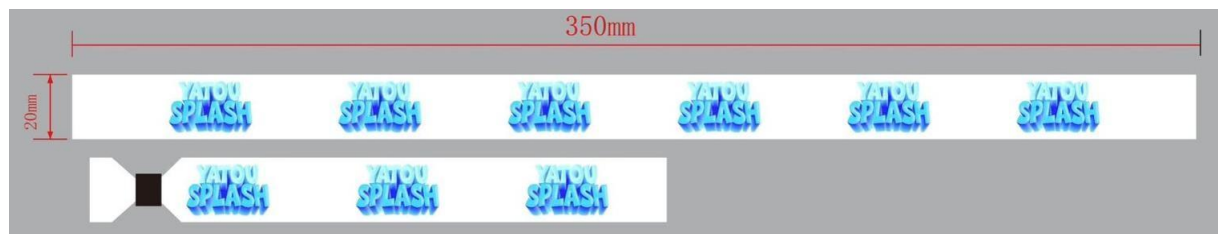
Spatial layout example :



Yatouland's custom tableware :



Silk bracelets creation :



ANNEXE 1 : BILAN DU STAGE

Année 2025 - 2026

Gardez un original

Nom, prénom de l'étudiant : Magnenat Enzo

LLSH – LEA

Licence ☒

Master ☐

Dates de stage : du 11 mars au 6 juillet 2026.

Nom et titre du responsable de l'étudiant dans l'entreprise

Favier Yan Directeur Evènementiel

Opinion générale sur l'étudiant : Stagiaire très agréable, toujours présent et impliqué dans les missions qui lui sont confiées. Il fait preuve d'une grande autonomie dans son travail et s'adapte facilement à toutes les situations rencontrées. Son sérieux, sa disponibilité et sa capacité d'adaptation lui permettent d'intégrer rapidement de nouveaux environnements et de répondre efficacement aux différentes demandes. Son attitude positive et son professionnalisme ont été particulièrement appréciés tout au long du stage.

Aptitudes particulières constatées au cours du stage : Excellente capacité d'adaptation, autonomie dans la réalisation des tâches confiées, sens de l'organisation et de l'initiative. Très bon relationnel, facilité d'intégration au sein de l'équipe et aptitude à faire face efficacement aux situations nouvelles ou imprévues. Sérieux, rigoureux et toujours volontaire dans son travail.

Dans l'hypothèse où un poste serait disponible, souhaiteriez-vous que l'étudiant soit engagé :

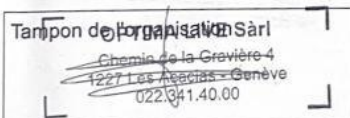
☐ non

☒ oui

Dans quel genre de fonction le verriez-vous ? Au regard de son parcours et des compétences démontrées durant son stage linguistique, nous le verrions évoluer dans des fonctions liées au commerce international, à l'import-export, à la gestion des achats ou à la logistique. Son aisance dans un environnement multiculturel, sa capacité d'adaptation et ses compétences linguistiques constituent de véritables atouts pour des missions impliquant des échanges avec des partenaires étrangers. Son expérience dans l'importation de matériel ainsi que dans l'élaboration de devis et le suivi de demandes clients lui permet également d'envisager des fonctions à dominante commerciale ou de coordination de projets.

Au cas où vous auriez, l'an prochain, un stage comparable, souhaiteriez-vous un stagiaire de formation similaire ? oui pourquoi pas.

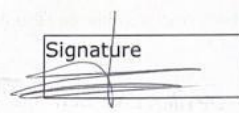
Signature du responsable de l'étudiant dans l'entreprise :



ANNEXE 2: GRILLE D'ÉVALUATION DU STAGIAIRE PAR SON TUTEUR DANS L'ORGANISME D'ACCUEIL

NOM et Prénom du tuteur professionnel : FAJER YAN

NOM et Prénom de l'étudiant : MAGENAT ENZO

Critère	++	+	-	--	Conseils et/ou commentaires
Savoir-vivre					
Sociabilité	✓				
Ponctualité	✓				
Tenue	✓				
Maîtrise de soi		✓			
Aptitudes					
Autonomie	✓				
Écoute	✓				
Organisation	✓				
Ténacité	✓				
Rigueur	✓				
Initiative		✓			
Compétences					
Rédaction	✓				
Communication	✓				
Linguistiques	✓				
Analyse		✓			
Techniques		✓			
Appréciation générale du tuteur					
Au terme de son stage, Enzo Magnenat a pleinement répondu aux attentes qui lui étaient confiées et a su démontrer de réelles qualités professionnelles. Son implication constante, son autonomie, son sérieux et sa capacité d'adaptation lui ont permis de s'intégrer rapidement au sein de l'équipe et de contribuer efficacement aux différentes missions qui lui ont été confiées. Tout au long de cette période, il a fait preuve d'un comportement exemplaire, d'un excellent relationnel ainsi que d'une grande motivation pour apprendre et progresser. Ses compétences linguistiques, associées à sa rigueur et à son sens de l'organisation, constituent de solides atouts pour son avenir professionnel. Nous sommes convaincus qu'Enzo saura mettre à profit les compétences acquises durant cette expérience dans la poursuite de son parcours et nous lui souhaitons pleine réussite dans ses futurs projets professionnels et personnels.					
					Signature 

ANNEXE 4 : ATTESTATION DE NON-PLAGIAT

Je soussigné(e) Magnenet Enzo atteste sur l'honneur que le présent dossier a été écrit de ma main, et que toutes les sources d'informations externes ont été citées.

Je suis informé que en cas de plagiat, les sanctions prévues pour fraude dans le règlement des examens peuvent s'appliquer.

Fait à Genève le, 25/06/2026