

A SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN FOR *QUINTA DA
SURATESTA*

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Project Thesis

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“A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH.”

- *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in Le Petit Prince*

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ABSTRACT

Quinta da Suratesta is a farm in Beja, Alentejo, that has an event management business. It displays an 18th century neoclassic country house, surrounded by a huge and beautiful garden, with a fix tent where the events take place. These infrastructures allow the implementation of weddings, christenings, summer parties, Christmas parties, business lunches/dinners, fund-raising parties, birthday parties, among others. Besides that, it still enables other services, such as the planning of parties, the wedding night, catering and decoration.

However, in this kind of business there is some direct and indirect competition and, as both the world and consumers are constantly changing, *Quinta da Suratesta* needs to be always keeping up with those changes. In fact, in spite of being one of the biggest, most beautiful and most requested places in the region, it also still is one of the least present on the social media. These are, no doubt, more and more responsible for the change of consumers' behaviour patterns. So, it is extremely important to be present on the social networks, in order to communicate and interact better with the target.

Therefore, this master's thesis is a **social media marketing plan** for *Quinta da Suratesta*, including an internal, external, market and competitive analysis. It also includes an implementation proposal comprising the STP (Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning) strategy and the definition of the marketing-mix policies (product/service, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical environment). The communication plan is defined for the year 2017.

Keywords: event management, marketing plan, social media, social networks

RESUMO

A Quinta da Suratesta é uma quinta situada em Beja, no Alentejo, que gere a realização de diversos eventos. Trata-se de uma casa neoclássica do século 18, rodeada por um grande e bonito jardim, com uma tenda onde decorrem os mesmos. Este espaço permite concretizar casamentos, batizados, festas de Verão e Natal, almoços/jantares de negócios, festas de solidariedade e aniversários. Para além disso, possibilita ainda outros serviços como a organização de festas, a noite de núpcias, *catering* e decoração.

Contudo, neste tipo de negócio existe alguma competição direta e indireta e, como o mundo e os consumidores estão constantemente a mudar, a Quinta da Suratesta precisa de estar sempre a acompanhar essas mudanças. Na verdade, apesar de ser um dos maiores, mais bonitos e mais requisitados espaços da zona, é também um dos que ainda está menos presente nos *media* sociais. Estes, porém, são cada vez mais responsáveis pela alteração de comportamento dos consumidores. Logo, é muito importante estar presente nas redes sociais, para se poder comunicar e interagir melhor com o público-alvo.

Assim, esta tese de mestrado constitui um plano de marketing para os *media* sociais da Quinta da Suratesta, incluindo uma análise interna, externa, do mercado e competitiva. Contempla também uma proposta de implementação composta pela estratégia de STP (Segmentação, Público-alvo e Posicionamento), assim como pela definição das políticas de *marketing-mix* (produto/serviço, preço, distribuição, comunicação, pessoas, processos e evidências físicas). O plano de comunicação está definido para o ano 2017.

Palavras-chave: gestão de eventos, plano de marketing, *media* sociais, redes sociais

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Esta tese de mestrado consiste na elaboração de um plano de marketing da Quinta da Suratesta para os *social media*. A quinta situa-se em Beja, no Alentejo e promove como atividade principal a realização de eventos. Apresenta uma casa do século 18, rodeada por um grande e bonito jardim e uma tenda na qual decorrem os referidos eventos. Sendo estes os seus principais fatores de sucesso, importa também considerar a diversidade do jardim, a qualidade da oferta e do espaço, a sua capacidade para acomodar um grande número de pessoas e ainda a história que envolve a casa. Este espaço permite a realização de casamentos, batizados, festas de Verão/Natal, almoços/jantares de negócios, aniversários e outro tipo de eventos. Além disso, oferece outros serviços como a organização de festas, a noite de núpcias, o serviço de *catering* e de decoração e ainda realiza um mercadito anual de decoração de eventos.

Um dos principais motivos para a escolha do tema em causa ficou a dever-se às mudanças que têm ocorrido atualmente, tanto no mundo, como em cada um de nós. Hoje em dia, cada vez mais pessoas têm acesso à Internet, o que, consequentemente, origina um aumento do uso dos *social media*. Tudo isto tem alterado o comportamento dos consumidores, que dão um valor incrível às redes sociais, usando-as não só para partilharem opiniões e experiências, mas também para procurarem informação sobre marcas e produtos. No mundo atual, quando um consumidor quer investigar sobre uma marca, consulta primeiro as redes sociais. Dado que os consumidores estão sempre a mudar, também as empresas e marcas precisam de fazer um esforço para se adaptarem a novas realidades e novas formas de agir. Há que tirar partido disso, pois cada vez mais se usam estes meios para influenciar terceiros e cada vez mais os consumidores se interessam por estas partilhas, já que acabam por confiar mais no *word-of-mouth*, do que na comunicação das próprias marcas. Assim, as empresas precisam de criar relações estáveis com os consumidores, precisam de ouvi-los e perceber o que querem e o que necessitam. Atualmente a melhor forma de interagir com os consumidores é através dos *social media*. Estes têm hoje um papel muito mais ativo na comunicação das marcas do que tinham no passado.

O presente projeto não se foca apenas nos *social media* e no mundo digital, mas está também relacionado com o mercado de eventos. Assim, depois de uma análise ao mercado, conseguimos perceber que este está em grande expansão. Cada vez mais Portugal recebe

importantes e grandes eventos, que fazem parte da forma como as marcas interagem com os consumidores e têm, por isso, um grande peso na estratégia de comunicação de cada marca.

Trata-se, porém, de um mercado fragmentado, com muitos tipos de eventos e muitas empresas que trabalham na área e que oferecem os mais variados serviços. É uma indústria com um grande nível de atratividade, mas que está a ser afetada devido à situação económica e política do país. Contudo, este facto não impede o aparecimento de vários negócios de eventos. Em termos de concorrência, existe bastante oferta, como quintas e espaços que permitem a sua realização. Todos oferecem serviços de *catering*, decoração, aluguer de quartos, entre outros. Assim, a Quinta da Suratesta tem alguns competidores, diretos e indiretos, o que a leva a ter de acompanhar as novas tendências do mundo digital. Na verdade, apesar de ser um dos maiores, mais bonitos e mais requisitados espaços da zona, é também ainda um dos que está menos presente nos *social media*. Estes, porém, são cada vez mais responsáveis pela alteração de comportamento dos consumidores. Logo, é fundamental estar presente nas redes sociais, para se poder comunicar e interagir melhor com o público-alvo.

Foram todos estes fatores que nos levaram a desenvolver um plano de marketing da Quinta da Suratesta para os *social media*. O projeto inclui, assim, uma proposta de implementação contemplando um plano estratégico (segmentação, público-alvo/*target*, posicionamento) e um operacional, que consiste na elaboração do *marketing-mix* do negócio, incluindo os 7 Ps (*produto/serviço, preço, distribuição, comunicação, pessoas, processos e evidências físicas*).

A segmentação levou-nos à definição de 3 principais *targets*, o que, juntamente com o posicionamento, originou a estratégia de *marketing-mix*, tendo como principais objetivos incrementar a notoriedade do negócio, aumentar o número de clientes e interagir com os consumidores. O posicionamento no qual se baseia esta estratégia deve ser percebido como um negócio de eventos que oferece o melhor espaço da região e em que a sua proposta é: *If you can dream it, we can do it*.

Para ajudar a desenvolver o marketing operacional foi, antes de mais, realizada uma revisão da literatura, de modo a adquirir conhecimentos científicos sobre planos de marketing, *social media* e o mercado de eventos. No sentido de complementar esta pesquisa, foram feitas análises externas do mercado e da competição, análises internas para estudar a Quinta da Suratesta e ainda uma análise competitiva, incluindo uma análise SWOT.

Posteriormente, realizaram-se estudos quantitativos e qualitativos, respetivamente inquéritos *online* com o principal objetivo de estudar o comportamento dos consumidores nos *social media* e ainda entrevistas a espaços similares e a empresas de *catering* e decoração. Após a sua análise (SPSS e análise de conteúdo), passou-se então à definição da proposta de implementação, que inclui o plano estratégico e o plano operacional para a quinta ao longo do ano de 2017. Foram definidas ações de comunicação, de modo a promover e dinamizar o negócio, sendo que, para cada uma delas, foi realizado o calendário da sua ocorrência, assim como o orçamento. Também foram definidas algumas métricas para medir o nível de sucesso do plano e verificar se tudo está a correr como esperado.

Em suma, a partir da revisão da literatura, das análises externas, internas e competitiva, da metodologia seguida e da proposta de implementação apresentada é possível tirar algumas conclusões que nos levam a perceber tanto as limitações deste projecto, como os seus contributos para projetos semelhantes.

CHAPTER 1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

An opportunity brings about an idea for a product/service. It can be a new product/service or the improvement of an existing one. Thus, identifying an opportunity is one of the first steps of the product/service development process. So, whenever we find a problem, it is the same as identifying an opportunity that we can develop (Ulrich and Eppinger, 2003).

According to the theme of this research project, there is an easily identifiable problem: *Quinta da Suratesta* is a business without a marketing plan, although it is essential for every company. It doesn't have a marketing plan at all, not even a good social media marketing plan. Moreover, it is a topic that interests us a lot, not only because it is part of our family's business, but also because we love everything related to events and event management. That world is amazing, because in order to obtain results we have to be organized and dynamic and that way we get to know a lot of new, influential people. So the question came up: why not develop a social media marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*?

The option for a social media marketing plan and not an overall marketing plan was due to the fact that nowadays the whole world is online and, as a consequence, it is extremely important to be present on the social networks. If a company is not present at least on one of the social networks, it is as if that company doesn't exist. Today consumers' first option is not to google when searching for a brand; they prefer the social networks and they search for any brand they want to know better. Thus, brands should take advantage of the opportunities provided by the social networks. The emerging role of social media can boost the involvement, engagement or loyalty between the customer and the brand. This way it is possible to be closer to the consumer, talking directly to them and listening to their needs and to what they want. In the future brands should be based on links and relations that allow them to anticipate desires and preferences, since preference is the unique power that really matters.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. MARKETING

2.1.1. DEFINITION

A long time ago the term “marketing” was misunderstood and misinterpreted. People considered marketing as a manipulative and unprofessional activity and they related it mainly to publicity and sales (Kotler and Bloom, 1990). Fortunately, this view is changing and many companies have been using marketing to help them face the changes that are always occurring in today’s world. So, people now see marketing as an area of expertise that can help their companies to grow, because it can foster the relationship with current clients or even attract new clients and yet develop the business (Kotler and Bloom, 1990).

According to Lindon *et al.*(2004: 24), we can define marketing as “the set of means that a company disposes to sell their products to their clients in order to make profit”. However, if we think back, it is easy to realise that all companies have always sold their products to their clients because they have always wanted to sell what they produce so, in this sense, the concept of marketing has always existed.

A more up-to-date and open concept has to do with identifying and meeting human and social needs because marketing implies “meeting needs profitably” (Kotler and Keller, 2012: 5). As the guru Peter Drucks said, nowadays marketing is more focused on consumers, in order to create relationships with them and to foster awareness in their minds (Kotler and Keller, 2012). As there is always someone that needs something, the aim of marketing is to develop a product or a service that fits the customer perfectly but, in order to do that, the company needs to know and understand consumers very well. The American Marketing Association offers a formal definition saying that “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (Kotler and Keller, 2012: 5).

However, to develop effective marketing, it is necessary to make the right marketing decisions. So, marketers must decide “what features to design into a new product or service, what prices to set, where to sell products or offer services, and how much to spend on advertising, sales, the Internet or mobile marketing” (Kotler and Keller, 2012: 4).

2.1.2. THE ROLE OF MARKETING IN A BUSINESS

From the several definitions of marketing that we have seen before we can conclude that marketing plays an important role in a business, since its main goal is to create and foster relationships with customers (Kotler and Bloom, 1990). We can even say it is the bridge between the brand or product/service and the consumer. Without marketing, businesses may offer the best products or services of the industry, but none of its potential customers would know about it (Small Business - Chron.com, 2015).

Therefore, marketing is perhaps the most important activity in a business, because it has a direct effect on profitability and sales (Tutor2u.net, 2015). Without marketing, our potential customers may never be aware of our product/service and it will be difficult for the company to succeed. If we create awareness around our product, it increases the possibility of our clients to know the product and so spread the word, telling friends and family about this new product they discovered. It also increases the chances for consumers to make a purchase. In a blink of an eye the sales will increase as the word spreads. These sales may not have happened without a marketing strategy, and without sales a company cannot succeed. Having a great marketing strategy is a key point to reach such goals as increase sales and be known by consumers (Lendrevie *et al.*, 2015).

So, in a more and more volatile and complex world, marketing has a critical role in companies' success, since it promotes their products/services and gives them the chance of being known by potential customers. It also creates relationships between companies and customers, so that companies can understand their needs (Lendrevie *et al.*, 2015).

2.1.3. THE IMPORTANCE OF A MARKETING PLAN

As it was said before, it is essential for every business to have a marketing plan. However, *Quinta da Suratesta* doesn't have any, so it is appropriate to study the importance of developing a marketing plan within a business.

Why is planning so important? Planning consists of taking some decisions beforehand, in order to be prepared for the predictable and also the unpredictable (Lindon et al., 2004).

According to Kotler and Keller (2012: 15), the marketing planning process consists of “analyzing marketing opportunities, selecting target markets, designing marketing strategies, developing marketing programs, and managing the marketing effort”. Thus, it is possible to be prepared to execute the business in the best way. Lewis Carroll, in *Alice in Wonderland*, clearly shows the need of having a plan and a direction to follow: “One day Alice came to a fork in the road and saw a Cheshire cat in a tree. ‘Which road do I take?’ – she asked. His response was a question: ‘Where do you want to go?’ ‘I don’t know’ – Alice answered. ‘Then, - said the cat – it doesn’t matter.’” That’s the reason why planning is so important, because if you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there. Companies need to set the goals they want to reach to know the direction they need to take and obviously the plan they need to follow (Lendrevie *et al.*, 2015).

As mentioned before, planning involves establishing goals and developing a marketing strategy – a strategy in order to achieve the goals (Shaw, 2012). To have an appropriate marketing strategy is a critical element for the success of any business. It involves ten steps. The first one is a situation analysis/diagnosis of the elements that can affect the company, such as: the market – macro environment (PESTAL analysis) and micro environment (Porter’s 5 forces), clients, competitors and also a self-analysis of the company. Then, it is time to carry out a SWOT analysis to study the company’s strengths and weaknesses and the market’s opportunities and threats. As a result of this analysis, it is possible to conduct a Dynamic SWOT if we cross the opportunities and threats with the strengths and weaknesses and so it becomes easy to establish the main guidelines to implement the marketing plan. The next step is to identify the critical requirements in order to have a successful business. Writing the goals is a very important step, because every company needs to know the direction they have to take and what they need to accomplish. After defining the goals, a STP process should be conducted in order to study the segmentation, targeting and positioning of the company. The goal of this process is to guide the organization into the development and implementation of an appropriate marketing-mix, which is associated with operational decisions about the four Ps: product, price, promotion and place/distribution. Finally, the last three steps aim at assessing and controlling performance measures and the budget (Lendrevie *et al.*, 2015: 478).

Any company that wants to succeed needs to plan for a variety of contingencies, and marketing represents one of the most significant (Writing a Marketing Plan, n.d.). As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said, “A goal without a plan is just a wish”.

Nowadays we live in a volatile world, so there is the obvious need to make marketing plans, since they help firms to be able to respond to rapidly changing market conditions. According to Kottler and Keller (2012: A1),

As a marketer, you'll need a good marketing plan to provide direction and focus for your brand, product, or company. With a detailed plan, any business will be better prepared to launch an innovative new product or increase sales to current customers.

A marketing plan is a

written document composed of an analysis of the current marketing situation, opportunities and threats for the firm, marketing objectives and strategy specified in terms of the four Ps, action programs, the market in which they operate, their future direction, and the means to obtain support for new initiatives. (Writing a Marketing Plan, n.d.: 65)

Besides that, it summarizes what the marketer has learned about the market place and indicates how the firm plans to reach its marketing objectives (Kotler and Keller, 2012). It also provides direction and focus for a brand, product or company, since it documents how the organization will achieve its goals through the implementation of specific marketing strategies and tactics, where the starting point and the focus is always the consumer (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

2.1.4. HOW TO MAKE A MARKETING PLAN

Although a marketing plan is more limited in scope than a business plan, it is one of the most important outputs of the marketing process (Kotler and Keller, 2012). However, marketing constitutes such an important element of business, that business plans and marketing plans coincide in many ways (Writing a Marketing Plan, n.d.). As Paul “Bear” Bryant, a football coach of the University of Alabama, once said, “Have a plan. Follow the plan, and you’ll be surprised how successful you can be. Most people don’t have a plan. That’s why it’s easy to beat most folks” (Writing a Marketing Plan, n.d.: 65).

Concerning this last statement and what was mentioned before, we can conclude that it is extremely important to be able to make a marketing plan, but are there any guidelines to help make it? Of course there are. The research that was carried out for the present study allowed us to find some examples of the components of a marketing plan and of the way to make it. We will, however, only focus on the two frameworks we considered more evident and better structured.

Starting with Luther (2001), he believes that there are seven crucial components to include in a marketing plan, namely:

1. *The fact book* – a book where you have to do an analysis of the current market regarding economics, competitors, your business and customers;
2. *The strategic and/or business plan* – a plan that consists of selecting markets with good profit potential and critical business strengths in order to be competitive;
3. *The operational plan* – a plan that develops business strengths that can deliver competitive products and/or services;
4. *The positioning statement* – a statement showing how the company wants the business strengths to be perceived by their target or potential customers;
5. *The marketing plan* – a plan showing how the positioning statements can be translated into recognizable and preferable brands;
6. *The action plan* - the detailed execution of strategies;
7. *Feedback* – the use of controls and research to monitor existing and future conditions to be included in the fact book.

Although Luther presents a very interesting framework, it is important to study one more in order to compare both and also because they can complete each other, resulting into a personalized framework. So, according now to Writing a Marketing Plan (n.d.), these should be the components of a marketing plan:

1. *Executive Summary* – it is a brief summary of the main goals and recommendations and it tells readers why they are reading this marketing plan;

2. *Company Overview* – it is a brief description of the company, including its mission statement, background and competitive advantages;
3. *Goals* – it is a section specifically telling the readers what the company wants to achieve, setting goals and a timetable to achieve them;
4. *Situation Analysis* – in this section the company analyses the macro environment (PEST – political-legal, economic, social-cultural and technological) and the micro (Porter's 5 forces – company, suppliers, buyers, competitors and substitutors), the company, the competition and makes a SWOT analysis to describe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the company;
5. *STP Analysis* – it assesses the market in which the company functions, the products it currently offers or plans to offer in the future, and the characteristics of current or potential customers;
6. *Marketing Strategy* – it chooses the best and most effective strategy in order to achieve the objectives defined;
7. *Financial Projections/Budget* – it focuses on possible developments and returns concerning the marketing investments outlined in the marketing strategy; it includes the costs of the activities and actions planned to achieve the goals;
8. *Implementation Plan* – it includes the timing of the promotional activities, when monitoring will take place;
9. *Evaluation Metrics and Control* – it provides the means of assessing the marketing plan, that is, the measures that will reveal whether it is making progress towards the goal.

2.2. DIGITAL MARKETING

2.2.1. EVOLUTION OF THE MARKETING CONCEPT

Once the goal of every company or brand has always been to sell their products to their clients, the concept of marketing has always existed in the business world. What has changed is the way people look at it and how the companies use its tools (Lindon *et al.*, 2004). In the past, companies adopted strategies - no matter how simple they were - to promote their products and services, in order to sell them and make profit. However, both the world and customers are constantly changing, so companies need to keep up with this pace of change and make an effort to adapt to the new consumer behaviour. That's the reason why marketing is always changing. In fact, it belongs to a really dynamic area that needs to follow consumers to maintain a relationship with them.

Throughout time, the concept of marketing has evolved and it can be summarized in five different eras. The first one is the **simple trade era**, described as having lasted from the beginning of time through the mid-19th century. It is an era where marketing was seen as “the set of means that a company disposes to sell their products to their clients in order to make profit” (Lindon *et al.*, 2004: 24). It is the simplest era, because the own selling activity counted as marketing. Companies didn't make anything in special; they just sold their products to their clients. However, companies considered the activity of selling as an accessory one, because what really mattered for them was to produce as much as they could. At this time marketing was needed to drain the production, but it was also considered an accessory activity. That's why it was replaced by the **production era** at the time of the industrial revolution (D. Steven White, 2010). This era holds that consumers favour products that are available and highly affordable (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008 in Solomon, 2012). Consumers were mostly interested in product availability at low prices, so its implicit marketing objectives were cheap (Solomon, 2012). However, since goods were scarce, companies focused mainly on manufacturing and intensive distribution because, as long as someone was producing, someone else would want to buy it. It is the famous concept of supply and demand, where “supply creates its own demand” (Solomon, 2012: 175). After World War I came the **sales era**, competition grew and the focus turned to selling. So, sales became an important concern to most companies. The consumer became the focus, instead of

the company itself. Companies had to work harder to sell their products. There was the need of taking the products to consumers to drain them (Lindon *et al.*, 2004). As the guru Peter Drucker says (Marketingmri.net, 2015),

There will always, one can assume, be a need for some selling. But the aim of marketing is to make selling superfluous. The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself. Ideally, marketing should result in a customer who is ready to buy. All that should be needed then is to make the product or service available.

Therefore, in the second half of the twentieth century, companies realized that marketing was a department which influenced the whole company's success, giving birth to the **marketing era**, where there was a change of the market's philosophy (Lindon *et al.*, 2004). It assumed that the starting point for any marketing process were the customer's needs and wants, and no longer the hard selling. There was a shift from the needs of the seller and the product to the needs and wants of the buyer (Solomon, 2012). Thus, business orientation shifted from product to market (Solomon, 2012). This era holds that the key to achieve organizational goals consists of being more effective than your competitors in integrating and coordinating marketing activities. Although selling is connected with cash, Theodore Levitt states that marketing is preoccupied with the idea of satisfying the customer's needs (Marketingmri.net, 2015). This concept has evolved and the focus is no longer just consumers' needs and wants but, instead, it shifted to create and maintain a relationship with those costumers, building customer loyalty. This resulted into a **relationship marketing era**, according to which the goal is to build a long-term, mutually beneficial relationship with the costumer. Kotler (2009) states that "the cost of attracting a new customer is estimated to be five times the cost of keeping a current customer happy" (in Morethanbranding.com, 2015). There is one more era that completes the last one – it is the **social marketing era**. The focus is the interaction with consumers, but a social interaction, implying a real-time connection with them. It is a new way of communicating with costumers and hence a new way of practising marketing. This era brings about digital marketing. Through digital marketing it is possible to build a closer relationship in order to engage with clients, since engagement is a critical success factor to create a business (Morethanbranding.com, 2015).

We believe it is not the end. There will always be other concepts of marketing, because both the world, the communication channels and consumer behaviour are permanently changing.

In fact, what we consider today to be the fastest way to reach customers might be obsolete tomorrow.

2.2.2. DIGITAL MARKETING TRANSFORMING THE MARKETING PRACTICE

As it has been said, the concept of marketing has been evolving through the years and we have also realised that the way people communicate is no longer the same. Therefore, companies need to adapt and, of course, evolve in that direction. The differences, compared to previous years, can be seen in every part of the marketing process. Nowadays consumers develop relationships with brands that no one had years ago.

Throughout history, if you want to increase brand awareness and make sales, it has always been important to promote your product to your audience. In the past, companies used traditional marketing techniques, such as ads in magazines and newspapers, on billboards, on TV and on the radio (Macraesmarketing.com, 2015). The fact is that people are accustomed to traditional marketing and reading an ad in a magazine, or looking at an outdoor, or even listening to an ad on the radio are still familiar activities that continue to be done (Digital Marketing Strategies, 2015). The same way, there are companies that instead of using just traditional or digital techniques, use a blended model that brings together online and offline communication (Lindon *et al.*, 2004). A traditional strategy may include one or more of four categories: print, broadcast, direct mail, and telemarketing. Print relates to advertisements in newspapers, newsletters, magazines, brochures, fliers, outdoors and other printed material for distribution. Broadcast refers to radio and TV commercials. Direct mail concerns digital fliers, postcards, brochures, letters, catalogues, and other material that is printed and mailed directly to consumers. Finally, telemarketing implies delivering sales messages over the phone to convince consumers to buy a product or service. It is considered as hard selling and people do not look at it as being a good company practice (Marketing-schools.org, 2015).

Although companies still make use of some types of traditional marketing, there has been a growing transition to digital marketing. This, instead, focuses on the Internet in particular to advertise and sell a product. According to Crelin (2013), digital marketing is “marketing of products or services carried out through digital technology such as the Internet, mobile devices, and video games”. As we can see further ahead, on the social media section, digital

marketing allows a shift from one-way to multi-way communication. Here the emphasis is on the interaction between the company and consumers, which provides numerous opportunities to connect with them and foster a relationship (Wolny, 2015). With the advent of digital technology and the decline of some forms of traditional media, companies have been forced to develop new means of connecting with their target and of promoting products and services to potential customers. Examples of digital marketing include websites, social networks and every ad in a digital format. After all, digital marketing is similar to traditional marketing, but using digital devices. Due to its connection with social media and the Internet, the main goal of using digital marketing is to engage and create a meaningful relationship with costumers. Through this, it is possible to communicate with consumers and listen to their needs and wants in order to become a closer brand.

2.2.2.1. TRADITIONAL MARKETING VS DIGITAL MARKETING

Comparing traditional marketing with digital marketing we can find some differences. In traditional marketing communication only happens in one direction, with one person communicating with a large group (the target audience). That is why traditional marketing results are not easily measured and, in many cases, cannot be measured at all. While this type of communication does occasionally exist in digital marketing, the focus is instead on multi-directional communication, according to which the company actively communicates and interacts with consumers. It is a targeted audience, instead of a mass audience (Rowley, 2008). It is a very interactive way of reaching an audience, since it uses social networks and the Internet. It allows direct contact between consumers and the company, which means that the company can get some very valuable consumer feedback. On the other hand, traditional marketing is static, which means there is no way to interact with consumers. It is as if the company is throwing information at people, hoping that they decide to take action. Consider it as the type of marketing that pushes products or services onto customers (Digital Marketing Strategies, 2015).

Another difference is that traditional marketing is always well-planned out, with the campaign covering a long length of time and following a specific schedule. While digital marketing does involve long-term planning of this sort, there is much more room for adjustment along the way. Once published, the traditional campaign is almost impossible to modify, it is non-

versatile, which is considered a barrier, because if something wrong happens and the ad has to be changed, it will cost the company a lot of money. Related to that, another important fact that allows us to compare both types of marketing is the level of investment (Rowley, 2008). Digital marketing has an asset, because it needs low investment since it requires few resources. Thus, by integrating this type of marketing, it is possible to reach measurable results at a reasonable cost (Castronovo and Huang, 2012).

According to Huang (2009), there are three main characteristics that distinguish traditional from digital marketing (in Dembowski, 2015). The latter has high efficiency, penetrating power, which means that it is easier to communicate with potential customers and it allows a lot of interactivity between the brand and the consumers (Huang, 2009 in Dembowski, 2015).

Summing up all these differences, we think that mixing online and offline communication seems to be a good strategy. Although digital marketing is gaining in popularity, most companies are still using both, however with a slight emphasis on digital ads. Thus, it seems like common sense to have a website and use the web as a means to interact with customers; it is almost imperative (Digital Marketing Strategies, 2015). Undoubtedly there are some successful traditional marketing strategies, particularly if companies are reaching a mass local audience, but it is important to take advantage of digital marketing, so as to keep up in today's world.

2.3. SOCIAL MEDIA

2.3.1. THE NEW ERA OF THE INTERNET

We are presently living in an era of endless opportunities and solutions for businesses that wish to reach their target audiences and boost their results.

The ever evolving and expanding impact of the online realm on companies is apparent in everyday life. The overwhelming majority of companies currently implement online aspects in order to adjust to the latest online trends. The common thread in all these trends is how companies can benefit themselves while also catering towards the consumer. The concept of mutual benefit is based on the efficiency and accessibility derived from online technologies.

Technological devices and instruments are much more evolved and enable many different actions and results. Nowadays we are already facing web 3.0 that uses tools to search and give consumers exactly what they want in a concrete and personalized solution, instead of a list of possible solutions like web 2.0 used to do.

The advent of the Internet has increased the ability of individuals and potential customers to interpersonally connect with one another, thereby creating a powerful means through which product information can be rapidly disseminated and products more cost-effectively adopted by the market (Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels, 2009). As a result, marketers can use these advantages of interpersonal networks and online communities to promote their products and services through electronic forms of word-of-mouth (Castronovo and Huang, 2012). According to Gershoff and Johar (2006), quoted by Castronovo and Huang (2012: 118), word-of-mouth information sharing is one of the main components of the marketing process, since consumers often rely on other's words of advice when making purchase decisions, thinking that people with experience on the product/service are better sources of information.

In fact, the word goes by, person to person, increasing this network of people in a blink of an eye. Thus, as expected, with the number of internet users the same is happening - it is increasing at an incredible pace, wherein in Portugal this number increased to 6.9 million of users in 2014 (Statista, 2015). Besides that, until now, the total number of worldwide internet users is 3.17 billion (Statista, 2015).

2.3.2. SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Social media is defined as a “group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allowing for the creation and exchange of user-generated content” (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010 in Campbell, Ferraro and Sands, 2014: 432).

The emergence of social media in the 21st century has changed significantly the way of communication among firms and customers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009 in Samanta, n.d.). Supporting this view, Deighton (1997) states that the "technological shock" and the increasing use of social media will completely reshape the way marketing is done (in Schlegelmilch and Sinkovics, 1998: 163). That is why marketing in the social web is finding a new way of communication with the public in a digital environment (Weber, 2009 in Samanta, n.d.). The

aim of companies is not to transfer messages to consumers, but instead to be more open brands, participating in social networks and encouraging their customers to use them, in order to engage and create a meaningful relationship. The use of social media enables companies to eliminate the one-way communication model and adopt simultaneous communication among multiple directions of all stakeholders in a business environment (Bonson and Flores, 2009 in Samanta, n.d.). However, organizations need to know how to build and maintain these communications, in order to foster strong relationships. Therefore, the true challenge for businesses is to find the most effective way to approach online consumers (Evans, 2008 in Samanta, n.d.).

As mentioned before, an effective approach is to use alternative marketing practices that can be especially advantageous for smaller to medium- sized firms in the consumer products and services industry, because of the lack of resources that are necessary for employing traditional forms of advertising. Integrating them through a social media platform can also deliver measurable business results at a reasonable cost. This way companies have the ability to communicate their messages to their target audiences, cultivating meaningful relationships with their consumers (Castronovo and Huang, 2012).

2.3.2.1. INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

For many years companies and consumers believed that it was necessary to use specific tools of the communication mix to deliver specific messages to particular audiences. They believed that to achieve the effect they wanted on buyers, through their communication, it was necessary to use particular tools (Fill, 2009). For example, clients were recommended to use advertising to increase awareness, as well as sales promotions to generate immediate sales uplifts. However, this specialisation was expensive, time consuming and inefficient (Fill, 2009). Thus, companies changed their communications away from mass media approaches in order to interact more with customers (for example, through social media). This new re-oriented strategy is based more on “personalised, customer-oriented and technology-driven approaches, and is often referred as Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)” (Fill, 2009: 257). IMC is the coordination and integration of all marketing communication tools. It is bundling promotional mix elements together, so they look and sound alike (Kitchen *et al.*, 2004). IMC attempts to “combine, integrate, and synergize elements of the communication

mix, as the strengths of one are used to offset the weaknesses of others” (Kitchen *et al.*, 2004: 19).

2.3.2.1.1. INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN TERMS OF MEDIA

This integration can be analysed in terms of media. It means that IMC are performed through the mix of traditional media and digital media (Rakic and Rakic, 2014). As stated earlier, companies should adopt a strategy that uses different types of marketing in order to reach better results. They need to consider both “social and traditional media as a part of an ecosystem whereby all elements work together toward a common objective” (Rakic and Rakic, 2014: 189).

According to Jackson (2010), the new media technologies (as the Internet and social networks) are changing the way people interact with each other and the world (in Rakic and Rakic, 2014). As a matter of fact, consumers now expect to be active participants in the media process. They are not satisfied if companies talk to them, which happen usually through traditional media. Instead, they want to talk directly to one another as an extension of traditional word-of-mouth communication. But besides that they want to talk to companies. This requires new approaches to media strategy, involving media that do not simply replace traditional media, but rather expand media choices so as to capture reach, intimacy, and engagement (Rakic and Rakic, 2014). Respecting their requirements, communications need to be performed integrally “by combining traditional promotion mix (advertising, personal selling, public relations and publicity, direct marketing and sales promotion) and social media (blogs, social networking sites, video sharing sites, etc.)” (Rakic and Rakic, 2014: 190).

Nowadays, consumers are always changing their consumer behaviour and they use different media. That is why companies should use a mix of media and create messages for these different media. Although consumers are shifting from traditional to digital media, they still use the traditional ones. One of the traditional media that has a great impact on consumers and that can even surpass digital media is the packaging. Consumers can avoid watching ads on TV, they can choose not to listen to radio messages, not to look at billboards, not to be present on social networks, and thus to avoid influences of typical media. “However, when they find

themselves in a store, an effective packaging can attract and keep the attention more than any other media” (Rakic and Rakic, 2014: 191).

2.3.2.1.2. INTEGRATION IN TERMS OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERACTION POSSIBILITIES

Integration in terms of communications and interaction possibilities means that IMC are a mix of traditional and static communications ("monologue" towards the target audience) and dynamic communications ("dialogue") in real time. Traditional organisation's monologue "to" consumers and stakeholders through traditional media is being supplemented by digital media that allow two-way communications and dialogue between consumers and organisation, but also among consumers themselves (Rakic and Rakic, 2014).

New digital-based technologies and the Internet in particular provide an opportunity for interaction and dialogue with customers, specially due to the role of social media and its tools. With traditional media, however, the tendency is for monologue or at best “delayed and inferred dialogue” (Fill, 2009: 47).

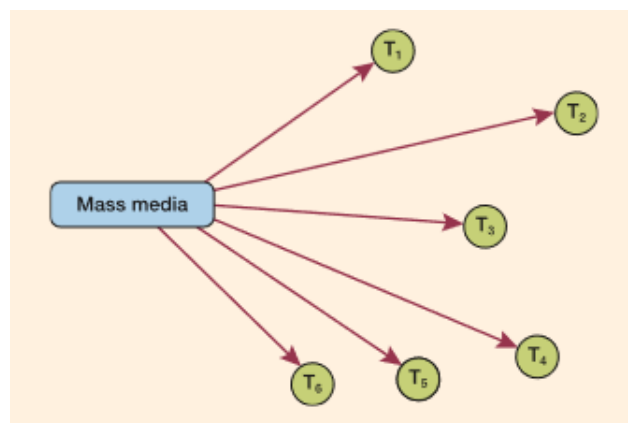


Figure 1 – One-step model of communication (Fill, 2009: 49)

We can analyse the level of interaction through the models of communication. The traditional view of communication holds that the process consists essentially of one step – One-step model of communication (Figure 1). According to this model information is delivered and shot at audiences. The decision of each member of the audience to act on the message or not is the result of a passive role or participation in the process. This model is linear and unidirectional, and it suggests that the receiver plays a passive role in the process. The type of

media that combines with this model is the traditional media that is a static one, with no possible interaction (Fill, 2009: 49).

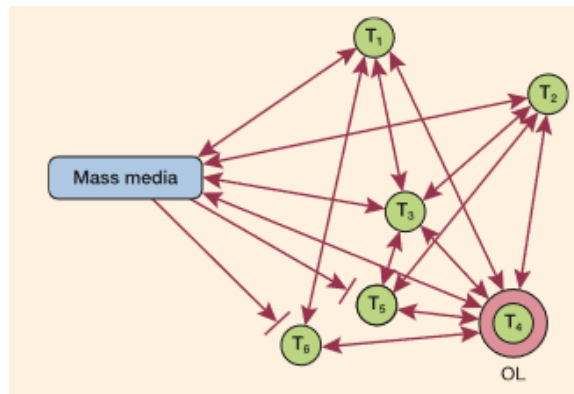


Figure 2 – Multi-step model of communication (Fill, 2009: 50)

On the other hand, the multi-step model of communication (Figure 2) proposes that the process involves interaction among all parties (Fill, 2009: 50). Here consumers are always involved in the communication process. It is not only in one direction; there is interaction between the brand and consumers and all this is caused by the increased use of social media that are changing consumer behaviour and the way they communicate with companies. So, this model attempts to account for the interactive nature of communication. Within an interactive marketing communication scenario companies try to engage consumers with messages that are delivered through online and electronic channels, which offer both the opportunity to respond and communicate. Obviously, this interaction enables communications to move from the one-step model to the multi-step one, which is literally interactive (Fill, 2009: 50). Therefore, there is a shift in the way marketing communications have developed, especially in the online environment. Being present on social media is a must if companies want to keep up with the real world and maintain a relationship with their clients based on mutual interactions.

2.3.3. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLAN

A social media marketing plan is the summary of everything a company plans to do and hopes to achieve for your business using social media. This plan should comprise an audit of where your accounts are today, goals for where you want them to be in the near future, and all the tools you intend to use to get there (Hootsuite Social Media Management, 2014). As Lee

Odden says, “the first and most important step in creating your plan is clearly identify your goals” (in Shandrow, 2013). You may want to use social media to gain exposure for your brand, to directly interact with your customers or to promote specific products and services. He continues his statement by saying that the next step is to “understand your customers’ goals, and then figure out how your social-media strategy will connect both” (in Shandrow, 2013). So, the role of a social media marketing plan in the company’s overall communications can have significant business results if implemented correctly (Castronovo and Huang, 2012).

According to Moran and Gossieaux (2010), quoted by Castronovo and Huang (2012: 122), a “successful social media strategy must begin with an understanding of consumer conversations and characteristics”. Consumers are more likely to react to a social media strategy when they are able to interact and engage with and help others. As far as Castronovo and Huang (2012) are concerned, the ability to foster a social relationship between consumers and companies is the most important component of a social media strategy. Moran and Gossieaux (2010) explain that a “firm must first listen to what existing online communities are saying about their products and services before a social media strategy can be developed” (in Castronovo and Huang, 2012: 122).

An important issue when developing the strategy is to decide if the company should be present on all the popular social media networks. If it is a small business, as a starting point, it should begin with a presence on a few social networks or maybe just one and on one blog. Yet, the most important thing is to find which platforms your customers are using most. Another important topic is the periodicity according to which a company should post new content. If the company wants to reach more followers more frequently, it should stagger its posts consistently throughout the day, maybe 2 to 5 times a day, in order to better communicate and engage with them (Shandrow, 2013).

According to Lindon *et al.* (2004), the presence on social media should be taken strategically in 3 steps:

- 1 – Select the types of social media where the company wants to be active with a dynamic presence;
- 2 – Communicate with consumers using ads and brand campaigns and so exploiting the word-of-mouth communication;

3 – Finally, manage the brand in such a way that it becomes possible to share it and interact with its audience, so that the brand can reach potential consumers as much as possible.

But if companies want to appear in some types of social media in a relevant way, they should develop blogs about the company's area of expertise, dealing with themes related to their core activity. Brands should promote the company on social networks like LinkedIn or Facebook, where companies are usually present in order to share their products and services with their clients. Companies should communicate through their image, by sharing videos on YouTube, for example, which is the second most important browser. At last, companies should communicate on Twitter, in order to listen to what people are talking about them, to share information and also to foster a relationship and promote the buzz effect through word-of-mouth communication (Lindon *et al.*, 2004).

However, before engaging and interacting with customers, companies should set goals, in order to measure if those goals were achieved as they were supposed to have been. The ways of measuring the results of the strategy depend on the type of social media the company is using, as we can see below.

2.3.4. TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND METRICS

2.3.4.1. TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

To attract and engage social media followers and ideally convert them into customers, companies need to carefully map out a clear and effective social media strategy, opting for the right types.

According to Marketo – the company leader in digital marketing software and solutions – there are 3 types of social media that we can use when developing a social media marketing plan (Marketo, 2015). However, the network's power results from the integration of various social media tools. The mix of social media highly depends on the objectives of the strategy and the trends in social media usage within the target market (Castronovo and Huang, 2012).

1 – Blogs

Blogs represent a method of communicating information and opinions in a short, web-based form, rather than in more traditional forms of print publications. It is a powerful and universal way to drive positive word-of-mouth recommendations through the content that a company publishes (Castronovo and Huang, 2012). A blog is a type of social media that enables companies to establish and build meaningful relationships with their target, thereby increasing customer loyalty.

There are a lot of fashion blogs or food blogs, for example, that become a hit because they offer tips and pieces of advice, hold contests, answer questions and gather and showcase customers' stories, as well as referral stories. It is considered to be a successful marketing tool when the conversation on the blog turns into online buzz for the firm (Niederhoffer *et al.*, 2007 in Castronovo and Huang, 2012).

2 – Social Networks

A social network is an “application that is created and sustained through ‘means of human interaction’” (Platon and Orzan, 2012 in Whiting and Deshpande, 2014: 75). Its aim is to build relationships among people with similar interests and activities. Marketers can reach specific groups of customers simply by utilizing specific social networks, or by engaging specific groups in larger, less homogeneous networks.

There are a lot of social networks emerging from the online era we live in, but the most used by consumers are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google + and Pinterest. However, we can consider that the most popular and well-known are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google + (Yang and Lin, 2014). Facebook is the market leader and it has 1,415 million active users and 750 million visitors per month, ahead of Twitter (250 million visitors per month), LinkedIn (110 million visitors per month), and MySpace (70.5 million visitors per month) (Yang and Lin, 2014). LinkedIn is geared towards a more professional audience and it has 347 million active users (Castronovo and Huang, 2012). Twitter is referred to as a “micro blogging” tool, as posts are limited to 140 characters (Castronovo and Huang, 2012: 124). It has 288 million active users. Google + works in such a way that consumers can actively interact and engage with one another in real-time and it has 300 million active users (Statista, 2015). The choice

of using one or another has to do with the objectives that the company wants to achieve. Depending on that they will be measured according to different metrics (Table 1):

Social Networks	Key Metrics
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X number of posts per day • Page follows • Likes • Engagement and comments • Referring traffic • Shares • Lead generation/new customers
LinkedIn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X number of posts per day • Page follows • Comments, likes and shares • Group participation • Referring traffic • Lead generation/new customers
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X number of posts • Followers • Mentions • Retweets • Number of lists • Hastag usage • Influence of twitter followers • Lead generation or customer acquisition • Referring traffic • Favorited tweets
Google +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X number of posts • Google + circle adds/follows • Google + mentions • Google +1 • Referring traffic
Pinterest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pins • Repins • Followers • Purchases from pin referring traffic

Table 1 – Key metrics of social networks (Marketo, 2015)

3 – Content Communities: Online Video, Photo Sharing Sites and Presentation Sharing

These types of social networks – online video, photo sharing sites and presentation sharing – belong to content communities. These sites are less about interacting and more about sharing content, including videos, photos, text or even PowerPoint presentations (Walaski, 2013).

Online video allows users to upload video content and the most common sites are YouTube, Vimeo, Vine and Instagram video (Walaski, 2013). Photo sharing sites include Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr and snapchats and they consist of platforms to share photos with friends or consumers (Marketo, 2015). In turn, presentation sharing is very useful to share PowerPoint presentations. A platform that made it possible is Slideshare (Marketo, 2015).

2.3.4.2. MEASUREMENTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING PLANS

It is important to continually track your social media marketing metrics, in order to gauge which tactics and types of posts work and which do not (Shandrow, 2013). The power of an effective social media marketing plan must be measured. According to Castronovo and Huang (2012: 124), “the effectiveness of a social media marketing program must be measured in terms of its ability to generate positive buzz about a firm, as well as its products and services”. This, in turn, should be translated into measurable business results for the firm, whether in the form of increased awareness, increased sales, or increased loyalty (Table 2). These are the 3 goals that social media should accomplish (Castronovo and Huang, 2012):

Goals	Related Metrics
Build Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web traffic and web traffic referrals • Search volume trends and volume of followers • Social mentions • Share of voice
Increase Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web traffic and time spent on site • Bounce rate and content acceptance rate • Repeat visits and volume of followers • Social mentions • Share of voice
Build Loyalty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time spent on site • Repeat visits and volume of followers • Content acceptance rate • Repeated social mentions • Share of voice • Recommendations and reviews • Social connectivity among purchases

Table 2 – Social media strategy goals and related metrics (Castronovo and Huang, 2012: 125)

However, the most appropriate success measurement techniques depend on the specific goal that is being pursued through the social media marketing plan. So, before measuring any social media marketing plan we should identify the goals previously defined to see if they were accomplished through appropriate metrics.

Some social platforms offer their own metrics. Facebook, for instance, gives page administrators access to page insights data for free. These tell you how many people are interacting with your posts. You can use the data to better plan future posts and decide on the most effective ways to connect with your fans and followers. LinkedIn provides similar analysis for company pages.

According to Hoffman and Fodor (2010), the following table (Table 3) organizes the various social metrics for social media by classifying them according to social media applications and

social media performance objectives. It should help marketers to measure the effectiveness of social media efforts.

Social Media	Brand Awareness	Brand Engagement	Word-of-Mouth
Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of unique visits Number of return visits Number of times bookmarked Search ranking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of members Number of RSS feed subscribers Number of comments Amount of user-generated content Average length of time on site Number of responses to polls, contests, surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of references to blog in other media (online/offline) Number of reblogs Number of “likes” Number of times badge displayed on other sites
Social Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of members/fans Number of installs of applications Number of impressions Number of bookmarks Number of reviews/ratings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of comments Number of active users Number of “likes” on friends’ feeds Number of user-generated items (photos, threads, replies) Usage metrics of applications/widgets Impressions-to-interactions ratio Rate of activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency of appearances in timeline of friends Number of posts on wall Number of reposts/shares Number of responses to friend referral invites

		(how often members personalize bios, links)	
Content Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of views of video/photo/text • Valence of video/photo/text ratings (+/-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of replies • Number of page views • Number of comments • Number of subscribers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of embeddings • Number of incoming links • Number of references in mock-ups or derived work • Number of times republished in other social media and offline • Number of “likes”

Table 3 - Relevant metrics for social media applications organized by key social media objectives (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010: 44)

2.3.5. THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The truth is that social media, when used strategically over time, is the most powerful form of marketing and market research the world has ever seen. But it’s not a magic bean that grows overnight into business success. It is a platform for real work. What has become self-evident today began, however, as an unintended side-effect of the internet. Facebook was never intended to be a marketing tool and YouTube was simply a means of sharing your home made videos (Forbes.com, 2015).

Social media is by a distance the most powerful phenomenon of this, or perhaps of any other generation. You are more linked with the whole world than ever before. In a blink of an eye we are talking to somebody that is on the other side of the world. You can now send more messages to more people, more quickly and more cheaply, than ever in the history of mankind. The same happens with brands; it has become easier to communicate and interact with their customers.

Some companies are beginning to take notice of the power of social media. Mainly in today's business environment, consumer loyalty can vanish at the smallest mistake, which can additionally have online propagation of their unfortunate encounter with a particular product, service, brand or company (Vinerea *et al.*, 2013).

2.3.5.1. VIRAL MARKETING AND WORD-OF-MOUTH

With the growth and evolution of the Internet, electronic peer-to-peer referrals have become an important phenomenon, and marketers have tried to exploit their potential through viral marketing campaigns. Viral marketing is described as “any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others, thus creating the potential for exponential growth in the exposure and influence of the message” (Kataria and Hasan, 2014: 739). Its process is simple – one person spreads a message to other people because he/she liked it and chose to send the message on to others, using the famous ‘word-of-mouth’ communication. According to Solomon (2015:523) word-of-mouth (WOM) is “product information that individuals transmit to other individuals”.

Nowadays the Internet allows this type of consumer connections more than ever before. The goal of viral marketing is to use consumer-to-consumer communications to disseminate information about a product or service, leading to more rapid and cost-efficient adoption by the market (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). Therefore, companies should create a buzz effect around their products. To create that buzz effect, in order to encourage conversations about a product, companies must start with a contagious product that evokes an emotional response, creates visual curiosity and becomes more useful as more people use it (Kataria and Hasan, 2014). Indeed, nowadays, all this buzz around a product makes it a hit one. Consumers can share information far more easily than ever before through e-mail referrals, social media as

well as through new technologies. Thus, it is easier to disseminate both positive and negative word-of mouth (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). It is important for marketers to realize, however, that viral marketing is a double-edged sword, since the word it spreads can be either positive or negative (Kataria and Hasan, 2014). And it is a real problem that marketers and brands cannot easily control. If a brand wants to be spread around the world, it is likely that people talk about the negative things too. So companies must be prepared and above all brands need to plan everything with a lot of detail and care about their actions, in order to avoid negative word-of mouth. They have to take the rough with a smooth. Bad news can travel just as fast as good news. It is incredibly easy to spread negative word-of-mouth online. Dissatisfied customers are worse than the satisfied ones – to make sure that everyone knows their negative experience with a brand or something they did not like about a product they create websites simply to share their experiences with others (Solomon, 2015). An example of this is Dunkin' Donuts. A man created a site just because he could not get skim milk for his coffee. So, the website for people to complain about the chain got to be so popular, that the company bought it in order to control the bad press it got (Solomon, 2015). Another problem that happens with the dissemination of a message is that, as we transmit information to one another, it tends to change. And the final result usually does not resemble the original one at all. A story never loses in the telling, because everyone likes to personalize their message and add something to it, or even sometimes there are important facts that are forgotten or fall by the wayside (Solomon, 2015). Consumers can disseminate information for a couple of reasons, such as extreme satisfaction or dissatisfaction, commitment to the firm, length of the relationship with the firm and novelty of the product or a bad experience with the brand (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). But, of course, those are occupational hazards that companies have to bear, because the positive word-of-mouth is a great tool that can also happen and companies should take advantage of that.

The key driver in viral marketing is the effectiveness of unsolicited, electronic referrals to create awareness, trigger interest and generate sales or product adoption. The message that people transmit consumer-to-consumer can be intentional or unintentional. Intentional message occurs when customers willingly become promoters of a product or service and spread the word to their friends. Consumers do this because of the incentives or desire to share the product benefits with friends (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). An example of unintentional message is Hotmail, where each e-mail sent via this website contained a line

promoting the company. Therefore, each person that sends an e-mail is automatically promoting the service.

Another important issue in the word-of-mouth process is the role of experts in the flow of information and influence through social networks. Consumers are more likely to seek advice from and be influenced by expert sources than by non-expert ones and there are reasons to believe that this finding will hold in a viral marketing context (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). Because we get the word from people we know, word-of-mouth tends to be more reliable and trustworthy than messages from more formal marketing channels. Most of the time people rely more on the opinion of other consumers who have already tried the product than on the information from other sources. They look for blogs and expert people to know their opinions and experiences concerning the product. These people are called opinion leaders and they are frequently able to influence others' attitudes and behaviours. Opinion leaders are extremely valuable sources, because they possess social and expert power (Solomon, 2015). Word-of-mouth is especially powerful when the consumer is unfamiliar with the product category, when there is a high perceived risk in decision-making, when it is related with an expensive product or when people are deeply involved in the purchasing decision (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). In these particular situations people try to seek expert advice or even to act on the advice of friends or family. Word-of-mouth not only influences consumers' choice and purchase decision, but also shapes consumer expectations, pre-usage attitudes and even post-usage perceptions of a product or service.

So, we can conclude that the viral marketing and word-of-mouth concepts assume that peer-to-peer communications are an effective means to transform communication networks into influence networks, capturing recipients' attention, triggering interest and eventually leading to adoption or sales (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008).

2.3.5.2. WHY SHOULD BRANDS BE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

The spread of digital technologies is a huge opportunity for brands to communicate and interact with their audience (Mazzarol, 2015). With the advent of all this online world, business becomes easier, because online content reaches the entire world in the very moment it is posted and it is free. The whole world now is online so, if you want to be known or if you

want to be heard, you also need to be online. Social media allows that to companies and besides that brands are also able to interact and communicate with consumers. The basic premise of using social media is that consumers will seek out media among competitors that fulfils their needs and leads to ultimate gratifications (Lariscy, Tinkham and Sweetser, 2011 in Whiting and Wiliams, 2013). According to Kohnen (2011:70), companies have “the need to connect to people, listen as much as to share ideas, and involve as many key people as possible in the realization of their goals”. Companies need to listen to consumers in order to understand their needs, their opinions and what they want and so establish a good relationship.

It is a fact that Facebook has over one billion users and it is projected to continue its rapid growth. And it is just only one of many social networks sites (Boling, Burns and Dick, 2014). That is why brands need to be present on social media. If a company wants to be successful, it is very important not only to be on social media in order to become well-known and create awareness, but also to communicate and engage with customers. Businesses have many new ways to post information about their products and services; the same happens with consumers, who also have many ways to post comments or upload videos (due to the advance of the Internet and the new technologies) on their experiences with the product or service. These posts and comments have the potential to reach audiences in the tens of millions (Boling et al., 2014). Through social media consumers can talk to other consumers and share opinions about a product or their experience with the product, allowing the word-of-mouth communication. As we have already explained before, nowadays consumers are more able to disseminate information about a product or a service. E-mail referrals, online forms of users and newsgroups, as well as customer reviews, allow consumers to share information far more easily than ever before. This global word-of-mouth phenomenon has the two sides of the coin. On the one hand it is an asset for brands, because it is viral. One consumer sees a product or tries it and he/she will spread the word to their friends and the brand does not need to do anything. The consumer promotes the product itself. But, on the other hand, it can be negative word-of-mouth about the product and it cannot be easily controlled (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008).

However, there is no better way of engaging with customers than through social media. A recent study has uploaded that companies invest 83% in increasing brand exposure, 69% to increase web traffic and 65% to gain market exposure. And also that over 70% of brands have acquired their customers through Facebook (Social Media Today, 2015). Traditional media

are also important, obviously, but if companies want to keep up and follow the pace of consumers, it is almost imperative to be present on social media. Only this way can they foster a dynamic relationship with their target, showing that they care about what they need and want. Besides that, brands become well-known and it allows consumer-to-consumer communication, being possible to spread the word in a blink of an eye.

2.3.6. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The changes that we are living now are not all about technological development; social media also has a huge responsibility in all of them. The increased use of social media has changed most of consumers' behaviour patterns. Social media has not only influenced the way consumers communicate and interact with brands, but it has also influenced consumer behaviour from information acquisition to post-purchase behaviour, such as dissatisfaction statements or behaviours and patterns of Internet usage (Mangold and Faulds, 2009 in Vinerean *et al.*, 2013). Social media is also changing where and how consumers spend their time. Today's consumers are accessing social media on their desktops, laptops, and mobile devices (Parsons, 2013).

Nowadays, consumers do not wait for permission to talk to brands or to promote them to other consumers. They make themselves heard, they advise other consumers. The problem with this new consumer behaviour on social media is that they can denounce and denigrate some brands (Lindon *et al.*, 2004).

Consumer behaviour on social media has to be carefully understood, in order to meet their expectations. In today's world consumers have an active role on social media. They have the opportunity to search for all the information they need, they can search for other brands until they find what they really want and compare it with competition. They do not have time and, besides that, they do not have patience to wait. Consumers want to find the information and the products they need at a fast pace, at the same time they are looking for it. They want to be in permanent contact with brands, 24 hours a day. If they need something suddenly, they know they can count on brands. They want to communicate and ask questions anytime they need but, above that, they want to receive an immediate answer. Today's consumers on social media are too demanding, but in fact they just want simple social networks that do not waste

their time and that make the process of communicating with their favourite brands an easy one. However, they do not want to be treated like simple consumers. With the evolution of social networks, it is as if everybody knew everybody, so consumers want to be recognized and treated in a way that makes them feel important, as if they are unique (Nunes and Cavique, 2001).

2.3.6.1. WHY ARE CONSUMERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media is a communication mechanism that allows users to communicate with thousands, perhaps billions, of individuals all over the world (Williams *et al.*, 2012 in Whiting and Williams, 2013). Consumers value social media, use social media to share the opinions and experiences they have with brands and make use of it to search information about products or services. By joining social media, people fulfil their need for belongingness and it also contributes to their well-being, since it satisfies their basic needs of engaging with other people and brands. In addition, this fulfilment of consumers' belongingness can represent a valuable tool for firms, because a satisfied user of a product can recommend that product (good or service) to other potential users (Forbes and Vespoli, 2013).

With the advent of social media, consumers are able to communicate more proactively. Through online social networks, consumers can seek others' opinions about specific products. In doing that, consumers show they value peer judgments more than firm promotions (Tiago and Veríssimo, 2014). However, it can be dangerous because, according to Solomon (2015), when considering a new product or service, consumers are more likely to pay attention to negative than positive information.

Boyd and Ellison (2007) stipulate that social networks “must allow users to construct public or semi-public profiles within a bounded system, generate lists of individuals with whom they share a connection, and navigate these connections and those made by other users” (in Yang and Lin, 2014:21). Parsons (2013) also states that social networks allow users to create profiles on the site, to post information and share that information and communicate with other users of the site. These profiles provide advertisers with a vast amount of useful information.

That is why consumers want to be present on social media. Social media is becoming increasingly widespread and popular, so consumers want to be there in order to keep up to date with what brands are doing in real time, to share their experiences with products and their own daily life, to generate content, to tag, edit or create information but, above all, to keep in touch with friends and family and to engage in peer-to-peer conversations. Consumers may also use social media to help them make decisions about purchases, because they rely on recommendations from friends. They also use it for entertainment and, while doing so, may also be exposed to ads placed by advertisers (Parsons, 2013).

2.3.6.2. WHY DO CONSUMERS FOLLOW BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

One of the reasons why consumers are on social media is because they feel they belong to a community where they can communicate and engage with their friends, as well as with brands (Forbes and Vespoli, 2013). It is a fact that the advent of the Internet had as a consequence the rise of social media and hence consumer behaviour has also changed, as well as the way people interact and communicate in today's world. As it was already mentioned, brands have reasons to be present on social media, as well as customers. The question now is: why do consumers follow brands on social media?

According to a survey lead by Edison Research's Social Habit study (2012), we can draw some conclusions. Nowadays consumers follow more brands and so the brand-following behaviour has doubled over the past two years (it was made in 2012). Indeed every day we can find new brands on social networks. People have an entrepreneurial character that did not exist years ago and every day there are new cool brands to follow that were not yet known. Thus, as the number of brands has grown, it is obvious that there are more people following more brands. Therefore, companies must see that as an asset and be present on social media. And if a business just wants to be present in few social networks, it should choose Facebook, because it is the dominant platform for brand-following behaviour, as we can see on figure 3 below. Consumers are more conscious of Facebook's impact on buying decisions; they think it is the one that influences their buying decisions most. And when the question comes up about why they follow brands in particular, sales/discounts are the most commonly-cited reason for following them (Table 4) (The Social Habit, 2012).

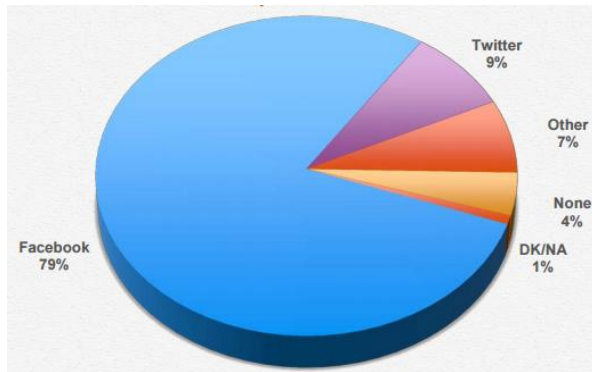


Figure 3 – Which one social networking site or service do you use most to connect with brands/products? (The Social Habit, 2012)

Reason	Number of Mentions*
Sales/Discounts/Coupons	56
Don't Know	47
Like The Product	45
Content/Ideas	43
Keep Informed On New Products	35
Favorable Opinion of Company	29
News/Information	28
Humorous/Entertaining	18
Work There	18
Current Customer	17
Other	16

Table 4 – Reasons to follow brands on social media (The Social Habit, 2012)

Another study has shown similar results – the most common reason why people follow brands on social media is also because of promotions and discounts and to be notified about special offers. Other reasons include latest products information, customer service, entertaining content and ability to offer feedback (Social Media Today, 2015).

But why do they prefer to follow one brand over another? The explanation is a combination of preference for the brand and a level of exclusivity the company can offer its followers on that social network. In this study, 16% of respondents said they follow a brand because they like the brand; it was the main reason. 15% said they follow brands to be notified of special offers /promotions and 12% said they follow brands to learn about new products and services (Lehr, 2015). However, brands need to take care, because consumers may unfollow them on social media due to too much self-promotion.

Followers are also looking for specific types of content over others. If the content posted by a company is boring or repetitive, people may unfollow that brand. Most consumers have images and photos as their favourite content type (Lehr, 2015). Videos take the second place, while statuses and other types of content are less preferred by consumers (Social Media Today, 2015).

On a study about how many different brands people follow, 52% of the respondents said they follow between 2 and 5 brands, 35% between 5 and 10 brands and 13% follow more than 10 brands. Thus, companies must do every possible thing to catch consumers' attention, so that they are interested in following their brands and in improving their brand awareness and, hopefully, their sales and customer loyalty. Not only because of these, but also because 60%

of people have already recommended a Facebook brand to friends and 90% of all purchases are subject to social media influence (WeRSM | We Are Social Media, 2013).

2.3.6.3. THE CASE OF PORTUGAL

Usually the pattern of consumer behaviour is similar all over the world - they use social media to do the same things, such as sharing opinions and experiences, or to connect with friends, or even to search for their favourite brands. However, for this research project, it is relevant to study the behaviour of Portuguese consumers concerning social media. Therefore, according to a Marktest study about this issue, we can take some conclusions: 96% of Portuguese social media users are registered on Facebook and 41% on Google+ and 26% of the Portuguese that access social media between 1 pm and 3 pm do it through a smartphone (Marktest.com, 2015).

Another study shows the number of monthly active mobile social media users in Portugal (February 2014) is about 3.2 million (Statista, 2015) and also that 44% of the population used social networks in Portugal in 2013 (Statista, 2015). As we can see, the Portuguese market is a useful one to study, because of the high degree to which information and communication technologies and social networking are embraced here. In 2005 Portugal was ranked 15th worldwide in mobile communication penetration at 81.84%. Later, in 2012, ANACOM made a study whose results suggest that the average Portuguese citizen tends to possess more than one mobile phone. This was given by the penetration rate that had risen to a record of 156.3%. According to Eurostat, Portugal has an Internet penetration rate in excess of 61% (Tiago and Veríssimo, 2014).

As we have already seen, one of the reasons why consumers use social networks is to follow their favourite brands. Portuguese consumers are not different and 69% follow brands on social media. Besides that, 13% think that following brands on social networks has more influence on their purchase decision. Portuguese consumers are present on Facebook (the one with more users), YouTube, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Hi5 and Messenger. And the reasons for them to abandon any of these social networks are lack of interest, change to another social network, lack of time, their friends' change to another social network or because the one they are using is outdated (Marketest.com, 2015).

In conclusion, we can say that Portugal is a great market to work on social media, because it is growing in the area of the Internet and telecommunications, allowing companies to evolve in the online world. Today's consumers almost expect companies to be present both online and in the social media and the challenge for companies is how to get involved and establish that presence (Parsons, 2013).

2.4. EVENT MANAGEMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

“The word ‘event’ is derived from the Latin word ‘eventus’ and was originally used to describe big happening out of the ordinary” (Dakle, 2013:202). Today, the concept of an event includes a large variety of social gatherings such as a birthday, a wedding, a celebration party or a business lunch/dinner. Thus, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines a ‘special event’ as a “non-routine activity within a community that brings together a large number of people” (Gaynor, 2009:14). According to Getz (2008:403) event management is “the applied field of study and area of professional practice devoted to the design, production and management of planned events, encompassing festivals and other celebrations, entertainment, recreation, political and state, scientific, sport and arts events, those in the domain of business and corporate affairs (including meetings, conventions, fairs, and exhibitions), and those in the private domain (including rites of passage such as weddings and parties, and social events for affinity groups).” On figure 4 it is possible to see this typology of events:

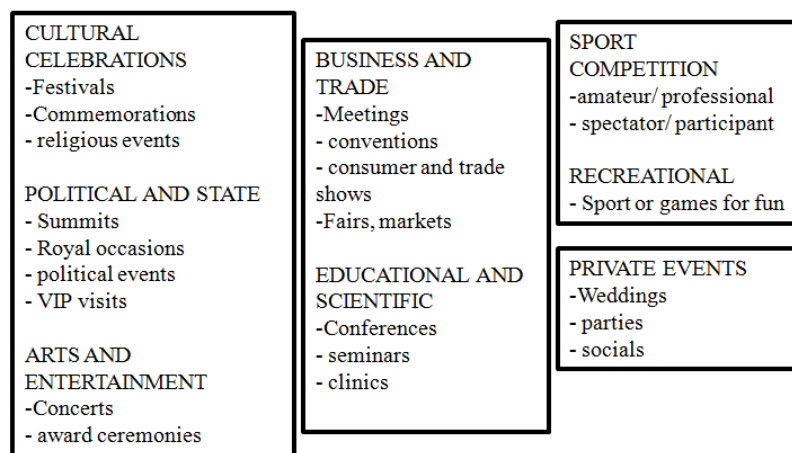


Figure 4 – Typology of planned events (Getz, 2008)

One of the most important things about events is that they hold such a great importance to the main participants that nothing can go wrong (Dakle, 2013). However, no matter how big or small an occasion may be, and in spite of the best planning, things do sometimes go wrong. The test of a good organiser is how quickly they respond and how visible the impact is. Managing an event may not be an easy task: some details go wrong, time becomes short and people get stressed (Thornton, 2012).

This is the reason why events must be planned. “Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now” (Gaynor, 2009:14). It provides the framework for informed decision-making, allows for the setting of priorities and reduces the need for crisis management. People should start the event-planning process with the end in mind, thinking of which goals they would like to achieve. Once that established, they are ready to dive into the details of planning the event (Bergeland, 2014).

2.4.1. EVENT TOURISM

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, and special events are an important contributor to that growth (Shifflet and Bhatia, 1999). Hundreds or thousands of events occur each day in the world. However, of those events, only a few are significant (McNutt, 1995). Between those events there is event tourism, which refers to leisure-oriented special events.

The growing number of planned events is a global phenomenon and the same is true for event tourism (Yuan, 2013). Event tourism market is emerging at a large and growing pace, especially for the hotel and travel industry. The main reason is because special events attract visitors who may not have otherwise come to the region (Shifflet and Bhatia, 1999). Besides, whenever an event happens, it can provide business opportunities for companies (mainly for those involved in the event) and create mutually beneficial relationships for hotels, because of the people that come to the event and are not from the region.

According to Yuan (2013:176), event tourism can be defined as “major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short or long term”. Another definition of the concept is more related with a management and planning perspective. It involves three key

points: destinations, organizers and sponsors and event-goers. Destinations have to do with the planning, development and marketing of events, working as tourist attractions, image builders and animators of attractions and destination areas. The organizers and sponsors state that event tourism strategies should not only cover well-planned events, but also negative events and the management of news. Lastly, event-goers make part of a market segment that consists of those people who travel to and attend the special events (Yuan, 2013). Not only event-goers, but also some stakeholders in event tourism influence the success of events (Stokes, 2006). Much of their appeal is that they are never the same, and people have to be there to fully enjoy the unique experience; if they miss it, it is a lost opportunity (Getz, 2008).

2.4.2. EVENT TOURISM IN PORTUGAL

The event tourism market in Portugal has been changing mainly because of the change of profile of tourists visiting Portugal. Indeed, the tourists that come to Portugal have become more demanding; they have a higher level of education, are more willing to travel and demand higher standards of service quality, while enjoying shorter holiday periods (Costa, 2004). We can also apply this profile to people who want to make events in Portugal. They have the same characteristics tourists have.

Within this research of event tourism in Portugal we want to deepen the market of farms where events can be made. It is a fact that it belongs to our culture. In Portugal people have always liked to party on farms and beautiful places with huge gardens where they can enjoy our wonderful weather. However, there are a lot of beautiful farms in our country and so it becomes difficult for their owners to differentiate from others and find good clients (Santaideia.com, 2015).

One of the major problems that are affecting this event market on farms is that the owners do not know how to efficiently position their farms online, so they are using paid portals of farms. This way, when someone looks for farms for events in Portugal, they do not appear on the Google top 10, because this top 10 is full of paid portals that compel farms to pay in order to be present on them. The main problem is that on these portals farms are not alone; they compete with tens or perhaps thousands of other farms in the region. Hence, the ones who have more money to pay are the ones that appear in the first place (Santa Ideia, 2014). Thus,

the solution is to have optimized websites where your farm appears exactly before all these paid portals when you look for this theme. It has a few advantages, such as the fact that it is only your farm that is available to be seen on your website, you do not have competitors and besides that, depending on the type of business, you can build a website without paying anything or without paying for its maintenance.

So, it is necessary to conquer land in those portals that dominate Google results, and it must begin by new optimized websites for Google, having in mind the final consumer, so as to have more contact requests and more bookings (Santa Ideia, 2014).

2.4.3. E-TOURISM

The use of Internet and communication technologies has changed the tourism market (Buhalis and Deimezi, 2003). It allows travellers to have access to quick and trustful information and also to book in few minutes, which is considered to be very convenient when compared with traditional means. One of the major results is the changing in tourist's behaviour. Therefore, the challenge of identifying, attracting and retaining customers in the online market, as well as the issue of understanding consumer's perceptions is becoming a critical success factor (Steinbauer and Werthner, 2007). It makes the business-to-consumer communication easier. Through the spread of these new means of communication companies make use of a growing number of resources to appeal to potential consumers (Fernandez-Cavia and López, 2013).

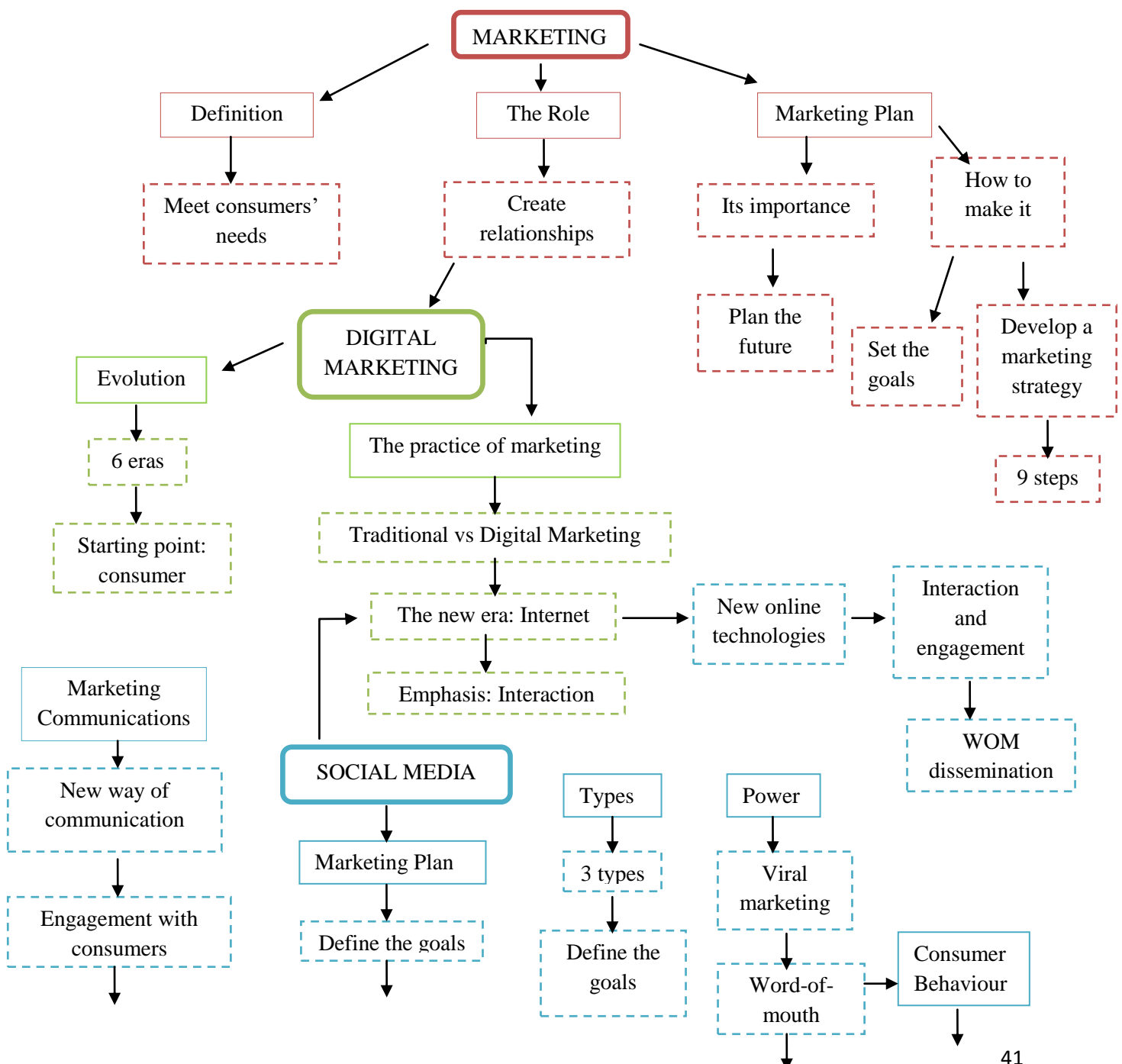
E-tourism has revolutionised all business processes, the entire value chain, as well as the relationships and interactions with all their stakeholders. The internet allows tourism organisations to interact with all their stakeholders, including potential and loyal customers, local groups and public authorities (Buhalis and Deimezi, 2003). This interaction in the tourism industry can be an asset for consumers, because e-tourism involves e-information, e-booking (hotels, transportation, etc) and electronic payment. It is first of all based on the "distribution of information, but the main purpose is direct selling, eliminating the physical and time barriers turning to e-commerce technologies" (Beatrice and Mihalescu, 2015:292). As we already know, new technologies have been changing the way tourism companies conduct their business. However, it can have good or bad implications for the industry (Buhalis and Deimezi, 2003). Regarding the benefits, e-tourism is the most efficient way to

communicate with target markets and disseminate the information. It becomes easier and quicker for consumers to buy what they want and need and besides that it also offers the opportunity to improve consumer services. One of the major advantages for companies is that it reduces costs and increases efficiency (Beatrice and Mihalcescu, 2015). Although the Internet has increased the opportunities for travel providers to distribute information and to process bookings for potential buyers, it also has a few negative points, such as: people who do not have access to a computer or to the internet cannot benefit from e-tourism and another negative aspect is due to the growing demand of personalized services tailored to individual needs and interests (Beatrice and Mihalcescu, 2015).

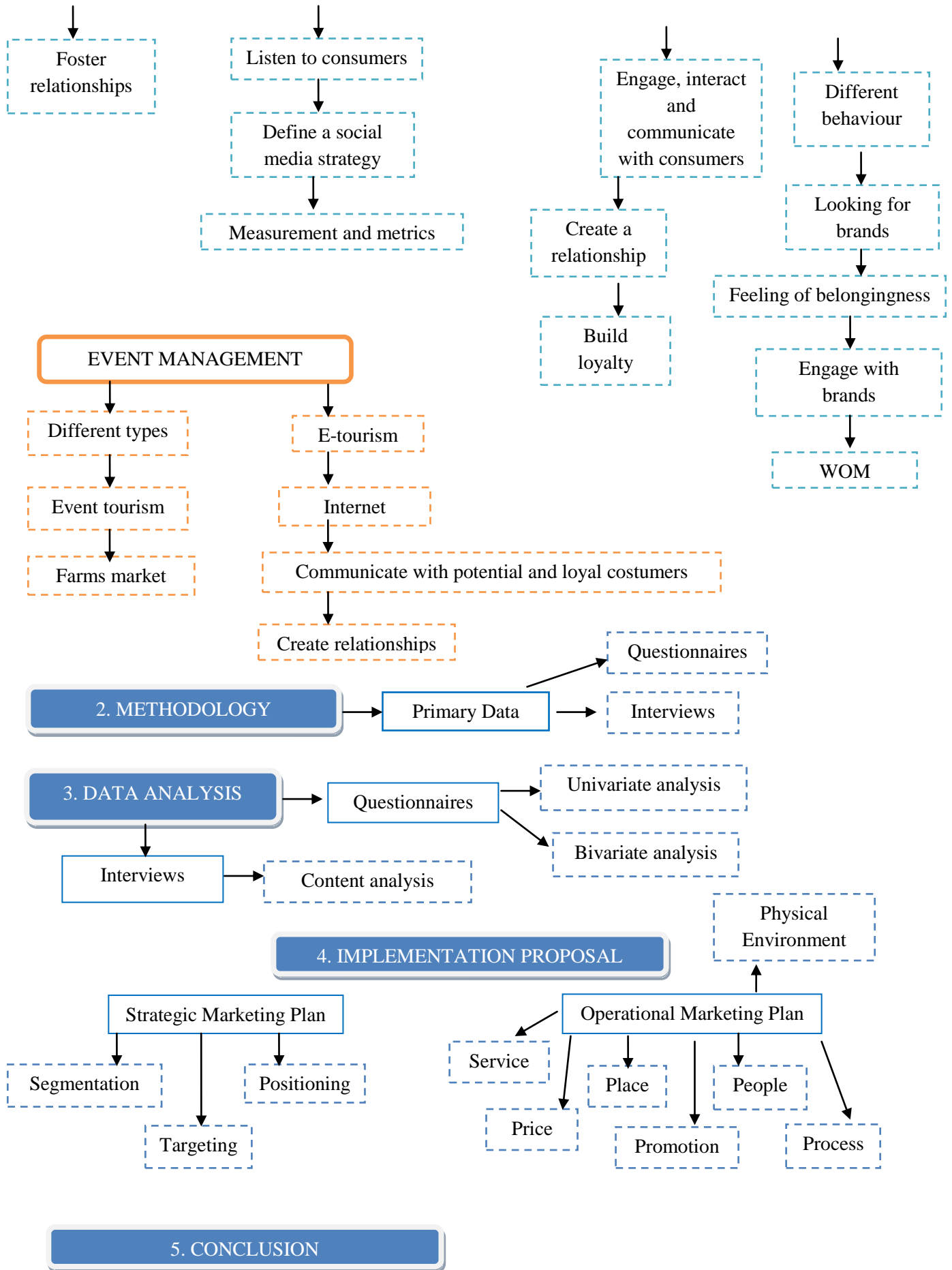
CHAPTER 3. FRAMEWORK

Based on the previous literature review, we are now able to identify some directions to conduct the marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*. There are some important issues that must be analysed. Thus, in order to schematize the undertaken literature review and to give an idea of what will be dealt with in the next chapters, a framework will be presented:

1. LITERATURE REVIEW



Social Media Marketing Plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*



CHAPTER 4. EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

The external analysis studies the market and the competition.

4.1. MARKET ANALYSIS

4.1.1. MACRO ENVIRONMENT – PEST ANALYSIS

The macro environment is composed by several variables that the company cannot easily control. However, its knowledge is crucial to avoid some situations.

- **Political/Legal Environment:**

Concerning the political and legal environment, we have to analyse how the government will interfere with the economy, in order to constrain or facilitate the activities of our business.

Although the Portuguese state is not very interventionist regarding political constraints that restrict our activity, there is a set of imposed rules in order to regulate the proper functioning of the sector.

The activity of events management does not need any licensing. However, depending on the type of the event, it may require a specific licensing. According to our activity, we do not need a licence every time we have an event. Thus, at the beginning of our business, we require a licence, so that the municipal council allows us to practise our activity.

Portugal is going through a time of political instability and it affects event tourism, because it sends the wrong image about the country, distorting the perception of potential tourists. Although tourism in Portugal is quite well established and growing at good rates, this factor is still relevant and because of that it has a medium negative impact on the business.

- **Economic Environment:**

The economic environment is necessary to analyse macroeconomic indicators and relevant aspects of the Portuguese economy and realize which ones condition and which ones facilitate our company's activity.

In a global way, the current economic situation is not favourable. Portugal is living an economic crisis. The economy is in recession, which leads to an environment of instability that affects all sectors. We can say that the worst is over, but we are still living in a recession period and so the generality of the economic indicators are still negative. However, despite the negative situation, the main macroeconomic indicators of Portugal are growing. It can mean that we are on the path to an economic recovery and so it can be an incentive for the advance of our activity because, when we are living recession periods, people do not waste money in parties and secondary things. They save money for the basic things such as food, education, clothes and many times they forgo superfluous things. Instead of marrying in a beautiful place with a huge garden, brides and grooms choose a smaller and cheaper place without a surrounding garden.

According to some macroeconomic indicators, the economy is recovering, as we can see through the Portuguese **GDP (Gross Domestic Product)**. In 2012 the Portuguese economy registered the largest recession, with the GDP falling 4% (INE, 2016). However, from 2013 until now the GDP has registered a positive growing, and in 2015 it increased 1.5% (INE, 2016). Thus, in nominal terms, the GDP in 2015 was around 179.4 thousand millions Euros (INE, 2016). The increase of the GDP can be explained by the rise of exportation.

Another important factor to take in account is the **unemployment rate** that in 2013 reached its peak of 16.2% (INE, 2016). Fortunately, since that period it has been decreasing and in the last quarter of 2015 it showed values of 12.4% (INE, 2016). It is still a big value that can influence our activity, because as people do not have a lot of purchase power, they choose to live together with their partners instead of marrying and making a celebration for friends and family. However, through the decrease of the unemployment rate we can see positive signals of the recovery of the economy. In fact the employment rate increased 1,8% in the last quarter of 2015 (INE, 2016).

It is also possible to confirm that the **purchase power** of the Portuguese people is increasing, taking in 2014 the 14th position in Europe (Económico, 2015). One of the reasons for this growth is the increase in 2016 of the minimum wage to 530€ (Económico, 2015).

- **Social Environment:**

In terms of demographics, Portugal lost 5% of the population in 2015, compared to 2014, decreasing from 10.4 million to 10.3 million (Pordata, 2015). This observed decline was essentially due to the growth of the net migration. However, on average, the population has been increasing in the past decades.

Another consequence of the decrease of the population is the index of aging. It has diminished to 138.6 elderly per 100 youth (Pordata, 2015). Nowadays parents have different lifestyles, they are busier with their work and they do not have much time to take care of their kids. As a result of this they just have one or two kids, contributing for the aging of the population.

To study the influence of the social environment in our business it is crucial to look at the weddings' rate. It is a fact that nowadays, due to the economic crisis, people do not marry as much as they used to. The trend is to live together without being married. So, the number of weddings in Portugal in 2014 was 31.478 (Pordata, 2015). It is decreasing, as well as the weddings' rate that declined from 60.2% in 2010 to 30% in 2014 (Pordata, 2015). But not all is bad news; in the region of Baixo Alentejo, Beja is the city with more weddings, recording 88 in 2014 (Pordata, 2015).

- **Technological Environment:**

In a society more and more affected by the new technologies, it is important to understand how the business will evolve over time and which will be the new needs, solutions and services requested by customers.

As we have already said, nowadays we are living in a technological era, where companies and clients are closer than ever before. Consumers use the new technologies for everything, namely to talk to their favourite brands. Companies have to listen to what customers want and need. So, they must evolve in that direction and keep pace with these new technologies if they

want to be updated and win notoriety on the market. The internet brought us the opportunity to communicate with our clients and keep in touch with them. Through this boost it is also possible to advertise our business, especially on social networks.

4.1.2. MICRO ENVIRONMENT

To study the sector it is important, first of all, to make an overall analysis of the tourism industry, in order to follow with a deeper analysis of the sub-sector we are studying, event tourism.

Portuguese Tourism Market

Worldwide, the tourism industry has experienced steady growth almost every year. It is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and it has been emerging at a large and growing pace, especially for the hotel and travel industry.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the number of international tourist arrivals hit a worldwide record in 2014, since it increased from 528 million in 2005 to 1.13 billion in 2014, an increase of 4,4% (Statista, 2015). In 2015, it was forecasted to reach 1.2 billion of international tourist arrivals, more 4% than in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015). Figures were forecasted to exceed 1.8 billion by 2030, as we can see on figure 5.

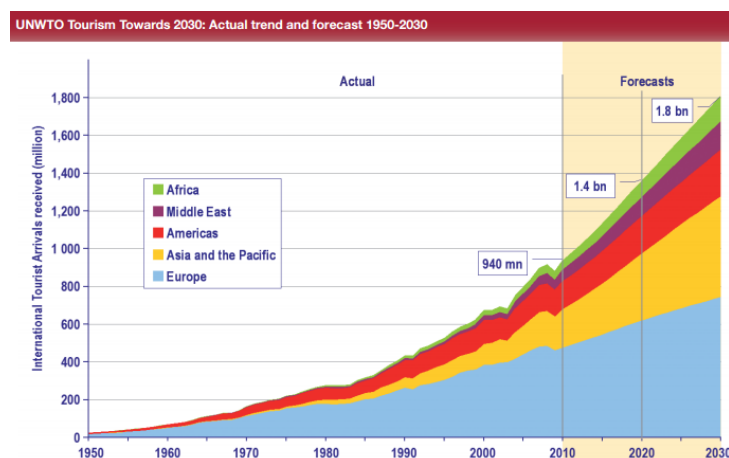


Figure 5 - International Tourist Arrivals (UNWTO, 2015)

Each year, Europe is the region receiving by far the largest number of international tourist arrivals worldwide, followed by the Asia Pacific region. It also produces most travellers: 575 million outbound tourists in 2014. With 46 million more tourists travelling the world (+4.3%), 2014 marks the fifth consecutive year of robust growth above the long-term average (+3.3% a year) since the financial crisis of 2009 (UNWTO, 2015).

Travel has become more accessible to people around the world over the past few decades and, as a result, the global tourism industry has boomed, particularly in more recent years. The travel and tourism industry has contributed around 7.314 trillion Euros to the global economy annually (Statista, 2016). Likewise, international tourism receipts earned by destinations worldwide have surged from € 1.828,71 billion in 1950 to € 379.456 billion in 1995 and € 1.138,37 billion in 2014 (Statista, 2016).

Although it is important to study the tourism market worldwide, because this way we can see how the global situation is going, we have to deepen the Portuguese market, since it is our own market. Tourism is also playing an increasingly important role in Portugal and in its economy. According to data from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), economically, tourism represents 15.8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), so it contributed to a total of EUR 27.9bn to Portuguese GDP in 2015 (WTTC, 2015). It is forecast to rise to EUR 33.6bn in 2025, representing 17.0% of GDP (WTTC, 2015), as shown on figure 6.

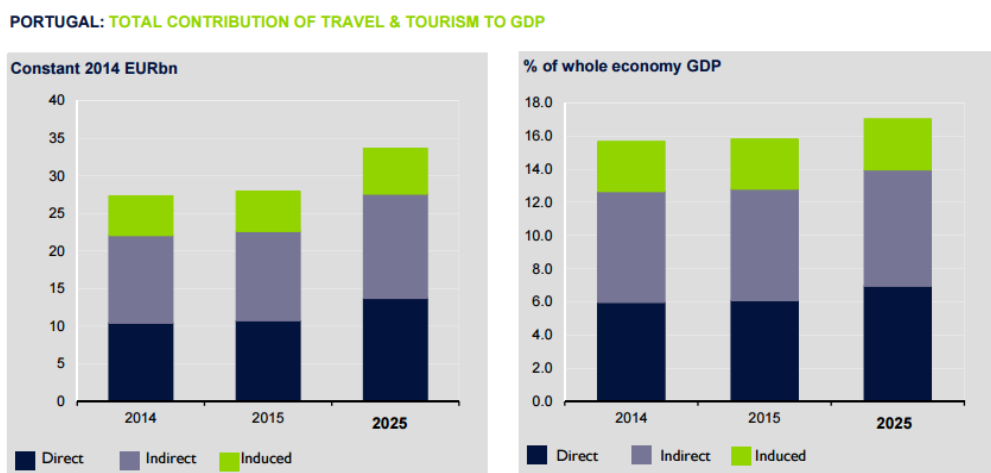


Figure 6 – Total contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP (WTTC, 2015)

As it was already said, tourism is one of the main sectors of the Portuguese economy and it is one of the more “job friendly” industries. It is increasing at an incredible pace and with its fast growing, new job opportunities appear. In 2015 tourism’s total contribution to employment was 858,000 jobs (18.6% of total employment) and by 2025 it is forecast to support 960,000 jobs (20.9% of total employment) (WTTC, 2015), as it can be seen on figure 7.

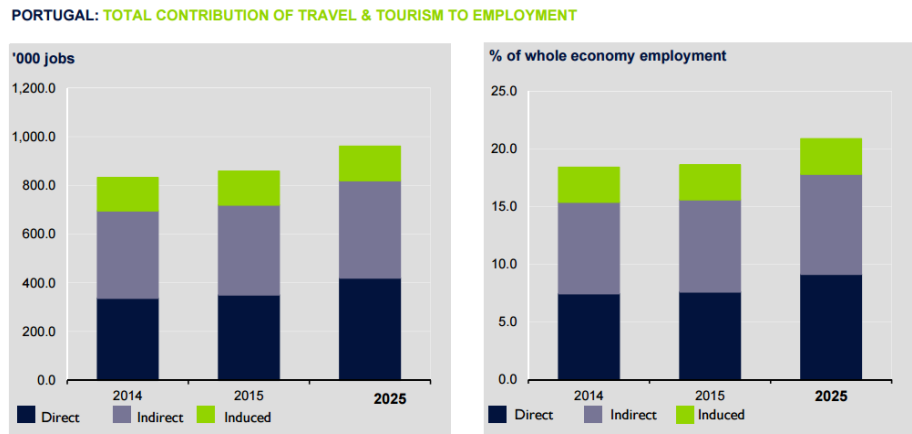


Figure 7 – Total contribution of Travel and Tourism to Employment (WTTC, 2015)

Portugal attracts many tourists each year. According to an analysis made by *Turismo de Portugal* in 2015, the number of tourists residents was 7.262,9 and of the foreign tourists was 10.175,5, making a total of 17.438,4 tourists, which represents more 8,6% than in 2014 (more 1.381,3 tourists in total). The country that brings more foreign tourists to Portugal is The United Kingdom, followed by Spain (Turismo de Portugal, 2015). Money spent by those foreign visitors (or visitor exports) is a key component of the contribution of tourism to our economy (Figure 8). Therefore, in 2014, visitor exports generated € 13.4 billion and this number was expected to grow by 2.2% in 2015 (WTTC, 2015). To reach this goal the country attracted 9,036,000 international tourist arrivals and, in 2025, international tourist arrivals are forecast to total 11,659,000, generating expenditure of € 18.0 billion (WTTC, 2015).



Figure 8 – Visitor Exports and International Tourist Arrivals (WTTC, 2015)

In 2015, the tourism industry generated € 11.362,2 million of revenues and its expenditure was € 3.612,1 million, making a balance of € 7.750,1 million (Turismo de Portugal, 2015). Comparing with the previous year both increased; however, the revenues increased more than the expenditures.

- **Market Structure: Segments**

According to the weather conditions and the natural and cultural resources, the tourism industry in Portugal can be divided into 10 different segments: Sun and Sea, Cultural and Landscape Touring, City Break, Business Tourism, Nature Tourism, Nautical Tourism (includes Cruises), Health and Wellness, Golf, Integrated Resorts and Residential Tourism and Gastronomy and Wine (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Let us consider each segment separately:

Sun and Sea tourism is part of the leisure tourism and its main attractions are the beach destinations. Portugal has good conditions for Sun and Sea, with over 800 km of coastline and being the European country with the highest number of sunshine hours per year. The quality of the beaches is also high – it is possible to practise sports such as surfing and kite surfing. The Algarve has Mediterranean characteristics and a temperature high water (compared to Atlantic beaches). This market segment accounts for 41% of the motivations of foreign tourists in Portugal, reaching 88% in the Algarve (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Cultural and Landscape Touring is the second motivation when choosing Portugal as a possible destination, representing 34%. Touring is especially important in Madeira (57%) and in Alentejo (56%) (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Portugal has a lot of natural parks, monuments and cities with relevant historical background that, combined with its great conditions, give the country distinct competitive advantages. City Break is a tourism segment within which tourists travel to a city in order to visit attractions related to a variety of topics (historical, cultural, social, etc.), or even to attend a specific event such as a musical concert, theatre plays, cinema, sport or fashion events. Lisbon (30%) and Porto (24%) are the two cities with more resources to offer this type of tourism (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Business Tourism is particularly important because of the travel volume that it represents and also because it contributes to reduce the seasonality of the destinations. Lisbon is the city with more capacity to plan business tourism events, due to the size of its congress centres. Nature Tourism in Portugal shows low quality, little infrastructures and also few available activities related to

tourism. It represents 6% of the primary motivations of tourists who visit us, and the more important regions are Azores (36%) and Madeira (20%) (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Nautical Tourism can be divided into 3 segments: cruise, yachts and sea-sports. Portugal has the potential to bet on Nautical Tourism, but the country's infrastructures for nautical tourism practice are still inadequate. It represents 1.2% of the tourists' motivations to come to our country and the regions where this segment is more important are Azores (6.2%), Madeira (5.8%) and the Algarve (3.1%) (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). Health and Wellness tourism is composed of 3 segments: thermal baths, spas and specialized clinics (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). It represents 1.9% of the tourists' motivations to visit Portugal. Some of these 3 segments of the Health and Wellness tourism have little infrastructures with a reduced number of activities and for these reasons it has not yet acquired a big visibility (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). However, Portuguese lifestyles are changing and it is a tourism segment with great probabilities to grow. Golf tourism has known an enormous growth in Portugal, not only in terms of quantity, but also in notoriety. This segment represents a strong motivation when foreigners choose Portugal. Integrated Resorts and Residential Tourism is an expanding segment market with a high potential to grow. However, it is important to ensure high quality patterns and improve its attractiveness in order to gain more tourists. The regions with more potential in residential tourism are Lisbon, Alentejo and the Algarve (Turismo de Portugal, 2011). According to *Turismo de Portugal* (2011), the country may become an excellence destination concerning Gastronomy and Wine tourism, due to the awesome conditions of the Douro and Alentejo regions. The priority areas for investments in gastronomy and wine are Porto and the north of the country, Alentejo and the central region.

The tourism market is considered fragmented, because it has a lot of companies working there. We have a lot of wine brands, many hotels and rural houses, a lot of companies working with tourism products. Thus, there are a lot of companies competing in a large scale.

Event Tourism Market

As it was already mentioned within the literature review, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and it is mainly due to the implementation of some events. Among those events there is event tourism, which refers to leisure-oriented special events. Event

tourism market is emerging at a large and growing pace and that reflects itself on the growth of tourism market in general. Whenever people go to an event, not every time but many of those times, they have to move away from their houses, so they need hotels where to stay, as well as restaurants, since they have to eat somewhere, and they also develop the travel industry, because of their displacement. Those people going to events take advantage of all this and they become tourists that way.

The event market is certainly growing. Over the past few years, Portugal has been able to be in the forefront of mega-events organization, such as *Expo 98*, *Euro 2004* or *Rock in Rio Lisboa*. However, in the majority of the cases, lower scale events are the ones that make part of the portfolio of most companies working in this area. The Portuguese market is gaining notoriety and it receives important events more and more. Increasingly people talk to companies to help them organise their events. Therefore, event companies are ready to prepare any type of activities, with particular emphasis on the launch and promotion of products, the organization of conferences and meetings and actions of team building, a trend to bet on and to adopt (Anje.pt).

Nowadays events weigh more in the communication strategies than ever before. Brands have different ways of communicating. Instead of doing traditional ad campaigns, they are choosing more efficient ways of getting consumers' attention in order to reach them. Events must be considered as a tool to construct the brand (Eventpoint, 2014). They are small happenings representing good experiences for the costumers. Good experiences are ways of connecting consumers with brands and their purpose is to show how the brand is positioned, how it talks and acts, in order to retain more costumers and maintain the ones that are already loyal. Events are very important for brand communication and act as a stimulus to create new initiatives and to multiply ways of relationship with consumers.

However, the market is not only composed of this type of companies; there are other types of clients. It is a much diversified market. Therefore, there are clients looking for social parties organization services, such as weddings, and clients interested in the organization of major events, such as concerts or exhibitions. More and more consumers want a special and individualized treatment, valuing companies that seek to develop creative and customized solutions, according to their motivations. Only this way will it be possible to catch consumers' attention (Eventpoint, 2014).

As there are different clients with different wants and wishes, there are also different types of events. In fact, the range of services that an event organization company can provide is very diversified (Anje.pt). According to Getz (2008), referred in the literature review, the event industry can be structured in 8 segments: cultural celebrations, political and state, arts and entertainment, business and trade, educational and scientific, sport competition, recreational and private events. The cultural celebrations include festivals, commemorations, religious events and special dates (Getz 2008). Political and state events refer to summits, royal occasions, political events and VIP visits (Getz 2008). Events about arts and entertainment are, for example, concerts, awards ceremonies and exhibitions (Getz 2008). Business and trade events include meetings, conventions, consumer and trade shows, fairs and markets (Getz 2008). Educational and scientific events refer to conferences, seminars and workshops (Getz 2008). Sport competition events can be amateur or professional and spectator or participant (Getz 2008). Recreational events include sports or games for fun with friends and family (Getz 2008). Concerning private events, they have to do with occasions such as weddings, social parties and other type of parties (Getz 2008).

Most of the times, to these types of events are aggregated catering services, decoration, security, cleaning, parking, video services, photography, sound, lighting among others. Everything will depend on the volume of the investment available. As we can see, it is also a fragmented market, with many brands working on the area and a lot of services possible to be provided.

Porter's 5 Forces

Porter's 5 Forces analysis is a useful instrument, because it helps to study the industry's attractiveness. It also helps to understand both the power of the brand's current competitive position, and the strength of the position it is considering moving to.

- **Competitive Rivalry:** there is intense rivalry among existing spaces for events. This industry has a wide range of spaces on the market, small price differences and some quality differences. We are talking about a business with high values/prices and very personal interests, so almost every time people prefer to spend more money and keep a particular place, than to choose another they do not like so much. If the difference is not significant, of course, because there is price sensitivity in the market.

- **Supplier Power:** there is a wide range of suppliers, that is, farms and other spaces for events, so the price is mainly affected by the market and competition, not distinctly by the supplier. Thus, there is a low supplier power.
- **Buyer Power:** there is a medium range of buyers – people who want to make events. In the summer it changes a little bit and the number of buyers increases. There are many competitors on the event market and as it is a business with high values/ prices, there is also price sensitivity. So, the buyer power is high.
- **Threat of Substitution:** there are some substitutes of farms where events can take place, such as hotels and *pousadas*. We considered them as indirect competitors, but they can also be substitute products, because they can provide the same service, in spite of not being on a farm. So we can consider that the threat of substitution is high.
- **Threat of New Entry:** The threat of new entry is low, because it is difficult to enter the event market. It is expensive to become part of this industry, since it is necessary to acquire a space for the events. However, it is not affected by regulation difficulties, legal barriers or technology protections.

We can conclude that the level of attractiveness of the event industry is high, since there are many competitors with some differences. The power of new entrances is low, because it is an expensive business if you need to start from the beginning. The power of substitute services is high, due to the many spaces that can provide event services. Although this fact lowers the attractiveness, it is again increased by the low supplier power and the high power of buyers. The price is mainly affected by the market and by competition, not distinctly by the supplier.

4.2. COMPETITION ANALYSIS

The purpose of our business is to rent the space (*Quinta da Suratesta*) in order to provide the organization of events. It is a service and not a product. So, our competitors are all the ones that offer the same service in the Beja region. However, we have to be more specific, because not all places in the region influence our business. As in any other business, we have direct and indirect competitors. *Quinta da Suratesta*'s competitors fall into 4 categories: Farms, Homesteads, Hotels and *Pousadas*. The direct competitors can be considered the farms and

homesteads that have as core business the organization of events, such as: *Quinta dos Estudos*, *Monte da Diabrória* and *Herdade dos Grous*. They are direct competitors because they have similar services and similar revenue goals; their main activity is the same as the one of *Quinta da Suratesta*. On the other hand, the indirect competitors are *BejaParque Hotel* and *Pousada de S. Francisco*, because they have similar services, but different revenue goals. They are indirect competitors because the organization of events is not their core business. Their main activity is related to their guests, who come to the city and need a room to stay and also to providing them some activities. Their main revenue comes from those activities and not from the events they organize.

For a deeper analysis of the direct competitors, each one will be examined individually. The purpose of this competitive analysis is to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the competitors, their offer, their prices, their strategies and their main activities, among other things.

- ***Quinta dos Estudos***

Quinta dos Estudos is a farm in Beja, Alentejo. It is a typical place from the Alentejo region that has been providing its services for 10 years. Their core activity is also the event management business. The place has capacity for 250/270 persons and it offers a room, bar, green spaces with a pool, parking and a kitchen for the catering (Casamentos.pt). The services they offer are the renting of the place and an extra transport service to carry the bride and groom in a 19th century car. They do not have catering service, so it is up to the persons who rent it to choose one. Whenever someone books the place, it has a time limit up to 4 a.m. that people have to accept. Exclusively in the case of weddings, they have a T1 flat that can also be rent if the bride and groom want it (Casamentos.pt). The prices range from 375€, which is the minimum you have to pay as a deposit, to 2,160€, depending on the number of people involved (Casamentos.pt).

Quinta dos Estudos main strengths are: the T1 apartment they rent to the bride and groom and the transport service they provide in a 19th century car.

On the other hand, their main weaknesses are: the limit of time they allow, only up to 4 a.m. and their small green garden.

- ***Monte da Diabrória***

Monte da Diabrória is situated in Ferreira do Alentejo, 6 km away from the centre of the city of Beja. It is a country house with 300 hectares of fields where you grow cereals and sunflowers (*Diabrória*, 2016). All the environment of the place is rural, characteristic of the Alentejo region. Their main activity is the event organization business, although they also function as a country house you may rent for tourism (it has 13 rooms). The place where events happen has capacity for approximately 250 persons and it is provided with an interior room, an exterior space with a pool and a garden and a kid's friendly space (*Diabrória*, 2016). Besides renting the place for events, they also have some rooms to host the guests. In the case of weddings, if the bride and groom want, they offer the wedding night, at any cost, and give the opportunity to host some of their guests at special prices, including meals. During the events they offer other services as well, such as animation, decoration and catering with some defined menus (*Diabrória*, 2016). It is possible to ask for the exclusivity of the space when the event is taking place.

Monte da Diabrória's main strengths are: having the catering service, the opportunity to host some of the guests (subject to a payment) and the offer of the wedding night to the bride and groom.

Their main weaknesses are: they do not have a kitchen for the catering company, so they have to bring all the food already cooked.

- ***Herdade dos Grous***

In Albernoa, 17 km away from Beja, we can find *Herdade dos Grous*. It has a beautiful country house and the activities include wine production, agriculture, rural tourism and ecotourism (*Herdadedosgrous.com*, 2016). Within rural tourism they implement an event organization business.

Herdade dos Grous offers their guests a restaurant service, with traditional food from Alentejo, but only for small events, because it just has capacity for 90 persons. They also have a large outdoor terrace with capacity for 120 persons, offering a beautiful panoramic view. There you can benefit from restaurant and bar service. Another option to enlarge the capacity of the place is to rent a tent you set on the exterior. Outside, we can find a pool with a view to

the lake, a huge grass carpet and a park for kids to play near the restaurant. The place also has a romantic environment, with a bandstand, to make any wedding look like a dream. They still offer catering service during the events and have rooms to host the guests.

Herdade dos Grous main strengths are: their beautiful surrounding environment, including the bandstand, the lake and the panoramic view. Another competitive advantage are the catering and hosting services they offer.

In terms of the main weaknesses, the following should be mentioned: in order to have capacity for receiving more people they need to rent a tent to set on the outside, which obviously implies more costs.

Based on what was said so far, the following table (Table 5) briefly compares the characteristics of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s direct competitors, analysing their core business, main advantages and capacity.

Competitors	Core Business	Advantages	Capacity
<i>Quinta dos Estudos</i>	Event Management Business	Flat for bride and groom and transport service	250/270 persons
<i>Monte da Diabrória</i>	Event Management Business	Catering and hosting service	250 persons
<i>Herdade dos Grous</i>	Wine production, agriculture, rural tourism and ecotourism	Catering and hosting service and beautiful gardens	120/300 persons

Table 5 – Comparative analysis of the direct competitors (own elaboration)

As far as the mentioned indirect competitors are concerned, let us also analyse them individually.

- ***BejaParque Hotel***

BejaParque Hotel is the most recent hotel in Beja. It includes a small exterior space with a terrace, a pool and a small grass carpet. However, they have a big interior room and so they have capacity for approximately 300 persons. Furthermore, they also provide catering with traditional food from Alentejo, private parking, an exclusive suite for the bride and groom, hosting service for the guests and other services eventually required (Bejaparquehotel.com, 2016). The types of events they organize most are christenings, weddings, birthday parties, business lunches/dinners and exhibitions. They have around 6 or 7 weddings per year and as far as other types of events are concerned, they organize a lot of them throughout the year.

BejaParque Hotel's main strengths are: the interior room for events, which is very comfortable and pleasant.

On the other hand, their main weaknesses are: the exterior space, which is small and with few green spaces.

- ***Pousada de S. Francisco***

Pousada de S. Francisco is located in the heart of the city of Beja. It was an old Franciscan convent from the 13th century. It is also an indirect competitor because their core activity is not the event management business, but the hosting business. Although as an old convent, it has good conditions to organise events. The *Pousada* has an exterior space with a garden, a pool, tennis courts and a park for kids to play. They have capacity for weddings or big events up to 450 persons (Pestana.com, 2016). In fact, *Pousada de S. Francisco* has many rooms that can be used in order to enlarge the space and, thus, increase the capacity. It also has an amazing chapel for civil weddings and the ideal room for meetings and small events up to 70 persons. They provide some services, such as catering and decoration. However, it is not mandatory to choose their services (Pestana.com, 2016).

Pousada de S. Francisco's main strengths are: the dimension, power and capacity of the place; the catering and hosting services they provide.

Its main weaknesses are: their prices, because they are more expensive than the competition.

CHAPTER 5. INTERNAL ANALYSIS

The internal analysis focuses on the company – *Quinta da Suratesta* – and its portfolio.

5.1. ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS

History

Quinta da Suratesta is a Portuguese farm in Beja, Alentejo. It has an 18th century neoclassic country house, from the D. Maria I period (Espanca, 1992). It is located 2km away from the centre of the city. The official builders of the old property were a family – *Afonseca Viviam Pessanha* – from Ferreira do Alentejo, near Beja. However, from the 18th to the 20th century, the house was repeatedly sold and it belonged to several families, until it was sold to the family that owns it today.

Quinta da Suratesta is a 3 hectares property that includes the farm house and large gardens with several types of trees, flowers and green spaces. Thereby, the current owners wanted to take advantage of the opportunity of having such a beautiful farm with so much space to add value to. So, they decided to begin an event management business, building a fixed tent to allow for the implementation of different kinds of events. This is an area surrounded by a huge lawn garden with trees, bushes, flowers and a few lakes.

The business began in 2003 and the most common events that have occurred in *Quinta da Suratesta* are weddings. However, all types of events are possible: christenings, business lunches and dinners, summer parties, Christmas parties, fund-raising parties, among others. In the region it is the most required place for events, from among its competitors, mainly due to its capacity for accommodating large numbers of people and its huge and beautiful gardens. As expected, it is a business with some seasonality, because most of the events occur in the summer.

Mission

The mission of *Quinta da Suratesta* is to provide unique events, taking advantage of the good conditions it offers, such as: a fixed tent with a big capacity, like no other in the region and 3 hectares of gardens with green spaces, flowers, trees and some lakes. The mission will be further explored when dealing with the strategic plan, as well as the vision and values of *Quinta da Suratesta*.

Goals

The objective of this event management business in *Quinta da Suratesta* is to provide a beautiful and huge green space, with large gardens, trees, flowers and lakes, in order to enable the organization of amazing events. We want each event to be unique, so we give customers the opportunity to organise the events with amazing conditions and to transform the space as they wish.

Competitive Advantage

Quinta da Suratesta is the most required place for events in the region and its main strengths, as it was already mentioned, are its huge capacity for accommodating large numbers of people and its huge and beautiful gardens. Besides, it has a country house dating back to the 18th century, which beautifies the whole space and gives it a competitive advantage.

5.2. PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS

Quinta da Suratesta has a small product portfolio. It only provides one service to its clients, which is the renting of the space in order to organise events. The portfolio analysis is an important one, because it allows us to see if it would be important to launch a new product or service.

When compared to the other competitors' portfolios, we realise that some of them offer their clients other services, such as catering or decoration or even hosting. *Quinta da Suratesta*

only offers the space: the huge garden and the huge fixed tent you may rent. Other services could be a possible new segment to add to our business in the future. We already have some competitive advantages when compared to our competitors; if we add the mentioned services to our event management business, then we will surely obtain a good portfolio to compete with the others.

CHAPTER 6. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

The competitive analysis consists of the development of a SWOT analysis and a Critical Success Factors (CSF) analysis. Besides that, it is also important to develop a Dynamic SWOT analysis, in order to take advantage of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s strengths and market opportunities and to prevent *Quinta da Suratesta*'s weaknesses and market threats.

6.1. SWOT ANALYSIS

This analysis summarizes the diagnosis of the brand's internal strengths and weaknesses, and of the market opportunities and threats.

STRENGTHS

- Country house from the 18th century
- Dimension of the garden
- Quality: a lot of beautiful green spaces (trees, flowers, grass, bushes, lakes)
- Capacity to accommodate around 400 persons
- A big fixed interior tent for events, available to be decorated
- Huge parking for guests
- No time limit to finish the event

WEAKNESSES

- It just has the renting service (no catering or decoration services)
- It does not have the hosting service for the bride and the groom or for guests
- Weak social media
- Weak communication strategy and interaction with consumers

OPPORTUNITIES

- Growing event and tourism industry
- Good weather conditions in Portugal
- Good Portuguese hospitality
- Habits change: the number of weddings is increasing
- Communication: events are considered an amazing communication tool
- The increasing use of social media and the change of consumer's behaviour

THREATS

- Weather dependency
- Seasonal business
- High maintenance costs
- Much competition on the market
- Economic and political situation

6.2. DYNAMIC SWOT ANALYSIS

Through the SWOT analysis we can obtain the dynamic SWOT analysis. It is an analysis where we combine the opportunities with the strengths and weaknesses and the threats with the strengths and weaknesses, in order to find strategies that allow us to be prepared and to avoid eventual problems. This dynamic SWOT has the following constituent elements: challenges, alerts, constraints and dangers. When combining market opportunities with the strengths of the company we create a challenge; the relationship between strengths and threats presents an alert; the combination of opportunities and weaknesses results in a constraint; and, finally, there is a danger when the weaknesses and the threats relate to each other (Table 6).

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	<u>CHALLENGES</u> - Bet more on the promotion of the business, in order to increase the number of weddings/events in <i>Quinta da Suratesta</i> .	<u>CONSTRAINTS</u> - Develop a social media strategy in order to promote the brand and interact with consumers; - Create a new segment of tourism: the hosting service.
THREATS	<u>ALERTS</u> - Contact more companies/people in order to have more events in winter that do not need the exterior space.	<u>DANGERS</u> - Provide more services such as catering or decoration; - Develop a communication strategy on social media. It is more efficient and it has less costs.

Table 6 – Dynamic SWOT Analysis (own elaboration)

Challenges:

Generate strategies that use strengths to take advantage of opportunities.

STRENGTHS

Dimension of the garden and its quality: a lot of beautiful green spaces (trees, flowers, grass, bushes, lakes)

OPPORTUNITIES

Habits change: the number of weddings is increasing and Growing event and tourism industry

STRATEGY

Bet more on the promotion of the business, in order to increase the number of weddings/events in *Quinta da Suratesta*

Constraints:

Generate strategies that take advantage of opportunities by overcoming weaknesses.

WEAKNESSES

Weak social media and weak communication strategy and interaction with consumers

OPPORTUNITIES

The increasing use of social media and the change of consumer's behaviour

STRATEGY

Develop a social media strategy in order to promote the brand and interact with consumers

WEAKNESSES

It does not have the hosting service for bride and groom or guests

OPPORTUNITIES

Growing event and tourism industry

STRATEGY

Create a new segment of tourism: the hosting service

Alerts:

Generate strategies that use strengths to avoid threats.

STRENGTHS

Capacity to accommodate around 400 persons and a big fixed interior tent for events, available to be decorated

THREATS

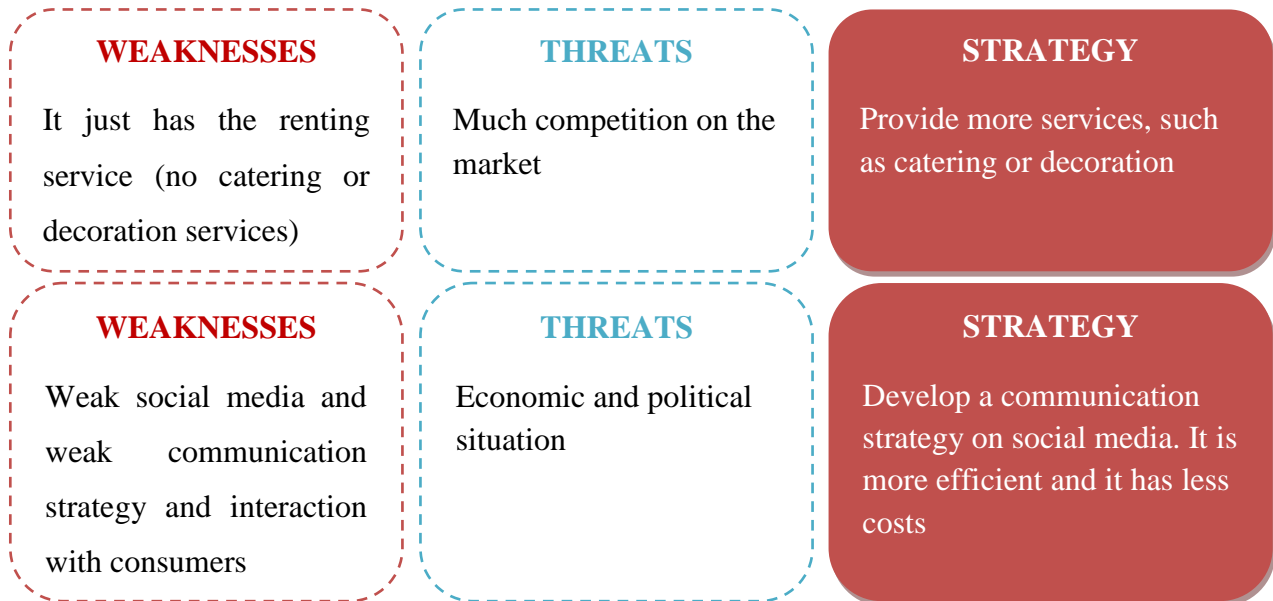
Weather dependency and seasonal business

STRATEGY

Contact more companies/people in order to have more events in winter that do not need the exterior space

Dangers:

Generate strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats.



6.3. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS (CSF)

From the previous analysis it is possible to define a set of Critical Success Factors (CSF) for the event market, such as:

- **Garden:** huge garden with a lot of green spaces, where trees, flowers, bushes, grass and lakes can be found;
- **Dimension of the garden**
- **Offer:** quality of the offer – it is a beautiful garden for events;
- **Capacity** for around 400 persons;
- **History:** country house from the 18th century.

CHAPTER 7. METHODOLOGY

As we will explain later in more detail, the main objectives of this marketing plan are to increase brand awareness, as well as the number of potential clients, through the development of efficient and persistent work on the social networks, so reinforcing this brand on the market and sticking it in the customers' minds.

In order to accomplish the main goals of this project, both quantitative and qualitative methods have to be implemented. Thus, the purpose of this chapter on methodology is to describe the methods and techniques of data collection and analysis that assisted the implementation of the marketing plan. The data obtained hereby are going to complement the previous ones from the literature review. They gave us some knowledge about the best marketing techniques to promote a brand, the methods we need to implement and also about the market, social media and consumer's behaviour and patterns.

First, we will approach the collection of the data and then their respective analysis.

7.1. DATA COLLECTION

By doing this marketing plan we obtained primary data. However, there are research projects that require some combination of secondary and primary data in order to meet the objectives. Primary data consist of new data that we collect by ourselves, specifically for a purpose (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

7.1.1. PRIMARY DATA

The primary data concerning this marketing plan were collected through quantitative and qualitative methods, respectively online questionnaires and in-depth interviews.

- **INTERVIEWS:**

In terms of the qualitative analyses, a research was pursued in order to study the competition and to check what they are doing, so as to improve our strategy. Being so, *in-depth interviews* were done through a script with predefined topics.

The structured interviews were conducted with people from competitive businesses in the Beja region, companies that have similar spaces for events. For that reason, we interviewed the five most required places in the region: *Quinta dos Estudos*, *Monte da Diabrória*, *Herdade dos Grous*, *BejaParque Hotel* and *Pousada de S. Francisco*. And as said above, the main goals were to study their strategies, in order to see what and how they are doing and how they are performing on social media.

As we have easy access to all the events taking place in *Quinta da Suratesta*, we also thought it could be a good idea to talk to the people involved as far as catering, music or decoration are concerned. So, we did it and we decided to choose the most well-known catering company – *Serve Bem*, and two decoration companies – *Festa Aluga* and *Maria Papoila*. The main objectives of these interviews were to see which places normally rent their services more often and why brides and grooms say they want to marry in *Quinta da Suratesta* when they talk to them. On the other hand, it is also beneficial to know the competitors better and to ask for some useful contacts.

The interviews were applied by us personally during the months of February and March, involving a set of predefined questions that were the same for all respondents.

- **QUESTIONNAIRES:**

Concerning the quantitative analyses, online surveys were carried out, through online questionnaires. The questionnaire is one of the most widely used data collection techniques, because each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order, providing an efficient way of collecting responses (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

The main purpose in conducting these questionnaires was mostly to collect data regarding our target's consumer behaviour on social media. This enables us to analyse which type of social media is the best choice and define the most appropriate content to post. Some other goals were linked with the brand *Quinta da Suratesta*, in order to study its notoriety on the market.

In order to obtain all the needed material, the questionnaires (Appendix 1) were done in a structured way and they were divided into six topics of research:

- Sample characterization (Age, Gender, Place of Residence);
- Consumer behaviour on social media (Consumers' habits on social media);
- Reaction to marketing campaigns on social media;
- Top of mind regarding spaces for events;
- Awareness of the brand (*Quinta da Suratesta*);
- Perceptions about the brand (*Quinta da Suratesta*).

These online surveys include mainly closed questions, because this type of questions is easier to analyse statistically, thus allowing the emergence of some patterns. However, they also include other types of question (equally easy to analyse and to allow the perception of some patterns), such as multiple choice questions, yes/no questions, scaled questions, verification questions and just one open question regarding the top of mind topic, only if the respondents answered “others” in the closed questions.

The questionnaires were available online between 19th January, 2016 and 23rd February, 2016 and they were completed individually by persons who have an account on Facebook. As the study is about social media, we thought that it would be a good idea to conduct the online questionnaires on one online platform. So, we chose Facebook, because we think it is easier to reach more people and to share with other people.

a) Universe

The population or universe represents the entire group of units which are the focus of the study, it consists of our target population (Directorate, 2016). Thus, it is composed by all users of the Facebook platform, visitors or non-visitors of *Quinta da Suratesta*, since it is a marketing plan for social media. There is no limitation of gender, age or place of residence. However, since it is impracticable to study the whole universe, there is the need to determine a sample.

b) Sample Dimension Of The Study

Sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enable reducing the amount of data we need to collect, by considering only data from a sub-group, rather than from all possible elements of the population (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

Knowing this, we needed to select a sample considering all research questions where it would be impracticable for us to collect data from the entire population (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In order to select the sample, we chose the “sample of convenience” method. “Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher” (Castillo, 2009). Thus, subjects were selected just because they were easier to recruit for the study and the researcher did not consider selecting subjects that were representative of the entire population.

One of the reasons to choose this sampling method had to do with the financial limitations and constrains. Sometimes it might be theoretically possible to collect data from the entire population, but the overall cost would prevent it (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Another key point of convenience sampling is that it allows us to save time. It is an important factor when we have tight deadlines. The organisation of data collection is more manageable as fewer people are involved (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). In fact, when we have fewer data, the results will be available more quickly.

As 113 questionnaires were applied, the results of this research are merely indicative and not representative of the universe.

7.2. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

After data collection, it was time to analyse those data, based on different treatment techniques for each one.

7.2.1. PRIMARY DATA

Regarding the primary data, some questionnaires (quantitative analysis) and in-depth interviews (qualitative analysis) were conducted. Quantitative analysis techniques such as graphs, charts and statistics allow us to explore, present, describe and examine relationships and trends within our data. On the contrary, qualitative analysis is based on meanings expressed through words. To be useful, these data need to be analysed and the meanings understood. The analysis is conducted through the use of conceptualisation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

The online questionnaires were analysed through a statistical program, the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 20. After introducing the questionnaire database, it is possible to analyse the data and produce the outcome of descriptive statistics. These outcomes will be studied through univariate and some bivariate analysis.

The in-depth interviews were analysed through content analysis. These data were collected personally and by e-mail, and had to do with the interviewees' own opinion about their places/work.

CHAPTER 8. DATA ANALYSIS

8.1. PRIMARY DATA

8.1.1. INTERVIEWS

The interviews conducted in order to study the competition were applied during the months of February and March 2016, and they allowed to reach conclusions concerning some competitors' patterns and also *Quinta da Suratesta*.

Two different interviews were done: one with predefined questions to competitors with similar spaces in the region (Appendix 3) and another with different questions to the people involved in the events that take place in *Quinta da Suratesta*, namely catering and decoration services (Appendix 4).

The interviews directed to the competitors in the region allowed us to reach a set of conclusions about: the most organised type of events, the number of events accomplished per year, the capacity of each place, main critical success factors, and types of consumer profiles, among others.

As far as the first question is concerned – the type of events they organise most – the main answers were: weddings, birthday parties, business lunches/dinners or other types of events, such as promotions, activities, workshops or exhibitions.

The answer to the second question is a little bit obvious, but it is important to know if there is a specific time of the year when more events take place. All the answers were unanimous: in the summer, between June and September.

The respondents were asked about their opinion concerning the seasonality factor as a conditioning in the events business. The answers confirmed that seasonality does affect the business. However, respondents claimed that it cannot be seen as a problem, but as an opportunity to search and create new products. The strategy to be adopted is to develop, promote and implement new business models for the months that represent less demand. Some of these places make winter promotions to fight against seasonality and to retain more customers.

When asked about the number of events they usually organise per year, the answers have to be differentiated. Places that also have the hosting and tourism services, such as *BejaParque Hotel*, *Herdade dos Grous* or *Pousada de S. Francisco*, said they organize a lot of events, between 30 and 50 per year. These events include activities with the hosts such as, for example, cultural or sports activities, workshops, business lunches/dinners, parties, birthday parties, among others. However, they just organise between 4 and 6 weddings per year, because they only occur in the summer. The other two places also confirmed the number of weddings per year.

The answer to this question depends on the place, since there are two of them that only accommodate 250/270 persons (*Quinta dos Estudos* and *Monte da Diabrória*). The *Pousada* organises events for 450 persons and the other two have enough space for 300 persons. However, *Herdade dos Grous* needs to pitch a tent to have sufficient capacity for 300 persons, because their facilities only accommodate 120 persons.

Regarding the price question, no values were mentioned. They just said that it depended on the type of event and on the type of service required. They added that their prices are in accordance with their offer and quality of services.

The next question was about the type of services they provide on their events. All the respondents said they do everything the consumer wants, such as catering, decoration or even hosting.

The critical success factors are mainly linked to the characteristics of their own places and to their promotion and communication with consumers.

Concerning their main consumer profile there are different answers. Some of the respondents consider they do not have a specific niche; they work with all types of people. However, there are others that indicated, as their main consumer profile, companies or people between 25 and 35 years, mainly for weddings. *Pousada de S. Francisco* specifically mentioned Portuguese people with a high level of education, between 35 and 55 years and travelling with family. One common characteristic among their clients is the way they contact them, which is usually by e-mail or by mobile phone.

When asked about their main competitors, they all gave a unanimous answer. All the respondents consider that they do not have competitors, so they do not need to worry about

competition. Instead of that, they need to provide the best work and services to their customers, in order to satisfy them and to ensure they want to return.

Regarding the question if it is worth advertising the places on proper websites, as booking.com or websites of events, the main answers were that it is not a question of being worth, but just one more way of disclosing the business.

The main objectives for respondents to use social networks are the promotion of the place and of the business, information about their promotions and sales and interaction with consumers.

To conclude the interview, the last question was about the areas that could be developed in the business (in terms of product, services, social media or communication). Respondents were a little bit vague, saying that all areas can be developed, some more than others obviously, but as they always want to evolve, they feel the need to develop or improve their services.

The interviews to the catering and decoration companies also allowed to conclude some patterns about the places they go most in order to provide their services; some conclusions were also taken about *Quinta da Suratesta* concerning our critical success factors.

Thus, when asked about the place, in Alentejo, where they normally make more events, the answers were of two types: particular houses or places to rent. Those places in the Beja region were *Quinta da Suratesta* and *Quinta dos Estudos*. When asked about the reasons that make people choose *Quinta da Suratesta*, they answered that the main reason is because it is the place with more capacity to accommodate large numbers of people in the area and also because it is the most beautiful space. This already answers part of the next question about *Quinta da Suratesta*'s critical success factors (CSF). They mentioned the huge dimension of the place, since it is able to accommodate a lot of people, the good access and the kitchen that the catering company considers to be the best when compared to other competitors. These companies were asked to compare *Quinta da Suratesta* to its competitors and the answers were that it is the best place. However, they were asked to refer 3 aspects/recommendations they think *Quinta da Suratesta* should implement or improve. Some of the aspects they named were toilets for staff that do not exist, security and supervision, because it is too easy to enter the place, and more maintenance of the existing infrastructures.

8.1.2. QUESTIONNAIRES

In order to analyse the quantitative data, the online questionnaires, a statistical program (SPSS) was used. This analysis was divided into 6 parts, the same 6 research topics of the questionnaire: sample characterization, consumer behaviour on social media, reactions to marketing campaigns on social media, top of mind regarding spaces for events, awareness of the brand and perceptions about the brand. Firstly, the descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire regarding the 6 parts is presented. It is considered a univariate analysis but, on the other hand, a bivariate analysis was also conducted, in order to study the relation among variables and their connection. The questionnaire results presented are the outputs of the SPSS statistical program.

8.1.2.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS – UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

a) Sample characterization (Q1, Q2 and Q3)

By using descriptive statistics it is possible to characterize the sample in terms of demographic characteristics.

Q1 – The age variable was divided into groups. Our frequency table (See Appendix 2 – Frequency Table1) shows that, out of 113 respondents, the biggest part (43, 36%) is aged between 21 and 25 years. In fact the sample is characterized mainly by individuals belonging to the age group between 21 and 25 years, followed by the age group between 26 and 30 years (17, 7%) and finally by the age group between 16 and 20 years (14, 2%). The less significant age groups were the respondents between 36 and 40 years (0, 9%) and the ones over 51 years old (6, 2%). By analysing these data we took the conclusion that age groups should be split into 2 main groups and so we created two new age groups.

According to these new age groups, Chart 1 shows that 74, 34% of the respondents, i.e. 84 people, are younger than 30 and 25, 66% of the ones who answered the questionnaire, i.e. 29 respondents, are over that age. As the questionnaire was applied through Facebook, we can conclude that people under 30 years old are more active in the social networks.

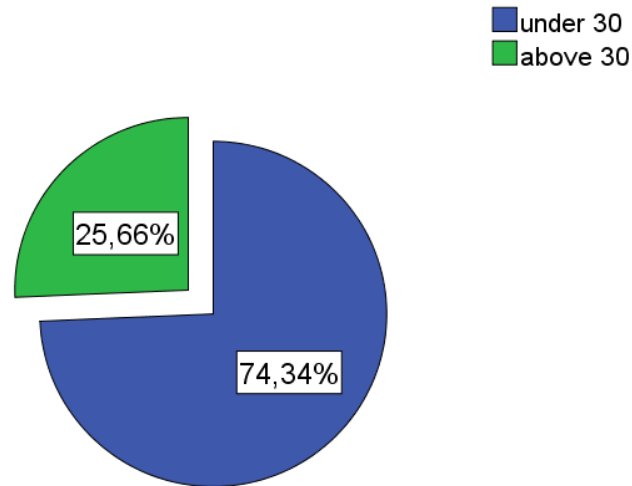


Chart 1 – New age variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q2 – Chart 2 shows that, from the 113 answers collected, the number of women is prevailing, with 82 female respondents and 31 males. The percentage distribution here is 72, 6% and 27, 4% respectively.

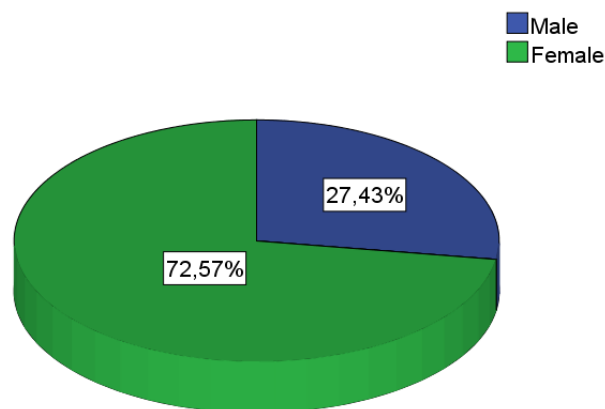


Chart 2 – Gender variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q3 – According to question 3 about the place of residence, we can conclude that the majority of the respondents is from Beja (46, 9%), followed by a group of respondents from Lisbon (34, 5%). Beja represents 53 of the answers, while Lisbon only accounts for 39. The rest of the respondents come from Évora (6, 2%) and other Portuguese cities (8, 8%) with little influence on the study, including also some foreign people from Paris, Germany, Munich and even Copenhagen, as shown on Chart 3.

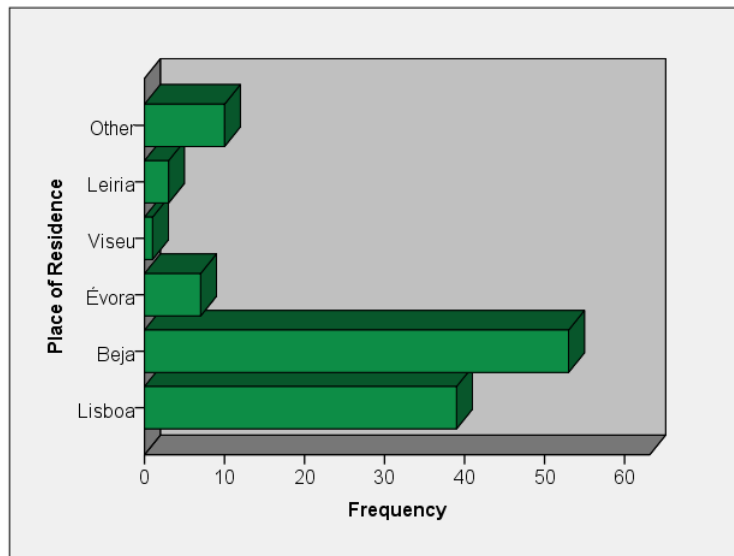


Chart 3 – Place of residence variable distribution (own elaboration)

So, up to now, we can conclude that the sample is characterized mainly by under 30 females, living in an area between Beja and Lisbon.

b) Consumer behaviour on social media (Q4 to Q18)

Q4 – This part of the questionnaire analysis studies respondents’ consumer behaviour on social media. To start this section respondents were first asked if they were present on social networks. As expected, there were no ‘No’ answers; all of the 113 respondents are present on social networks.

Q5 – To see in which social networks people are registered nowadays, we asked a fifth question with Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, Pinterest and YouTube as possible answers. The respondents were allowed to choose more than one option. So, Facebook is the social network in which all respondents answered ‘Yes’ (100%), which means that all of the 113 respondents are registered on Facebook (see Chart 4). The second one is Instagram, with 87 of the respondents registered and the third is LinkedIn, with 54 respondents. The one with fewer answers is Twitter, with only 19 respondents.

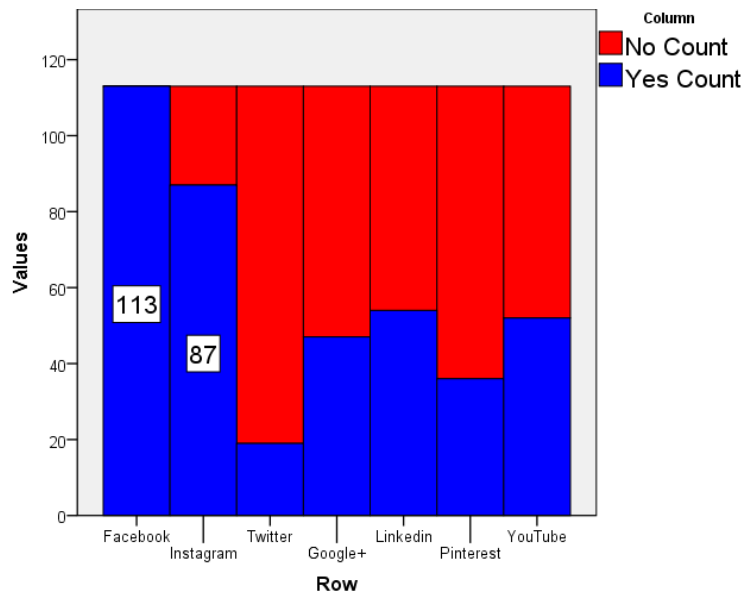


Chart 4 – Social networks registration variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q6 – Considering the social networks that were selected in the previous question, the majority of the respondents said they use them every day (92, 9%). It corresponds to 105 persons out of 113. Just 7 people use them 3 times a week (6, 2%) and only 1 person answered that he/she uses the social networks twice a week (0, 9%). No one answered just once a week (0%), as Chart 5 shows.

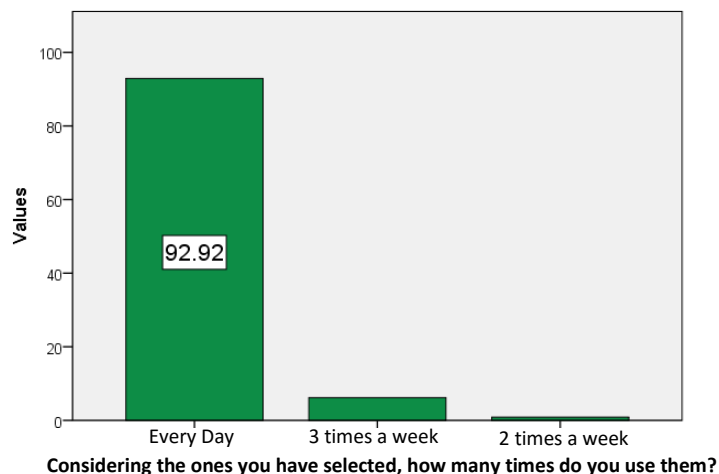


Chart 5 – Social networks frequency of use variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q7 – However, there is always a social network that is most used, so question 7 intends to study which one is more efficient, in the sense that it reaches more people due to its frequency of use. Among the 113 respondents, it was unanimous that Facebook is the social network they most use, gathering 78, 8% of the total answers, which corresponds to 89 persons. The second most used one is Instagram, with 19, 5% of the answers (22 persons). The rest of the options – Twitter, Google+ LinkedIn, Pinterest and YouTube – are less significant. As we can see on Chart 6, there are options that were not even chosen.

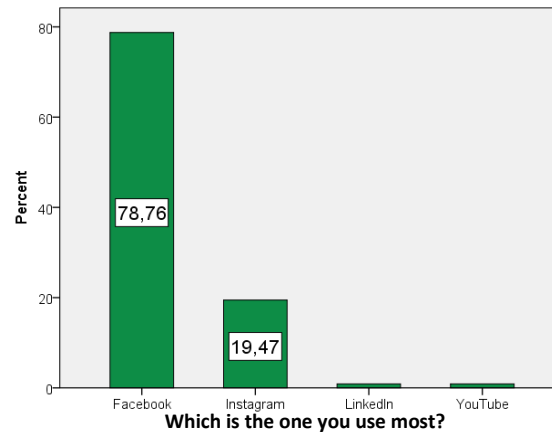


Chart 6 – Most used social network variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q8 – When they were asked how they usually access their social media, most respondents said they do it through smartphones. This corresponds to 85, 8% of the total answers (see Chart 7). 39, 8% of the respondents claimed they use laptops, while 35, 4% use desktops. Only 27, 4% of the respondents stated they access their social media through the use of tablets.

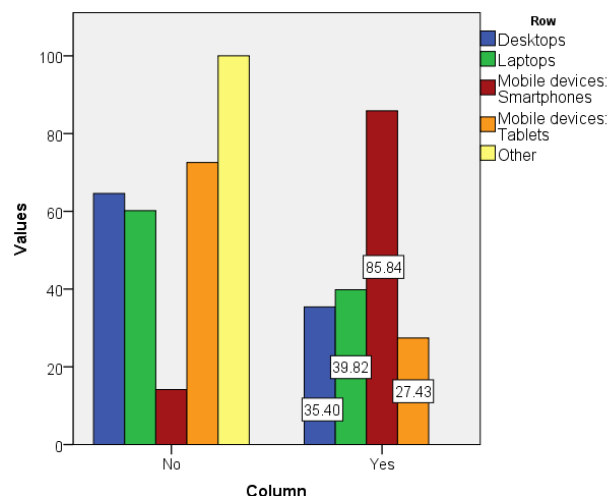


Chart 7 – Usual access to social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q9 – When asked about how they look for a brand, 84 respondents answered they do it through social networks pages. The second choice when looking for a brand is by using search engines, such as Google or Internet Explorer (78 of the respondents), followed by the use of brand websites (38 of the respondents). The less significant choices have to do with content communities and blogs/opinion leaders websites (see Chart 8).

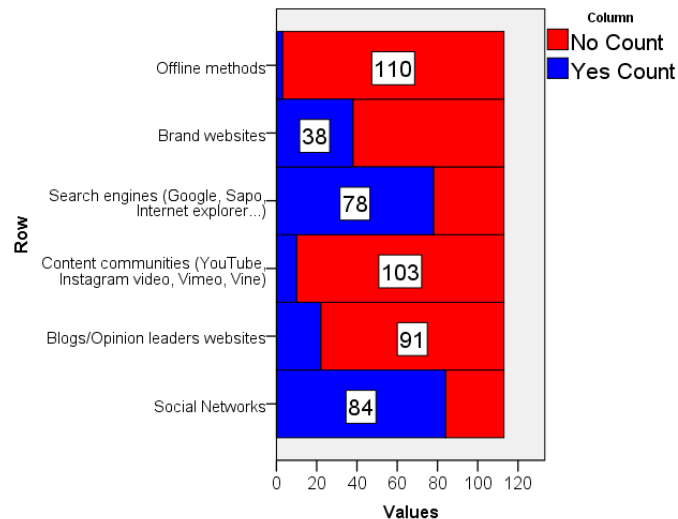


Chart 8 – Ways of looking for a brand variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q10 – The main three reasons why people want to be present on social media are to keep in touch with friends and family (74, 34%), to enjoy themselves (66, 37%) and to keep up to date with what brands are doing in real time (53, 98%). There are also other reasons to motivate people to be present on social media. However, they are less important, as we can see on Chart 9.

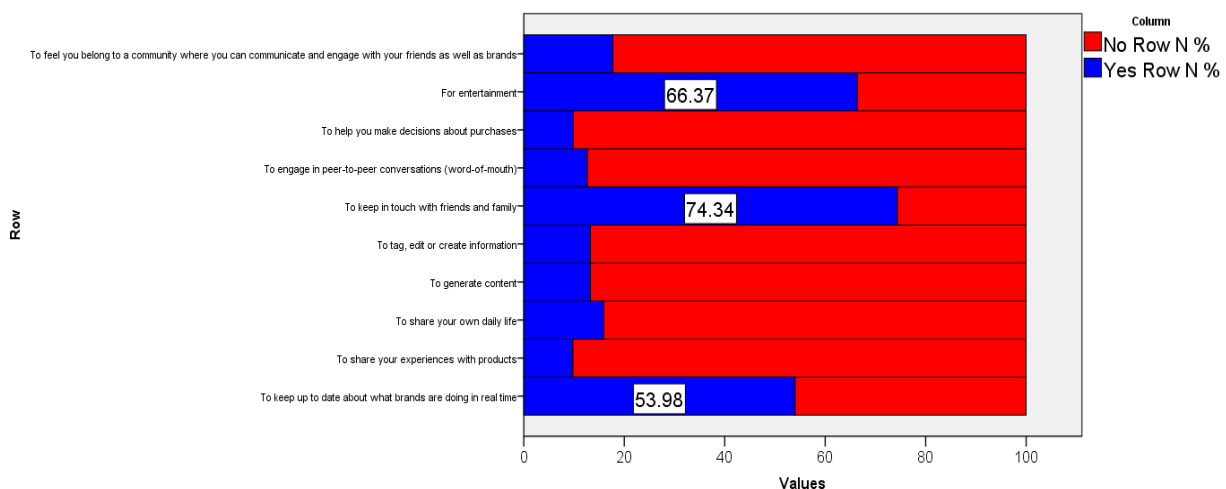


Chart 9 – Reasons for people to be present on social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q11 – As we can observe through Chart 10, almost every respondent follows brands on social media. The percentage of 92, 9% corresponds to 105 persons.

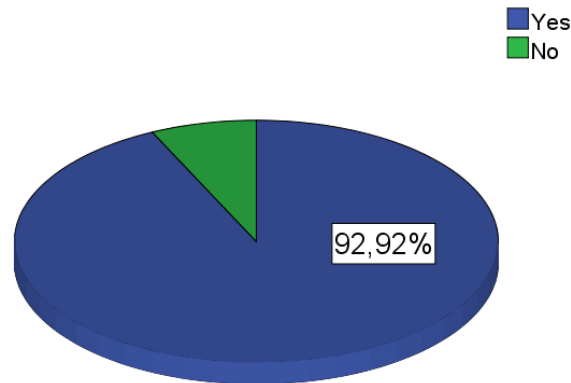


Chart 10 – Brand followers on social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q12 – Concerning those 105 who follow brands on social media, there is one type of brands that stands out from the others; that is fashion (see Chart 11). Fashion brands are the type of brands that respondents most follow, corresponding to 73 persons, which represents 68, 2% of the total. The other types of brands have a similar weight on their choices. We are referring to food brands, entertainment, events planners/places for parties and influential people, with the values ranging from 55% to 58%.

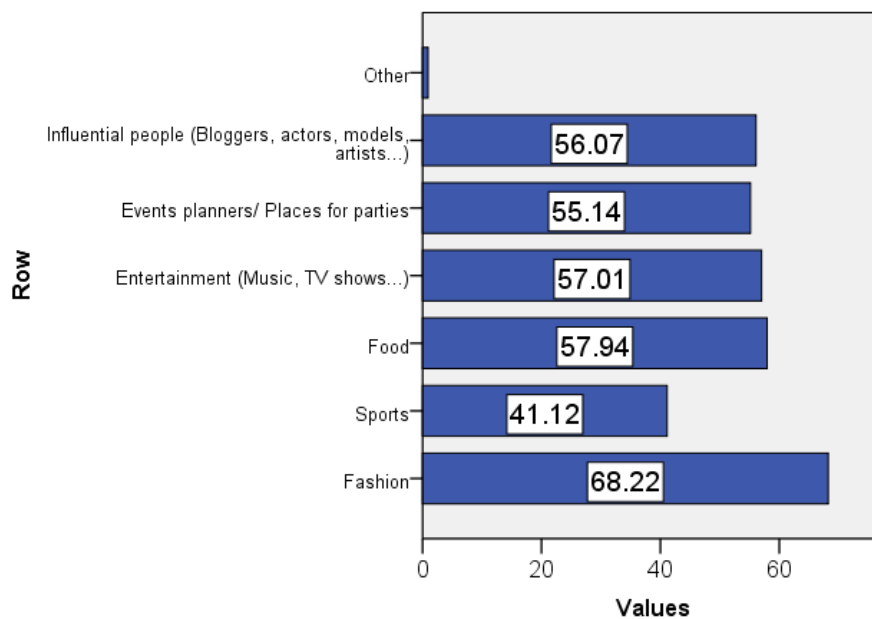


Chart 11 – Types of brands most followed variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q13 – Still regarding the 105 persons who follow brands on social media, we also want to know their reasons for doing that. As Chart 12 shows, the main reason to follow a brand, with 63 answers, is the liking of the brand (58, 9%). Another great reason, for 61 respondents, is the existence of sales/discounts/promotions (57, 01%). 49, 53% of the respondents (53 persons) follow brands because of their entertaining content and ideas. The other three most mentioned reasons are to know the latest products information (50 respondents), to learn about new products and services (40 respondents) and to be notified about special offers (40 respondents), the percentages being 46, 73%, 37, 38% and 31, 38% respectively.

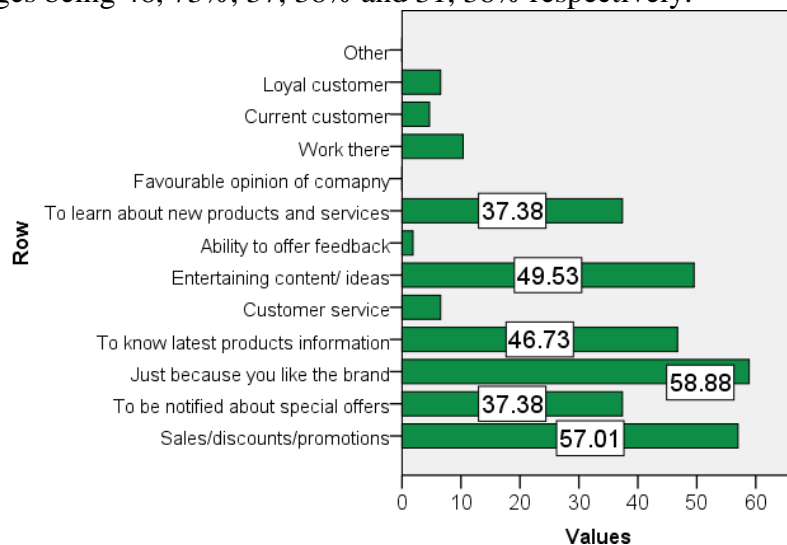


Chart 12 – Reasons for following brands on social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q14 – Regarding this question, there is no single answer that stands out from the others. However, as we can see on Chart 13, the most chosen option is “more than 10”. It means that 42 respondents follow more than 10 brands on social media, corresponding to 37, 1% of all those who follow brands. 37 persons follow between 2 and 5 brands (32, 7%) and 33 persons follow between 5 and 10 brands (29, 2%).

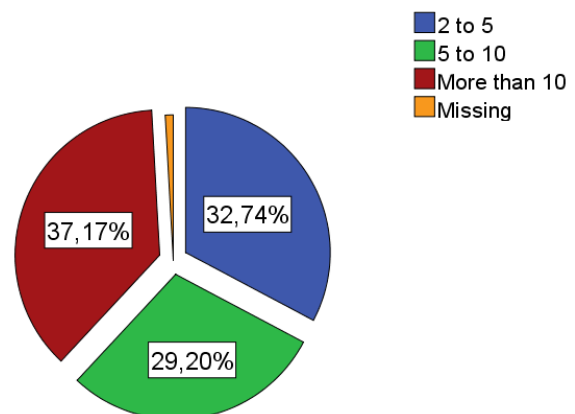


Chart 13 – Amount of brands followed variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q15 – The answer to this question shows that just one person thinks brands should not be on social media, which corresponds to 0, 9%. On the other hand, 99, 12% of the respondents have the opposite opinion (see Chart 14).

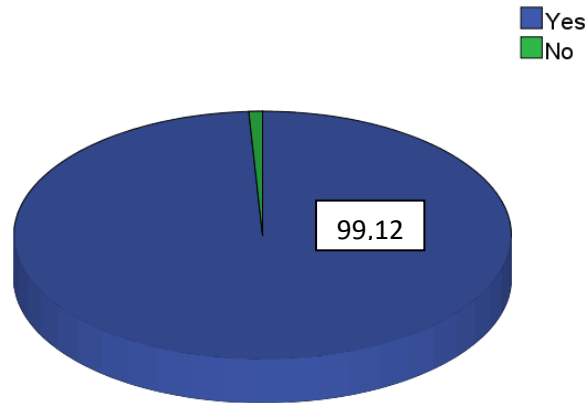


Chart 14 – The existence of brands on social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q16 – When asked about why they think brands should be on social media, 69, 03% think brands should communicate and engage with customers (78 respondents) as shown on Chart 15. The next two main reasons for brands to be on social media are to become well-known and to post information about their products and services. It corresponds to 59, 3% (67 respondents) and 58, 41% (67 respondents) of the answers, respectively.

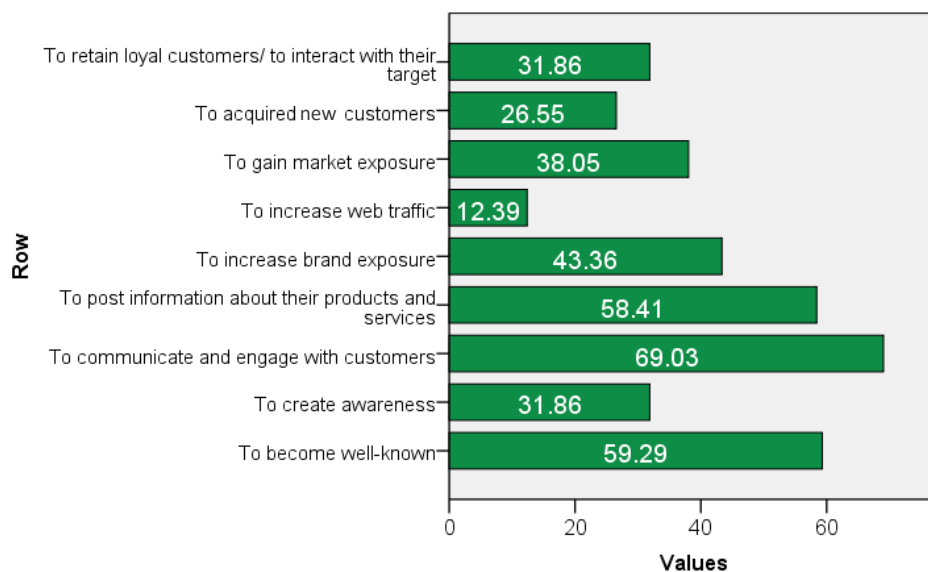


Chart 15 – Reasons for brands to exist on social media variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q17 – Most of the respondents (75, 2%), corresponding to 85 persons, have already recommended a brand Facebook page to a friend. Just 28 say they have not, which corresponds to 24, 8% of the answers, according to Chart 16.

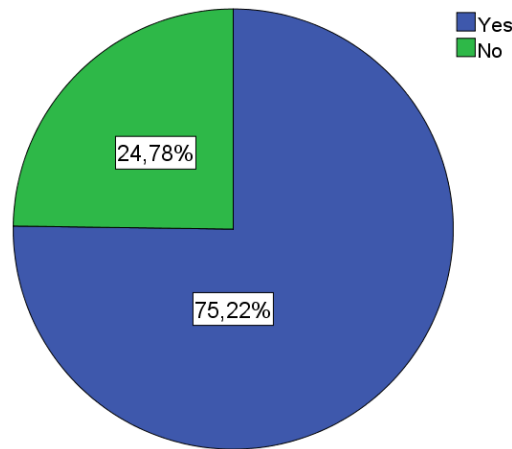


Chart 16 – Recommendation of a brand Facebook page to a friend variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q18 – As we can see on Chart 17, Facebook is the social network that most influences respondents' buying decisions. 95 of them chose Facebook, corresponding to 84, 07% of the answers. The second social network that most influences respondents is Instagram, with 41 answers, corresponding to 36, 3%.

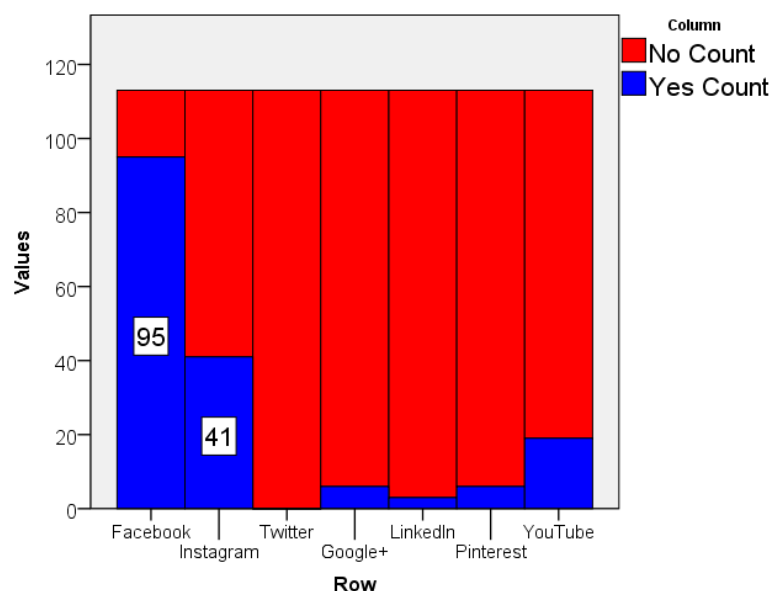


Chart 17 – Most influential social networks concerning buying decisions variable distribution (own elaboration)

c) Reactions to marketing campaigns (Q19 – Q22)

Q19 – 72 respondents usually share brands they like or their content with friends, corresponding to 63, 7% of the answers. The number of persons who answered ‘No’ to question 19 was smaller, just 41 respondents, which corresponds to 36, 3% (see Chart 18).

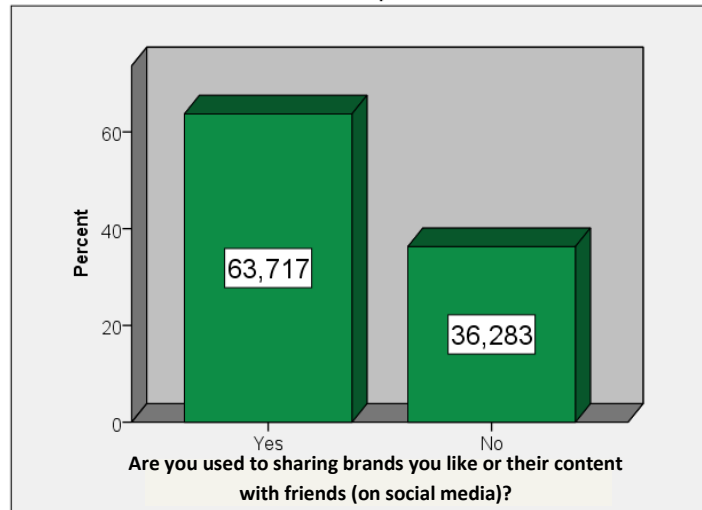


Chart 18 – Habit of sharing brands you like or their content with friends (on social media) variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q20 – Images and photos are the type of content people prefer a brand to post, with 57, 7% (65 persons) and 69,9% (79 persons) respectively. 50 persons prefer videos (44, 2%) and 40 prefer new products information (35, 4%), as Chart 19 shows.

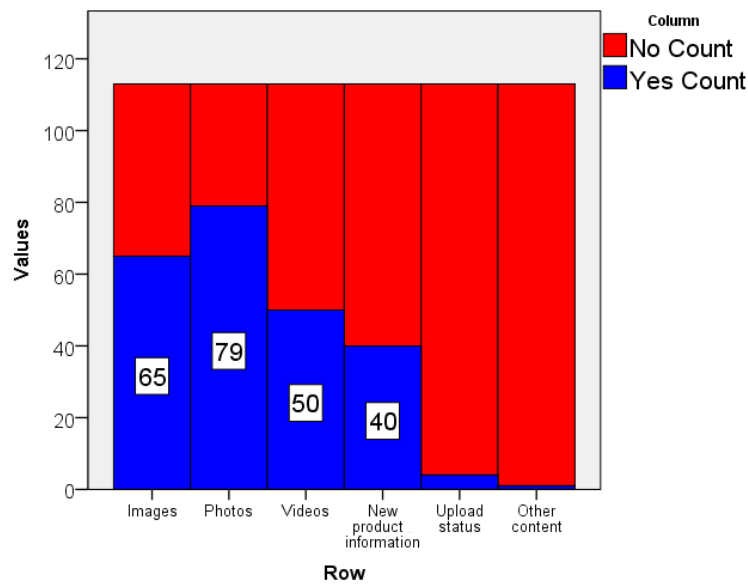


Chart 19 – Preferable contents for brands to post variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q21 – Brands need to be careful with the posts they do because, according to Chart 20, most of the respondents, that is 75 persons (66, 4%), said they have already unfollowed a brand due to their excessive number of posts.

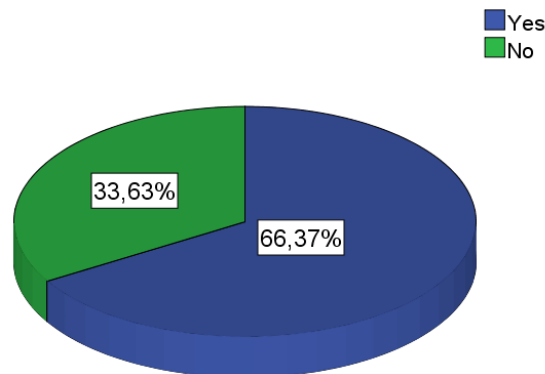


Chart 20 – Brand unfollowing due to excessive posts variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q22 – Following the previous answers, 54 of the respondents (47, 8%) think that 2 posts a day is the maximum of posts brands should do. However, 43 persons (38, 1%) claim that just 1 post a day is the ideal amount. As we can see on Chart 21, just a small percentage of 0, 9%, that is 1 person, wants a brand to do more than 5 posts a day.

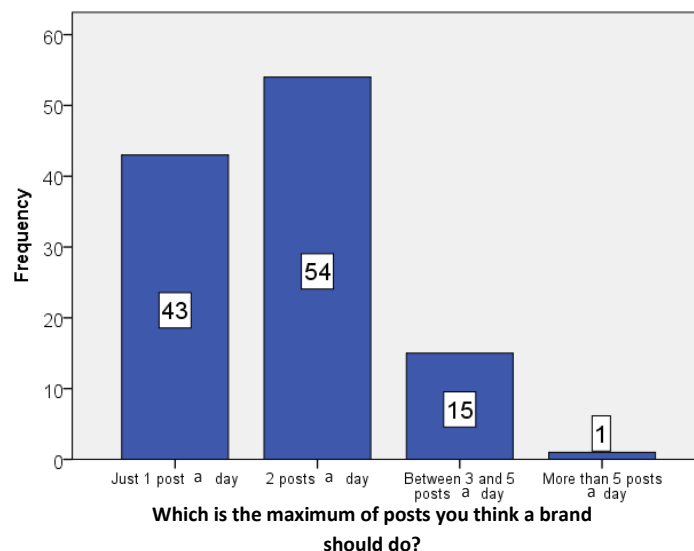


Chart 21 – Maximum of posts a day a brand should do variable distribution (own elaboration)

d) Top of mind regarding spaces for events

Q23 – This question is different, since it is an open question with a blank space for people to write their answer. It is a top of mind question because respondents are supposed to choose their top of mind brand or place for making events like, for example, weddings, summer parties or business lunches/dinners in the Beja region. After this question, the section of questions about *Quinta da Suratesta* begins. Up to here we have never referred *Quinta da Suratesta*, in order not to influence the answer to this question. But now, as we can see on Chart 22, *Quinta da Suratesta* is the place that is in the customers' minds. It stands out from the other places, as 75 respondents referred it, which corresponds to 66, 4% of the answers. The other places, as *Quinta dos Estudos*, *Monte da Diabrória*, *Herdade dos Grous* or *BejaParque Hotel* were mentioned only by 1 or 2 persons. 26, 5% of the respondents (30 persons) do not know any place, because they are the ones that do not know *Quinta da Suratesta* or any other places in Alentejo.

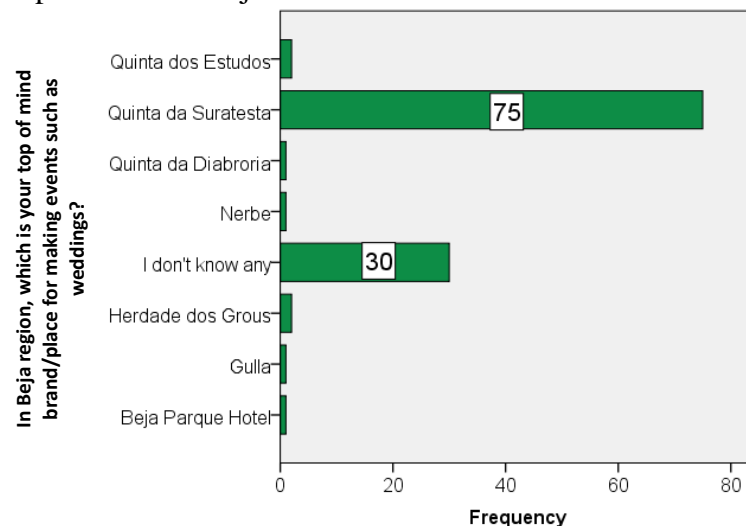


Chart 22 – Top of mind event-making brand/place in the Beja region variable distribution
(own elaboration)

e) Brand awareness (Q24 to Q28)

Q24 – This part of the questionnaire is to become aware of respondents' knowledge concerning *Quinta da Suratesta*. So, the first question is to check if the respondents know it or not. As we can observe on Chart 23, most of the respondents know *Quinta da Suratesta* (88 persons), which corresponds to 77, 9% of the answers. For the 25 persons who do not know it, the questionnaire finishes here.

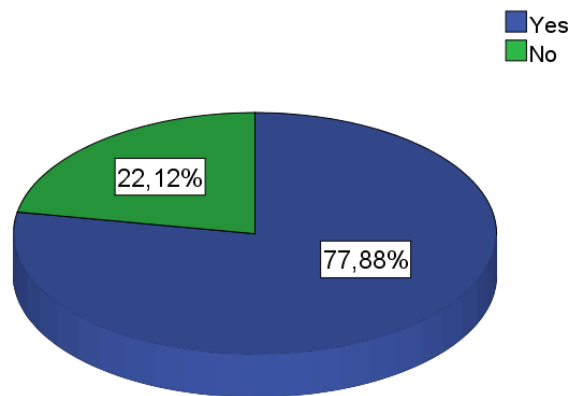


Chart 23 – Personal knowledge about *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q25 – From those 88 respondents who know *Quinta da Suratesta*, 63 persons (71, 6%) know it because they have already been there; 47 respondents (53, 4%) know about *Quinta da Suratesta* through friends, and 29 respondents (33%) know about it because of their family. The other 2 options are not so important (see Chart 24).

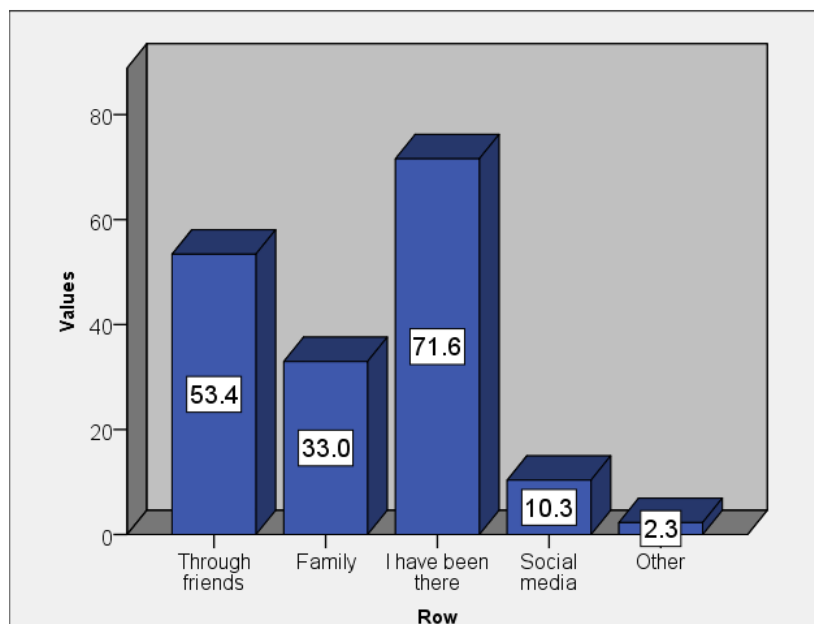


Chart 24 – Way of knowing about *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q26 – Most of the respondents who know *Quinta da Suratesta* (73 persons) follow it on Facebook. This number corresponds to 64, 6% of the answers, as Chart 25 shows.

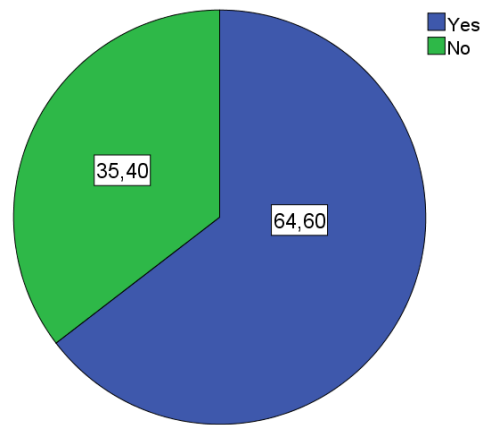


Chart 25 – *Quinta da Suratesta* followers on Facebook variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q27 – The main reason to follow *Quinta da Suratesta* on Facebook is to see the events photos (38, 94%). The next two main reasons, are because people really like the brand (34, 51%) and because they have already been there (29, 2%). There is a set of other reasons to follow it on Facebook, but they are not so important (see Chart 26).

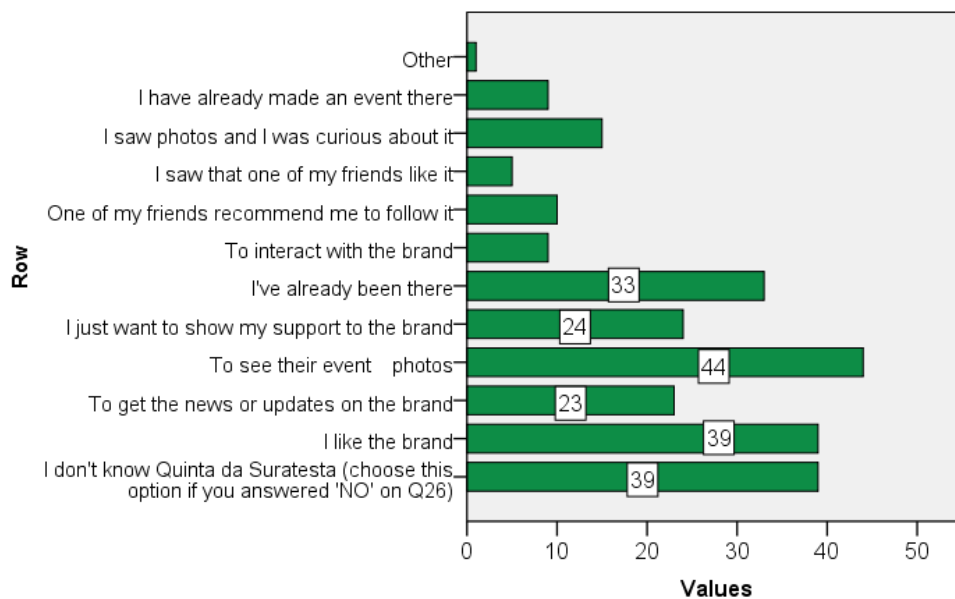


Chart 26 – Reasons for following *Quinta da Suratesta* on Facebook variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q28 – The answer to this question shows that a little bit more than half of the respondents (51, 3%) have never recommended *Quinta da Suratesta* to anyone and almost half of them

(48, 7%) have already recommended it to a friend on social media (Facebook). The percentages correspond to 58 and 55 persons respectively (see Chart 27).

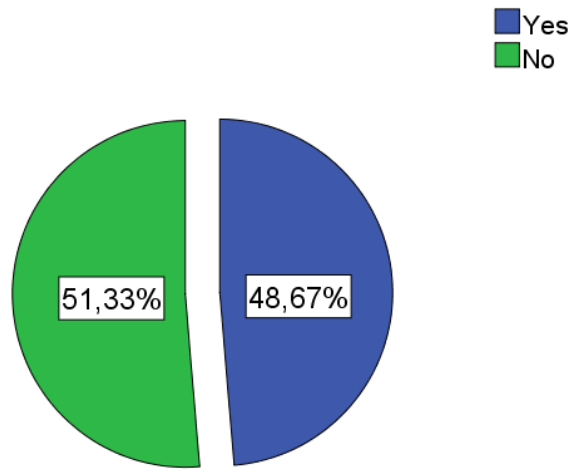


Chart 27 – Recommendation of *Quinta da Suratesta* to a friend variable distribution (own elaboration)

f) Perceptions about the brand (Q29 to Q33)

Q29 – In this question respondents were asked to classify *Quinta da Suratesta* in terms of 6 variables. According to a Likert response scale type, the answer scale goes from 1 (Bad) to 5 (Excellent) and there is an indifference point, that is ‘Do not know/Do not answer’.

Chart 28 allows us to realise that the variables that had the ‘Excellent’ classification were: the dimension of the space, with 48% of the answers, the garden, with 41% and the fact that it is a pleasant space with a pleasant environment, with 35%. These percentages mean that 54, 46 and 39 respondents chose these options, respectively. The variable Facebook was considered ‘Very good’, with 31% of the answers, which means 35 respondents. The interaction with consumers is divided between ‘Very good’ and ‘Good’, representing 25% and 21% of the answers, respectively.

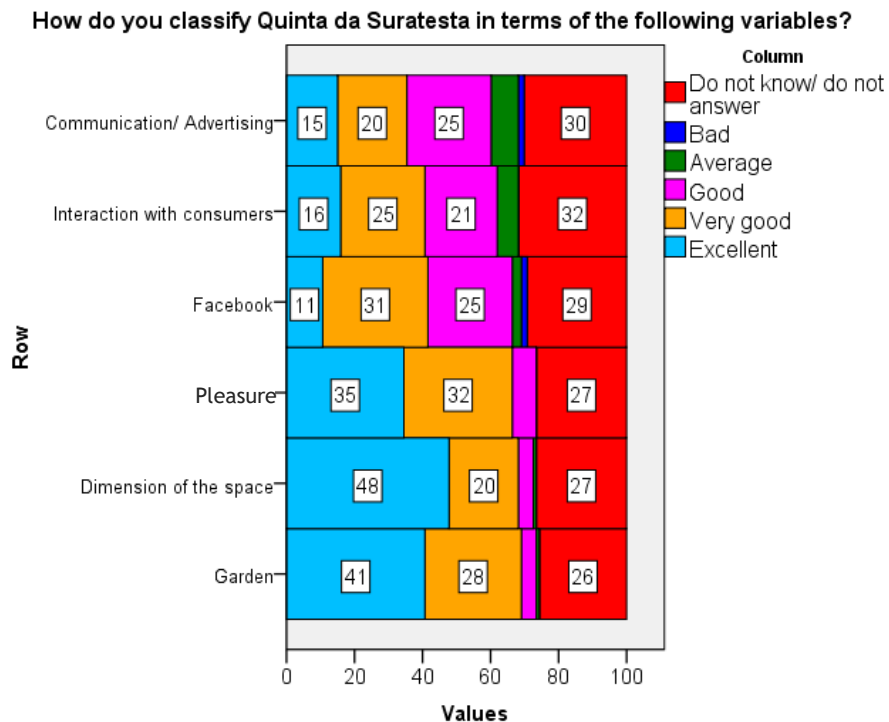


Chart 28 – Classification of *Quinta da Suratesta* according to 6 variables variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q30 – By analysing Chart 29, we can observe that the vast majority of the respondents have been in *Quinta da Suratesta*. 81 respondents answered ‘Yes’, which means 71, 7% of the answers. Just 32 respondents said that they had never been there (28, 3%).

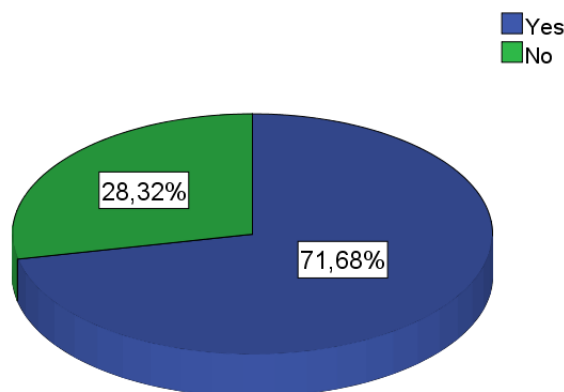


Chart 29 – Presence in *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q31 – Events in *Quinta da Suratesta* can be of many different types. So, in this question, the respondents that had already been there were asked about the type of event(s) they were in. There is one type that stands out from the others and that is weddings. 64 respondents have already been in weddings in *Quinta da Suratesta*, which corresponds to 79% of the answers. The other type of events that stands out next is summer parties, with 51%, which corresponds to the answers of 41 respondents. The other types are less significant (see Chart 30).

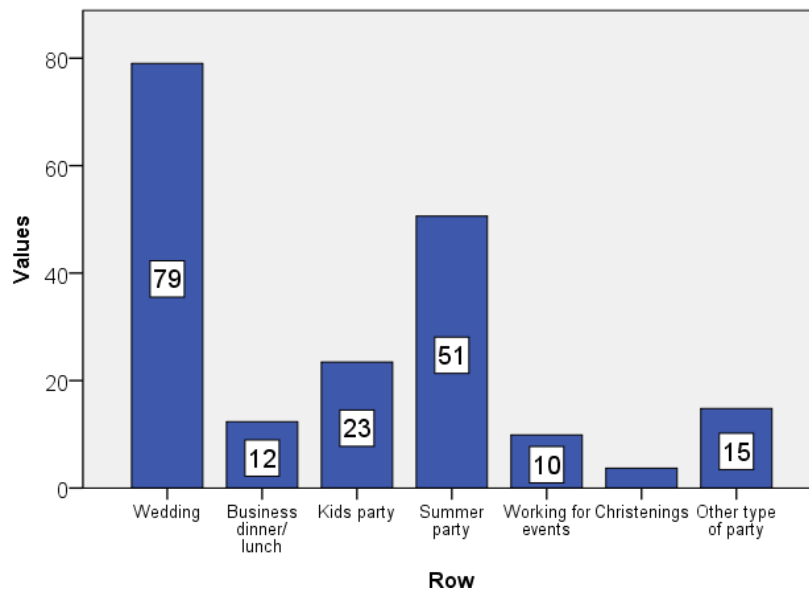


Chart 30 – Type of event(s) you were in in *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q32 – According to Chart 31, 45, 7% of the respondents have already been in *Quinta da Suratesta* more than 10 times, which corresponds to 37 persons; 17 respondents have been there more than 5 times (21%); 11 respondents answered they had been there between 3 and 5 times (13, 6%) and with this same percentage (13, 6%), also 11 persons chose the ‘more than 1’ option. Just 5 persons said they had been there only once (6, 2%).

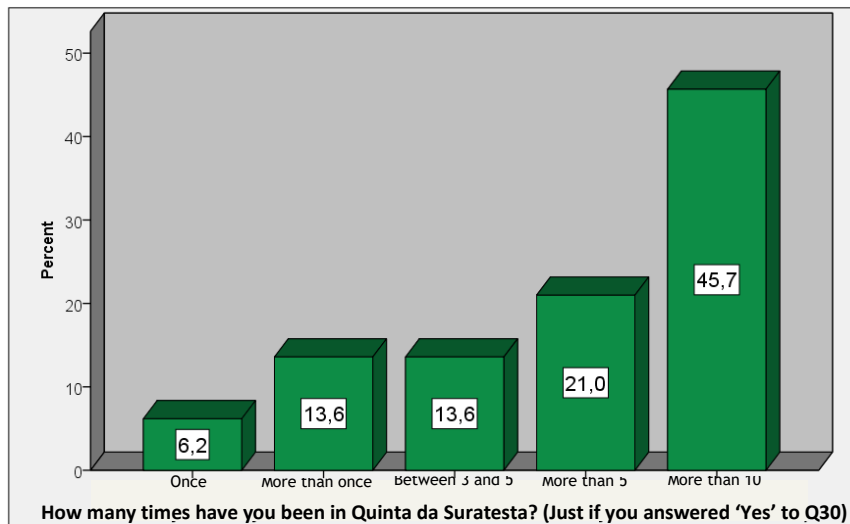


Chart 31 – Frequency of events attendance in *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

Q33 – The last question of the questionnaire intends to know if the respondents enjoyed attending events in *Quinta da Suratesta*. Every person that answered this question said they had enjoyed it. It means that 81 respondents liked *Quinta da Suratesta* when they were there, which corresponds to 72% of the answers. The percentage of 28, 3% (32 respondents) corresponds to people who did not answer because they had never been in *Quinta da Suratesta*, as we can see by confronting the answers to question 30.

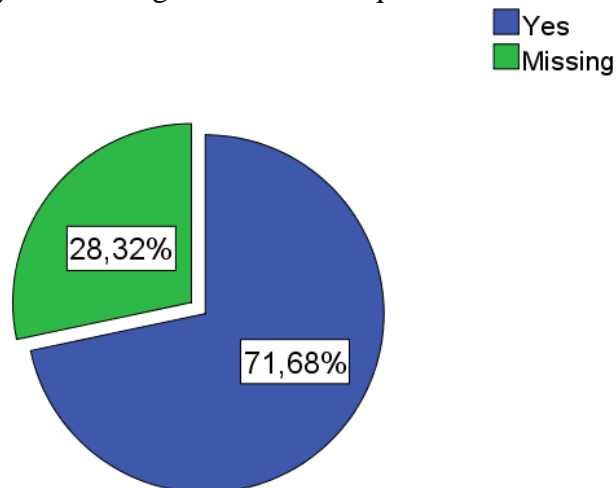


Chart 32 – Enjoyment when attending events in *Quinta da Suratesta* variable distribution (own elaboration)

8.1.2.2. BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

In this part of the study a statistical bivariate analysis was conducted, in order to study the relationship between two variables. This analysis of two variables consists on Crosstabs. It shows the relationship on a table that describes the number of times each of the possible category combinations occurred in the sample data. It is also possible to display this information on a bar chart for better interpretation.

The main objective of this analysis is to study the relationship between each age group and its behaviour on social media, as well as to take some conclusions about social media and *Quinta da Suratesta*. For this reason we decided to use the age group variable instead of the new age group variable that we used on the descriptive variable analysis.

- **Crosstabs of age and most used social networks variables:**

This analysis intends to study, depending on the age group, the social networks respondents use most, the maximum of posts they think are enough and the age group that knows *Quinta da Suratesta* better.

Q7 – Which is the one you use most?

It is important to understand which social network each age group uses most. 16 to 20 year-old people use Instagram a lot, but people between 21 and 25 and also between 26 and 30 use Facebook as their favourite social network. However, the age group between 21 and 25 years old shows an increasing use of Instagram. These are the most important groups on this analysis (see Chart 33).

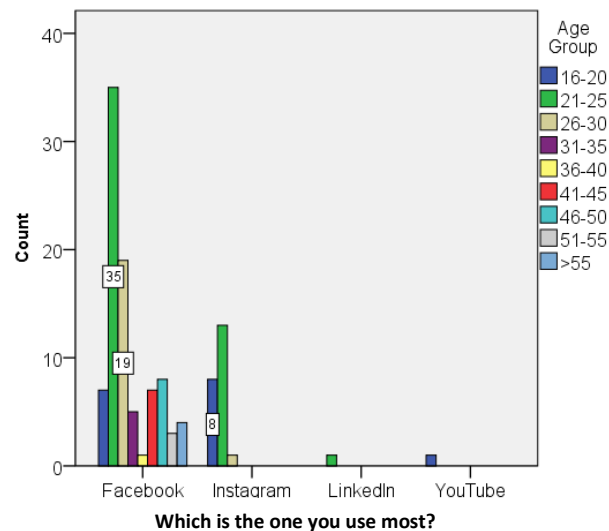


Chart 33 – Relation between age group and most used social network (own elaboration)

Q22 - Which is the maximum of posts a brand should do?

According to Chart 34, the most relevant age groups are still the first three. So, 26 respondents between 21 and 25 years old think that a brand should not do more than 2 posts a day; 10 persons between 16 and 20 years old also think a brand should do 2 posts a day. But 10 people between 26 and 30 years old consider a brand should only do 1 post a day. However, this number is very similar to the number of people (8) that think that a brand should do 2 posts a day. There are still 8 persons between 21 and 25 years old that accept 3 posts a day.

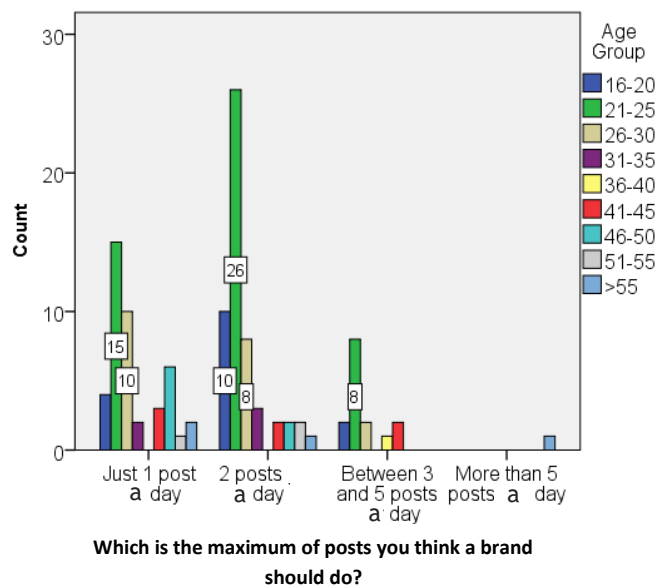


Chart 34 – Relation between age group and the maximum of posts a brand should do (own elaboration)

Q24 - Do you know *Quinta da Suratesta*?

As we can analyse on Chart 35, respondents between 21 and 25 years old are the majority regarding the answer to this question. In fact, 34 persons belonging to this age group answered ‘Yes’. 15 persons from the age group between 26 and 30 years old answered ‘Yes’ too.

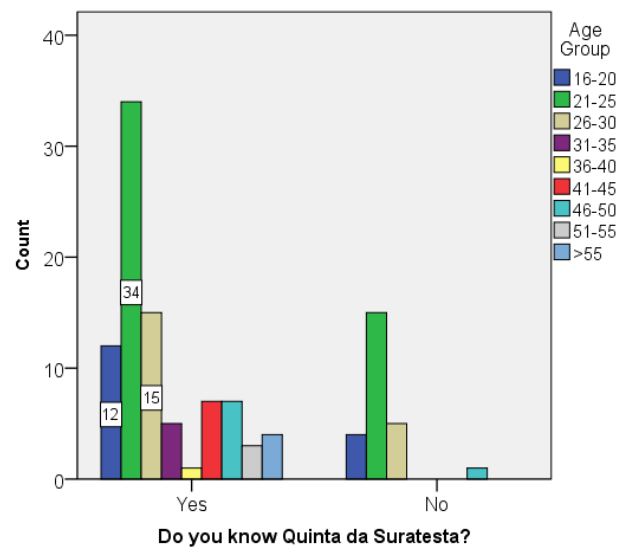


Chart 35 – Relation between age group and knowledge of *Quinta da Suratesta* (own elaboration)

- Relationships with *Quinta da Suratesta*:**

In this analysis we are supposed to discover, within the ones who follow brands, those who follow *Quinta da Suratesta*, and within the ones who recommend brands, those who have already recommended *Quinta da Suratesta* and also the cities that have referred *Quinta da Suratesta* as the top of mind brand of places and events. It is a way of becoming aware of the ones who are already linked with *Quinta da Suratesta* and the ones we still need to conquer.

As we can observe on Chart 36, from the 105 people who follow brands on social media, 71 persons follow *Quinta da Suratesta*, which is a great percentage. Just 34 respondents who follow brands do not follow *Quinta da Suratesta*, not yet at least.

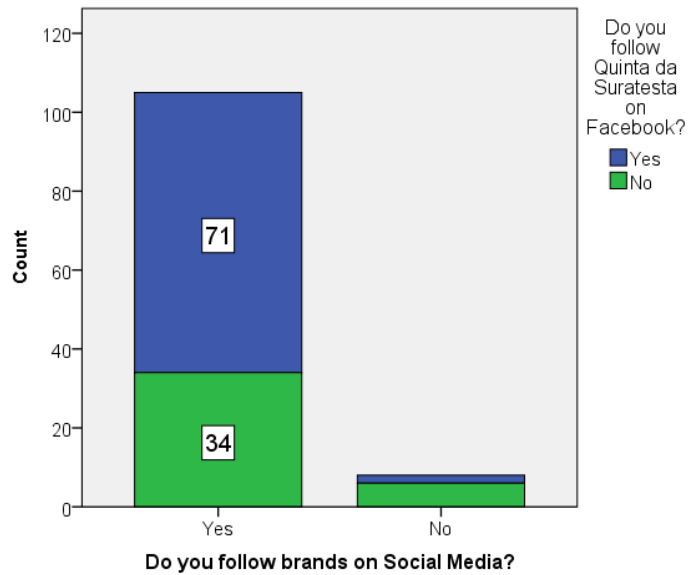


Chart 36 – Relation between following *Quinta da Suratesta* and following brands on social media (own elaboration)

Regarding recommendations, Chart 37 allows us to conclude that 48 persons who have already recommended a brand Facebook page to a friend, have already recommended *Quinta da Suratesta* too. However, although 37 respondents have already recommended a brand Facebook page, they have not recommended *Quinta da Suratesta* yet.

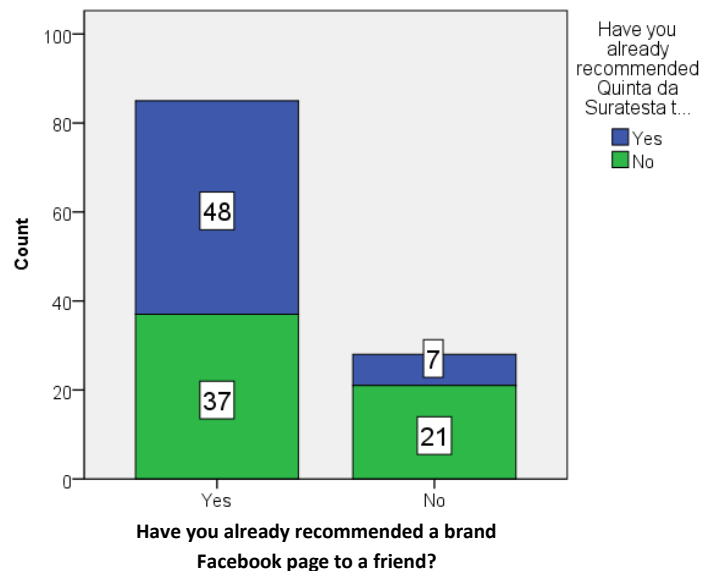


Chart 37 – Relation between recommendation of *Quinta da Suratesta* and recommendation of a brand Facebook page to a friend (own elaboration)

There is a top of mind question on the questionnaire, and the place most referred by the respondents was *Quinta da Suratesta*, as we could see on the analysis of the answers to question 23. The fact is that 75 persons answered *Quinta da Suratesta* and, from these, 43 are from Beja, 18 from Lisbon and 7 from Évora. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the place has more notoriety and is more well-known within its own city, Beja (see Chart 38). However, we hope to spread this knowledge to the other cities as well.

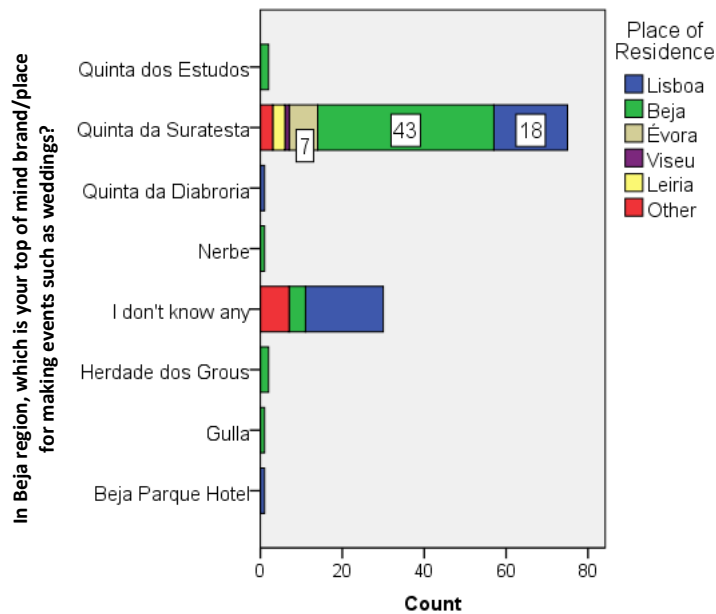


Chart 38 – Relation between place of residence and top of mind event-making brand/place in the Beja region (own elaboration)

CHAPTER 9. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this master's thesis is to develop a social media marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*, a farm in Alentejo where events such as weddings, christenings, business lunches and dinners, summer parties, Christmas parties and fund-raising parties take place.

So, the aim of this research work is to increase brand awareness, as well as the number of potential clients through developing efficient and persistent work on the social networks. This social media marketing plan will reinforce this brand on the market and stick it in the customers' minds.

However, to achieve these goals, it is first of all important to identify which types of social media should be used, having in mind its differences, as well as the main objectives of *Quinta da Suratesta*. Thus, once these crucial aspects have been defined, the most appropriate type of content to be posted becomes clear. It is also relevant to study Portuguese consumer's behaviour, especially concerning our target, in order to identify which types of social media they use most.

Besides, within a parallel goal, this plan is expected to bring higher revenues for the business by increasing the number of clients. It is also expected to increase our knowledge of the best marketing techniques to promote a brand.

CHAPTER 10. FORMS OF IMPLEMENTATION – MARKETING PLAN

This last chapter of the project thesis is the more practical one. Here strategic and operational marketing proposals will be developed, so they can be implemented on the marketing plan. The marketing plan clearly specifies how the company will achieve its strategic objectives through specific marketing strategies and tactics, having the customer as the starting point.

10.1. STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

The strategic marketing plan is sometimes referred to as a process, with segmentation being conducted first, then the selection of one or more target markets and, finally, the implementation of positioning. The goal of the STP process is to guide the organization to the development and implementation of an appropriate marketing mix – the operational marketing plan.

10.1.1. SEGMENTATION

Market segmentation is a marketing strategy that involves dividing a broad target market into subsets of consumers, who have common needs and priorities, and then designing and implementing strategies to target them. The segmentation process is composed of two steps: first segmentation variables are identified and the market is segmented; then profiles of the resulting segments are developed (Dibb *et al.*, 2012).

So, in order to define our market, the most important segmentation criteria for *Quinta da Suratesta* are:

- Demographic variables - Age, income, family size, marital status
- Geographic variables - Region
- Psychographic variables - Lifestyle
- Behaviouristic variables - Price sensitivity, benefits expectations

Segmentation criteria must be aware of the new consumer behaviour paradigms: due to the online revolution, consumers are always interacting with one another on social media. It is important to combine all these segmentation criteria to have clearly defined segment groups in order to target the marketing-mix. Each specific target will have specific characteristics, so the segments must respond differently to the different marketing-mixes.

10.1.2. TARGETING

After the market has been separated into its segments, the next step is to select a segment or a series of segments. A target market is a market segment that has been deliberately selected so that marketing efforts can be focused on it. It is a way to concentrate on the needs of a particular market segment, rather than on the overall market.

According to the criteria defined, we can identify 3 important targets to focus on:

- 1.** People between 25 and 35 years old, single (but with boyfriend/girlfriend), with a medium/high income, looking for a place to get married or to commemorate their birthday. These people are from the Alentejo region, although they may not live there (usually people marry in their own city). They do not mind paying because it is a special occasion, but they expect some benefits from the service they hired, such as a pleasant and beautiful place that gives them a unique experience they will never forget.
- 2.** Married couples, between 30 and 50 years old, with kids, looking for a place to make their kids' parties. They live in Alentejo, more specifically in Beja, and they can pay, as they have a medium/high income. They are looking for benefits, such as a pleasant and big place for kids to play.
- 3.** Companies looking for a place to make their business lunches/dinners in the Alentejo region. Usually they want something different, with pleasant green areas, that allows them to escape from their daily routines, but they are price sensitive, which means they are looking for a not too expensive place.

10.1.3. POSITIONING

The positioning is the way the brand is seen by the target. It is the place that a product or brand occupies in the customers' minds in relation to their needs and to the existing competitors. The two main dimensions of positioning are *identification* and *differentiation* (Dibb *et al.*, 2012). *Quinta da Suratesta* is identifiable by being an event management business in Beja. In this sense, it is a farm available for the organisation of events. On the other hand, differentiation is what a business can use to stand out from the rest of competition. In today's over-crowded market it is a business imperative, not only in terms of a company's success, but also for its continuing survival. Thus, *Quinta da Suratesta* differentiates from the others through its beautiful, huge and century-old gardens. It is its unique selling proposition and a competitive advantage that it is not easy to match.

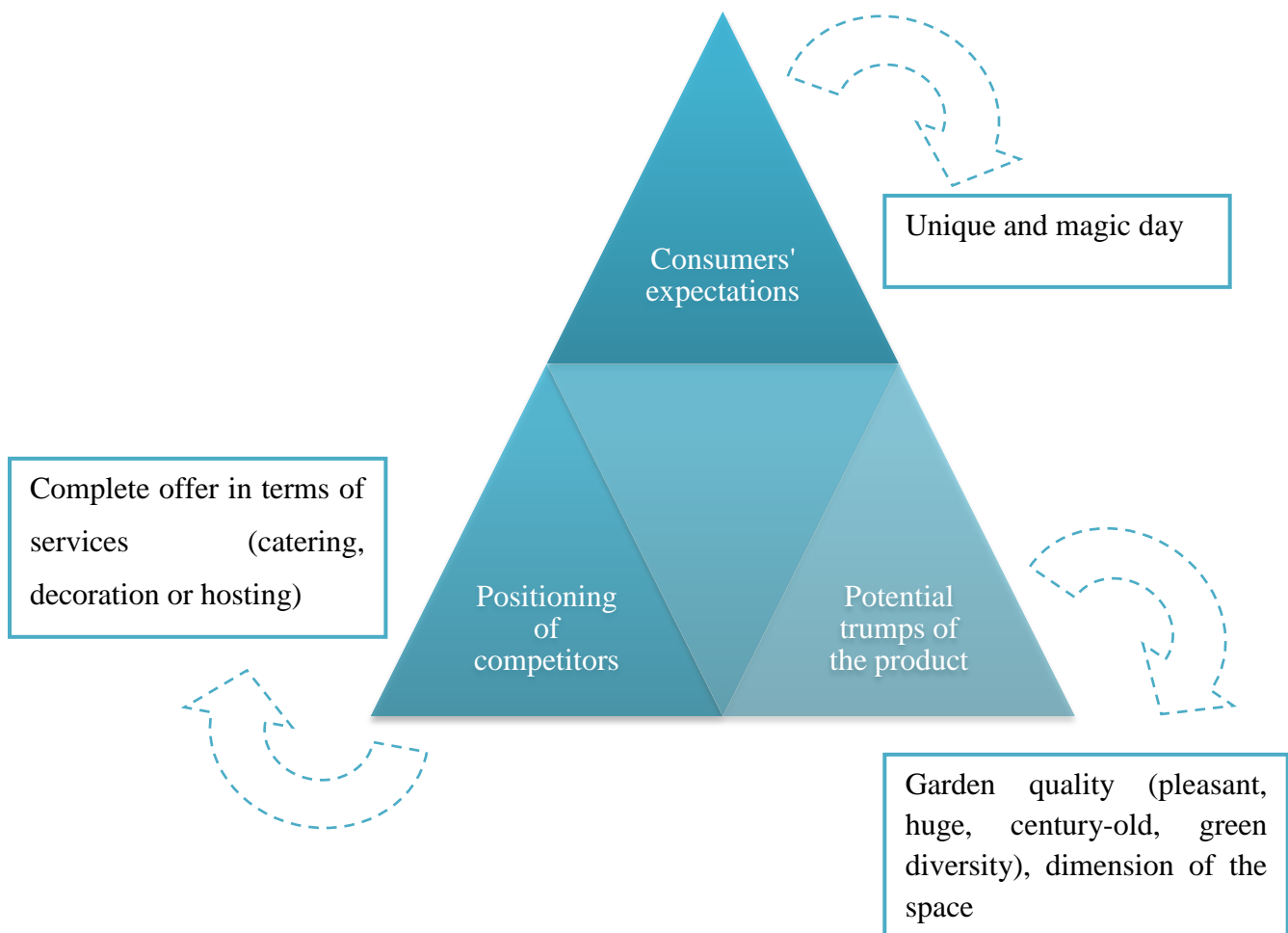


Figure 9 – The golden triangle (own elaboration)

After the definition of the golden triangle (Figure 9), in order to complete the positioning of the business, we decided to do a perceptual map (Figure 10). It shows where a product/service is “located” in the customers’ minds. Through a perceptual map we can also see where to launch a new product/service. The dimensions we chose were the quality of the garden and the dimension of the space. We chose these two because we think they are important aspects to be considered in the events business. When people are looking for a place to make an event, they carefully look for a beautiful space with a garden and the dimension of the place is chosen according to the number of their guests. As we can analyse on the map, there are two very similar competitors: *Quinta da Suratesta* and *Herdade dos Grous*.

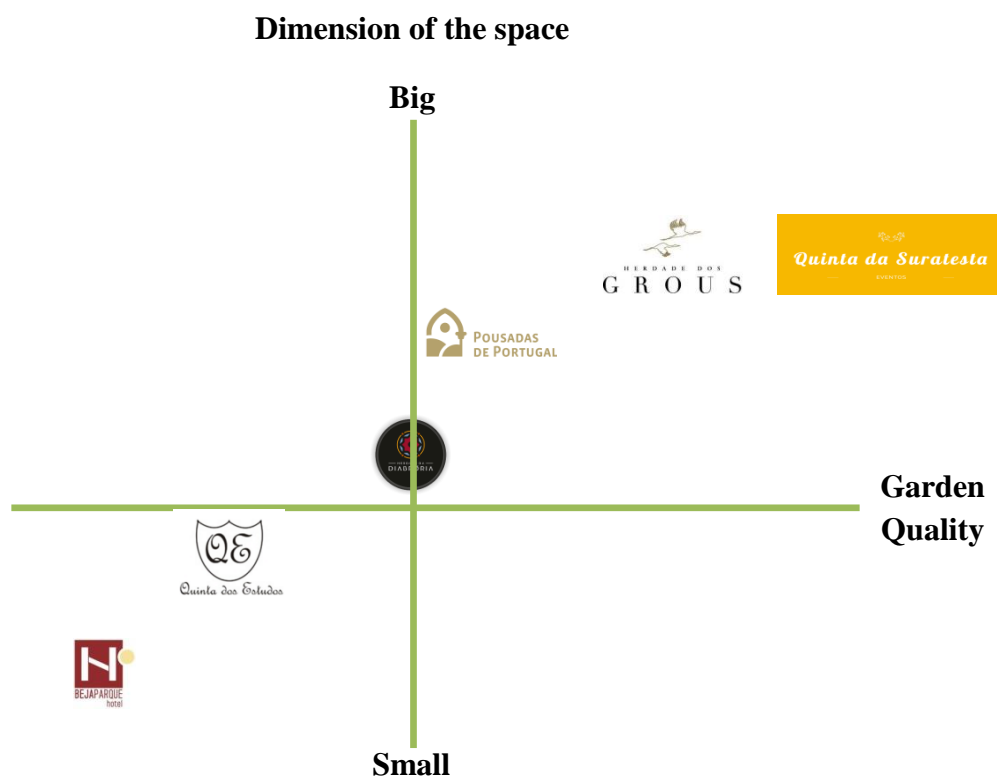


Figure 10 – Perceptual map (own elaboration)

Positioning is everything and it is in everything; if we do not do it, the market will. And it is extremely important, because the positioning of a brand, product or service influences customers’ buying decisions. So, we must define it, in order to be seen by the market the way we want and not the way consumers perceive it. After the two positioning dimensions, golden triangle and perceptual map are defined, we can now state our positioning – *Quinta da*

Suratesta is a century-old farm organising events in Beja and providing its clients a unique and magic day in its beautiful and huge gardens, like no other business does. We want to be seen as one of the best places in the region for making events, mainly weddings and summer parties. Summing up all these propositions, our positioning statement should be: “If you can dream it, we can do it.”

10.2. OPERATIONAL MARKETING PLAN

The operational marketing plan includes the business tool: marketing-mix. It is often crucial when determining a product or brand’s offer, and it is frequently associated with the four Ps: Product, Price, Place/Distribution and Promotion. However, nowadays, instead of the four Ps, we usually have the seven Ps. These include all the four Ps, plus three more, which are: People, Process and Physical Environment.

10.2.1. SERVICE

A product is seen as an item that satisfies consumers’ demands. It can be a tangible good or an intangible service. Concerning *Quinta da Suratesta*, it offers a service and, hence, it provides intangible benefits to its clients.

The level of service provided to clients is essential to understand both what the customer needs and what he wants. To better understand the service that we provide, we decided to make a characterization in terms of hierarchies of value to the customer (Kotler, 1969).

There are four levels of service. The first one is the benefit of the service, which is the same as the service base. Therefore, as we have already said on the portfolio analysis, the core service of *Quinta da Suratesta* is the renting of the space (the huge garden and the big fixed tent) in order to organise events. The second level is the tangible parts of the service, the ones we can see; in this case, it is the physical space, namely the fixed tent and the garden and its quality and cleanness. On the other hand, the third level is the intangible characteristics of the service, such as the customer service and the support to clients, the payment, the feedback and the online interaction with consumers through Facebook. The fourth and last level is the

potential service that includes possible new segments to add to the business in the future, in order to extend it. They can be catering services, decoration, music, hosting or any other. However, we will emphasise this aspect further below.

- **Branding**

It is extremely important, because it allows differentiating the brand from its competitors and it is some sort of identification of the brand. It includes some elements, such as:

Name: *Quinta da Suratesta* – it is a familiar name, because it corresponds to the name of the house.

Type of brand: it is an institutional brand, since it corresponds to the business identity.

Slogan: “If you can dream it, we can do it.” – the slogan refers to the famous statement made by Walt Disney: “If you can dream it, you can do it”.

Logo + Symbol: the logotype and the symbol are very important elements of a brand. Through them people can easily identify the brand. The symbol is composed of tree branches (on the top), because *Quinta da Suratesta* is a farm located in an open field. So, as it has a lot of trees and is surrounded by nature, we think that tree branches are linked with *Quinta da Suratesta*. The logo is always composed of words and, in this case, it is the name of the house and also the area of the business: *Quinta da Suratesta - Eventos*. The colours are white and yellow, in order to combine with the white and yellow farm house located by the side of the road and so to be easily identifiable.



Figure 11 – *Quinta da Suratesta*’s logo and symbol (own elaboration)

- **Life cycle**

Every service is subject to a life-cycle, starting with an introduction phase, followed by a growth phase, then a maturity phase and finally an eventual period of decline, as sales fall. These are the four stages in a service life cycle. *Quinta da Suratesta* is reaching its phase of

maturity, since it is in high demand among consumers. We need to be aware of it, because each stage has its own marketing strategies.

As it was said before, we have new ideas for services, in order to develop *Quinta da Suratesta*, and extend the business. So, to improve *Quinta da Suratesta*'s portfolio, these are the new services that will be offered to its clients:

- **KIDS' PARTIES**

Up to now the kids' parties organised in *Quinta da Suratesta* have been very few when compared with other types of events. Not even one a year. There are two main reasons for this: the first one is that the place is too big for kids and it has huge fix costs that are too expensive for parents to pay for their kids' parties. The second reason is that in *Quinta da Suratesta* there is not a separated small space ready to make these parties. As kids just want to have fun and play, they run everywhere and they end up messing the whole area. When it is an event with a lot of grown-up people, such as a big party, it is different, because what people pay is enough to cover all the costs and to make profit, but in the case of a kids' party we cannot ask for too much money, because nobody will accept it and so nobody will make their party here; if, on the other hand, we ask for less money, we will earn almost nothing. So, to solve this problem, we have a solution.

We can organise kids' parties but, instead of being in the fix tent, they will take place in one of the ground floor rooms of the farm house. This room is perfect for that purpose, because it has the right size for this type of parties. Another advantage is that, being on the ground floor, kids have direct access to the garden. This solution is clearly better for winter parties, because in summer parties can be outside, in the garden. We have a limited space in the garden and kids' parties can happen there.

There will be three possible services associated to these kids' parties:

1. **Small kid:** parents just rent the place and organize the part themselves;
2. **Just a kid:** parents rent not only the place, but also the decoration service for the party, expecting everything to be in accordance with the theme they want;

3. **Big kid:** parents ask for the decoration service for the party, according to the theme they want and, besides that, they also ask for the food. This last service is the most demanding one, since we are responsible for the whole organization of the party, including decoration and food.

- **DECORATION**

Another of the new services is decoration. Almost all competitors have decoration included in their offer, so it is a way of being closer to clients. It is an area that we love, so we have the right persons to do it. Besides, due to this business, we are always in contact with decoration companies and people and we have already seen a large number of events to take ideas from and to know how to do it and whom to talk to. It is a service that will start from scratch, so it is important to have a well-done and proper advertisement of the service. Until we do our first decoration work, people do not know us, so we need to gain their trust. It can be difficult at the beginning, because in this type of business nobody likes to take risks and they prefer to choose someone with notoriety and a name on the market. It is a big investment to do, no doubt, with all the materials we have to buy, but it is certainly an investment for the future.

- **THE WEDDING NIGHT**

Quinta da Suratesta still has a lot of new services to explore. One of them is to take advantage of the big house. It is a three-floor house and the three floors are liveable. But the ground floor has some rooms that are still available. The bigger one is for the kids' parties, but there is another one that looks like a separate small house, which is excellent to rent to the married couple. Thus, this new service consists of renting the small room to the bride and groom for them to sleep on their wedding night. It seems an excellent idea, since the house is on the same place as their wedding party, so they do not need to leave the place and, better than that, they do not need to be worried about the car and about what they drink throughout the night. This way the couple can enjoy the party until the end. To complete the service and only if the bride and groom want it, they may have a breakfast/brunch served in the garden as soon as they wake up. This service will be provided by an extra payment.

- **PARTNERSHIP WITH A CATERING COMPANY**

Almost every place in the market that organises events has the catering service included in its offer. *Quinta da Suratesta* has already had some proposals to make partnerships with catering companies. We think it is a good idea because it is a way of improving the available service and of becoming a stronger business on the events market. Food is always needed in every event, so it is important to be present in the offer. As *Quinta da Suratesta* is not an expert in cooking, it does not have the required human resources so, the best way to go ahead with this idea is through outsourcing. The idea is for *Quinta da Suratesta* to make a partnership with a catering company and this way it will only focus on the other core services they offer and leave the rest for those who really know about it. A possible partnership is the *Serve Bem* catering. They have already contacted *Quinta da Suratesta* with that purpose and they are the most popular ones in the region. Thus, every time there is an event in *Quinta da Suratesta*, people do not have to worry about food, because *Serve Bem* catering will be included in the offer. However, if they prefer another catering company, they can choose the one they want. The truth is that there are many people asking for catering companies and in that case we will have a solution.

- **PARTY PLANNER**

There is a reason for *Quinta da Suratesta* to try other services within the events business – in fact, when you are in the business, you make contacts and you interact with people from many different areas (catering, decoration, music, photography, flowers/plants, among others) and different companies. At the end you have an overall knowledge about the way the events market functions. Therefore, you become the right person to recommend companies for the event and to provide useful contacts. So, the party planner job fits *Quinta da Suratesta* perfectly. It can be of two types: a partial or a total party planner. The partial party planner aims at people that already have a few things organized, but they still need help to find some suppliers. The partial party planner is also important to make sure that everything goes as planned and that all suppliers respect the deadlines. The total party planner, on the other hand, implies a more complete service. It consists of a personalized clients' follow up, from the beginning of the planning up to the day of the party. Thus, we – *Quinta da Suratesta* – are responsible for the organization of the whole party, from the creation of the party's concept, to the access to great suppliers, including also the entire management of deadlines, decoration,

special details that make the difference, as well as special moments during the party, catering, music, among others. The main difference with the total party planner is that in this case we are in control of all the party steps, we help choosing all suppliers and we are responsible for the entire decoration of the place, as well as for the flowers. We want to ensure that it will be a perfect day and that everything goes well and as planned, so it will be a much more present service.

- **ANNUAL MARKET OF EVENTS DECORATION**

If there is one thing that is a very common trend and that happens very often in Portugal, it is the small markets. We are mostly talking about fashion markets, but it is a concept that is growing and that people accept very well, so it is possible to apply it to the kind of area we want. This annual small market of events decoration consists of organising a day in *Quinta da Suratesta* where the main decoration companies are present in order to show a little bit of who they are and what they do. These companies will have the opportunity to decorate parts of the place, both inside and outside. Thus, clients come to this small market and they become aware of the several decoration companies that are available on the events market. Clients can see how each company works and their own style and, as a second advantage, at the same time they can see the space *Quinta da Suratesta* has to offer. They not only have the opportunity to know the fix tent and the outside garden, but they can also realise how it looks like when it is ready for an event, already decorated and with everything in place, so it is easier to fall in love for it. Each company will pay a fix value to be present on the market and the main advantage for them and for *Quinta da Suratesta* as well is that they can all increase their number of clients.

10.2.2. PRICE

The price of a product or a service will determine how consumers perceive it. However, the intangibility of services makes it difficult for customers to perceive the real benefits of a service based on the price paid. Sometimes it is difficult to quantify the value of a service. Since *Quinta da Suratesta* is not at the beginning of its lifecycle, the price strategy is determined in terms of price competition or non-price competition. We decided to use a

strategy that combines both price competition with non-price competition. Therefore, we want to practise a price that competes directly with existing services, always considering the current economic situation but, since the price is not the most important factor, we also want to offer a differentiating service, with other conditions and more quality than competitors. Combining these two strategies, there are three different methods according to which prices can be based: costs, competition and demand. *Quinta da Suratesta* sets the price mainly based on competition. Of course it has also determined the fix and variable cost for the business, but the main factor in order to establish the price was competition. This method consists of searching for the prices of similar services with similar characteristics and conditions, not only in the Beja region, in order to perceive the value of similar offers among competitors. After comparing the prices and the offers, it is time to set a medium price for the market. Then each company can decide to set the price below the market price or above the market price. In the case of *Quinta da Suratesta*, we decided to set the price above market price. In the region of Beja, considering only the events business, we are the most expensive ones, but not much more expensive than some indirect competitors. However, it is important to take into account that no one else in that region offers the same space as we do. As it is a service, consumers compare the several offers and if they cannot see any differences, they opt for the cheaper one. It is a business where people waste a lot of money, so some of them prefer to marry in a small and not so beautiful place and pay less for that, instead of paying more and making a bigger and more beautiful party, involving other conditions that the others cannot offer. When, eventually, the price of the place is the smallest portion of the budget.

Thus, the following table presents the current prices of *Quinta da Suratesta*:

Type of Events	Number of Persons	Prices
Big events (e.g.: weddings, christenings or big dinners)	Up to 150 persons	1,500€
	More than 150 persons	10€/person
Small/medium parties (e.g.: birthday parties or business lunches)	-	500€

Table 7 – Table of prices of *Quinta da Suratesta* (own elaboration)

These prices correspond only to the service of renting the space (see Table 7). However, as we referred on the product-mix, additional services and segments to be included in the *Quinta da Suratesta* business will be developed, so there is the need to include the prices for these new services and segments. Table 8 below shows the already existing prices (that appear on

Table 7) and the new ones. The prices for the new services were calculated based on the competition and the costs.

Type of Events	Number of Persons	Prices
Big events (e.g.: weddings, christenings or big dinners)	Up to 150 persons	1,500€
	More than 150 persons	10€/person
Small/medium parties (e.g.: birthday parties or business lunches)	-	500€
Kids' parties:		
- Small kid	-	150€
- Just a kid	-	250€
- Big kid	-	350€
Decoration	-	N/A
Wedding Night	-	80€ - 100€
Partnership with a catering company	-	N/A
Party planner		N/A
Annual market of events decoration	-	60€/company

Table 8 – New table of prices of *Quinta da Suratesta* (own elaboration)

10.2.3. PLACE

The distribution of our service is not made through several channels, but through a direct distribution channel. As it is a service, the distribution is made at *Quinta da Suratesta*, where it directly reaches the final consumer (the people who rent the place for an event). However, this distribution implies a group of people – agents (decorators, catering, staff, among others) – in order to organise the event and to convey the final result to the final consumer (the people who rent the place and their guests). Therefore, it is important to notice that, in its majority, it is a B2C (business to consumer) distribution, since it has consumers/clients as the final target. Nonetheless, sometimes we make events for companies such as business lunches/dinners, and on these occasions we have a B2B (business to business) distribution. We also have an online

distribution channel. On the one hand we are not a product, so we do not sell anything online but, on the other hand, the social media are our greatest ally to “sell” our “product”. It is through Facebook that people know about us, that they see our events photos and that they also interact with us. Although people do not buy real products on our Facebook’s page, they see the service and if they are interested they talk to us and “buy” it. The same happens with the online site of the business, which will be better explained in the next part of our work, when dealing with promotion.

As it is a service, it is produced and consumed immediately at the place; there is no possibility of consuming it anywhere else, as it happens with products. The only things consumers can take home with them are memories – the good and memorable things and stories that resulted from the event.

Concerning *Quinta da Suratesta*’s physical location, the farm is in Beja, specifically 2km away from the centre of the city, on the side of the road that goes to Évora, IP2. So, it is easy to identify this white and yellow house. It has good accessibilities and a great parking lot, big enough to park all the clients’ cars.

10.2.4. PROMOTION

As one of the 4 Ps of the marketing-mix, promotion includes all activities that involve communicating with the customer about the product/service and its benefits and features. Through promotion, the company aims to attract customers’ attention and to give them sufficient information about the product/service, so as to foster enough interest to motivate them to purchase it.

To define a promotion strategy we need to establish the target, the goals, the message, the type of strategy, the promotion mix (the variables that will be adopted) and finally the schedule of the actions, the budget and the evaluation.

- **Communication target**

When creating a promotion strategy we must define its main audience. Thus, we must consider not only the ones that buy (buyers) or consume (consumers) the service, but also the ones that influence the purchase/consumption. Those that influence the purchase can be the ones that begin the decision-making process (initiators), or the ones that directly influence the consumption of the service (friends or family and prescribers). We also must consider the ones that effectively have the final opinion, deciding on which service must be acquired and consumed (decision-makers).

Therefore, according to the targeting defined previously on the strategic marketing plan, the communication audience selected is the same as the one already defined (it can be the buyer, the consumer and the decision-maker at the same time), plus the initiator, the one that influences and the prescriber, that respectively can be the buyers or a friend that suggests the idea, the one that influences can be a friend, family or a blogger and the prescriber can be some social media.

Thus, the **communication target** will be:

1. People between 25 and 35 years old, single (but with boyfriend/girlfriend), with a medium/high income, looking for a place to make their weddings or to commemorate their birthdays;
2. Married couples, between 30 and 50 years old, with kids, looking for a place to make their kids' parties;
3. Companies looking for a place to make their business lunches/dinners in the Alentejo region;
4. Friends;
5. Family;
6. Bloggers or professional advisors.

These three new targets are very useful, since one factor that leads consumers to choose a service is the old customers' experience, because they can give feedback about the service. In this sense, there is the need to maintain a relationship with them, so that the feedback continues to be transmitted positively. Hence, the service will be recommended.

- **Communication goals**

The main goals of this communication plan are:

- to increase brand awareness;
- to increase the number of potential clients (to increase sales);
- to reinforce the brand on the market (to gain exposure);
- to stick the brand in the customers' minds;
- to engage, in order to foster the relationship between the brand and consumers (to build loyalty);
- to create buzz around the brand (word-of-mouth);
- to disclose and inform about the new services;
- to show the positioning of the business (communication verbalizes the positioning and shows it);
- to become a more dynamic business.

- **Communication strategy**

As we are making a marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta* involving the social media, it is obvious that the communication strategy also concerns those social media. Therefore, *Quinta da Suratesta* will not adopt a push strategy, since it is related to a direct communication with consumers on the point of sale. The product/service arrives to consumer through the distributor or retailer and not directly from the producer. On the contrary, all the actions will be developed for the social media and so a **pull strategy** will be adopted. It consists of a direct communication from the producer to consumers, with the main purpose of establishing a trustful and closer relationship with them.

Exactly because it is a social media marketing plan, the communication will be **below the line**, due to the new opportunities that are emerging in order to create and foster relationships with consumers. According to our objectives and our strategy, this is the type of communication we want, a communication based on interaction.

- **Message**

The type of communication adopted will be a product communication, since the messages provided will be about the services, in order to promote those services, as the defined goals made clear.

The messages we want to transmit in each communication action need to be defined according to the communication goals and the target. The communication messages should be direct, of immediate perception by the receiver and they should have all the necessary information. The consumer should understand the objectives of the messages and so they should be quite clear.

Each communication will have a target and an objective, so the messages can differ somewhat; an action for a kid's party, for instance, will be different from one for a wedding. However, as this is a business about important celebrations of consumers' lives, all messages will have one thing in common: they intend to foster a closer relationship with consumers, allowing the interaction between them and the brand and, this way, using an emotional, happy, fun, friendly, close and direct tone of voice.

Thus, the messages shown on this communication plan have the objective of making consumers feel closer and directly involved with *Quinta da Suratesta*. A characteristic of the messages that shows this relationship we want to create is the slogan: "If you can dream it, we can do it." In some campaigns it will be the only message, showing that amazing and magical side of celebrating consumers' lives in *Quinta da Suratesta*.

- **Communication mix**

The communication mix is composed of eight variables: advertising, public relations, sponsorship, personal selling, direct marketing, sales promotion, digital communication and merchandising. However, as this is a social media marketing plan, we will only develop communication actions for one variable – **digital communication**.

Social media is changing the way people communicate and behave, so each business must decide what social media is expected to do for the company, and then they have to use it well and strategically. Thus, our communication plan will include the following actions:

○ WEBSITE

The website has to be done from the beginning, since *Quinta da Suratesta* does not have any website. Its main purpose is to give better information about the services offered, their prices and some contacts. It is possible to say that this is a complement of social networks, because the aim is not so much to create and foster the relationship between consumers and the brand, but essentially to give consumers more information, in order to improve that relationship. Its layout and visual appearance need to be simple and clean, to be in accordance with what we want to transmit – a simple and transparent service.

Like any other companies' websites, it will also contain some information about the business, such as its history, its mission, its vision and its location. Clients will also be able to give their feedback about their experience in *Quinta da Suratesta* and to leave their e-mail in order to receive the e-newsletter, which we are going to talk about further below.

The website will be constantly updated with photos of the events, in the form of a small portfolio, since all photos are available on the Facebook's page. Its link is <http://matildetareco.wix.com/quintadasuratesta>.

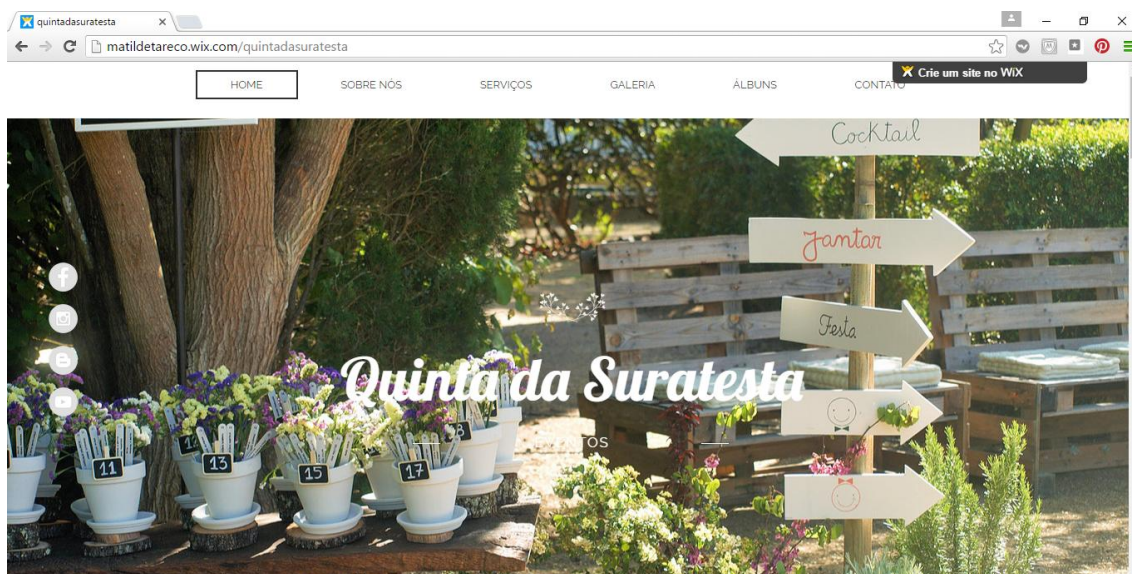


Figure 12 – Example of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s website (own elaboration)

○ **FACEBOOK**

The Facebook of *Quinta da Suratesta* has all the potential to become a good link between the company and its customers. However, its current presentation and dynamic should be improved, in order to better interact with consumers and also to become a more competitive tool.

Therefore, we need to upload the Facebook page with more information of the new activities and services. As we can see on the questionnaires answers, although there is a growing interest in some social networks, Facebook still is the one that has more registered people and the one that is most used. Its objective is to build a relationship and to promote engagement, so it is very important to spend time improving this useful asset we have at our disposal. Consumers use it every day and many times a day. They use it everywhere through their smartphones and they even assume that the Facebook is the social network that influences their buying decisions most, concerning people who follow brands on social networks. When looking for a brand, they do it through the social networks, so we really need to bet on it.

To improve the Facebook page there is the need to be more dynamic. We need to change the interaction with consumers. We need to get more followers and so we need to interact more with the existing ones and to make more regular posts. This way, this page will be more and more present on the feed news of their pages. Facebook is a viral tool – the more we interact with customers and the more posts we make, the more they will engage with us, putting a like or sharing the page. By doing this, they will take us to their friends and so we gain new followers. Consumers think that two to three posts a day is the maximum a brand should do and the content they most like to see is photos, so we need to move in that direction, becoming a more active brand.

The “new” Facebook page of *Quinta da Suratesta* has to be interactive and so it needs to have more regular posts to interact with consumers. There has to be one person responsible for updating the page frequently and responding to clients’ questions and suggestions. It can have more regular photos of the events, daily quotes to interact with customers, details of parties’ decoration, inspirations of weddings and other parties, among other posts. Another content that will be shared, whenever possible, is the blog that *Quinta da Suratesta* will go on having (it will be better explained further below). The blog will be shared on this page, in order to inform people of its existence and the blog’s posts will also be shared here. Regular contests could be done through this social media channel. A suggestion for a contest is to ask

followers to send beautiful and romantic love stories with pictures and the most voted one (with “likes” at the Facebook page) would win a romantic dinner on Valentine’s Day at *Quinta da Suratesta*. This dinner could be sponsored by the catering company we are going to make a partnership with – *Serve Bem*. Another action within this social network is to encourage consumers, when they are attending an event at *Quinta da Suratesta*, to post photos in their social networks with the hashtag #quintadasuratesta and the funniest would be posted in *Quinta da Suratesta*’s social networks.

One more action is to take advantage of advertising on Facebook. It is possible to promote our page on Facebook or to create an ad by paying a value. We can decide on the objective for wanting to create the ad and then organise everything, such as the target we want to reach, the location and the schedule. First, we will begin by creating an ad to promote the Facebook page of *Quinta da Suratesta*, as we can see on figure 13.

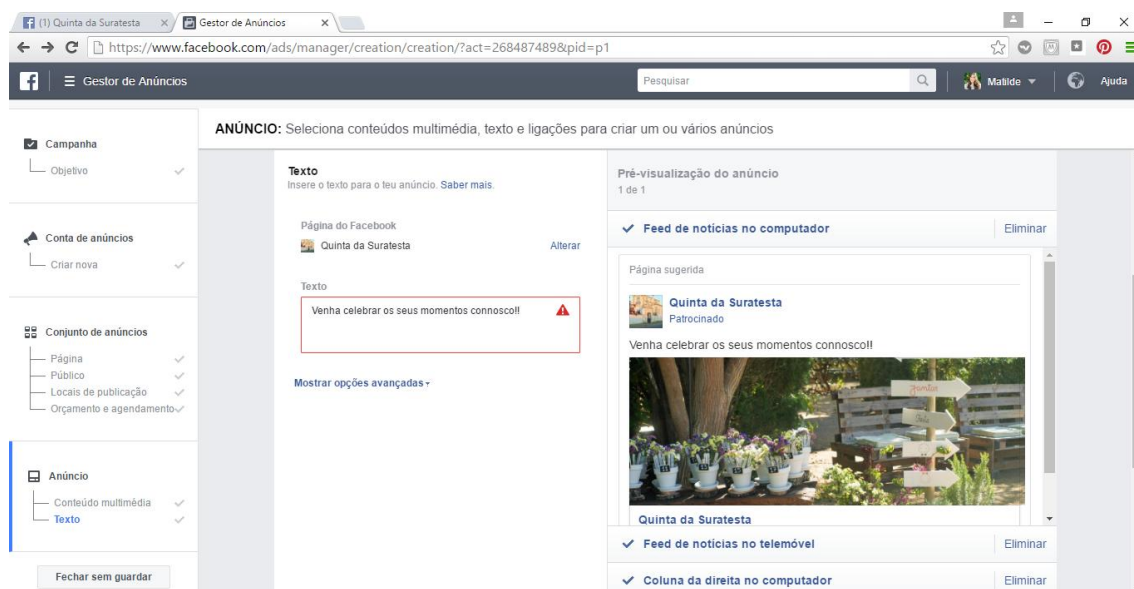


Figure 13 - Example of an ad on Facebook to promote *Quinta da Suratesta*’s page

○ INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a new tool that the business has never had. As we saw on the questionnaires, it is the second social network with more registered people and it is also the second most used. It is growing more and more and getting more followers. Nowadays it is very important to be present on Instagram, because people are becoming obsessed with the photos’ world. They

take photos of everything everywhere, they are always posting them and updating their gallery and, besides that, they want to see other people's photos.

Consumers choose Instagram to see photos, and so here, more than in Facebook, we are allowed to have more posts of photos (see figure 14). It is easy to post regular photos of the events, since the photo report of each event is composed of a significant number of elements. However, there are months with fewer events; in those months, another type of photos can be posted, such as inspiration pictures of decoration, of weddings, of parties, some pictures of the blog's posts and the events photos with the hashtag #quintadasuratesta, as already explained above, in the section about Facebook. Consumers can have the initiative to begin a conversation with the brand on the *insta direct*, in order to express their doubts or even to suggest posts, such as inspiration photos they would like to see or ideas and tips for parties. We can make some partnerships and giveaway actions. For example, we can make a partnership with the brand 'Mr. Wonderful', in order to offer one of their products, such as the wedding's diary or the honey-moon trip's diary. Consumers just have to follow both 'Mr. Wonderful' and *Quinta da Suratesta's* Instagrams, comment the post (the image of the product) made on *Quinta da Suratesta's* Instagram identifying five friends, put a like on the post and share it, on their profiles, with the tag @mrwonderful_pt, @quintadasuratesta, #mrwonderful, #quintadasuratesta. Finally, with an application of random choice, the winner will be selected. Some other contests can also be done on the Instagram page, whenever there are partnerships with other brands and according to the spread success of the business. This is an excellent way of becoming a more viral and known brand on Instagram. Its user name is *quintadasuratesta*.



Figure 14 – Example of *Quinta da Suratesta's* Instagram (own elaboration)

○ **BLOG**

More than ever before, people are always looking for new blogs and new themes to read about. They are interested in seeing what we want to offer and if they like it, they become followers. It is a powerful marketing tool to create positive word-of-mouth recommendations. The main goal of this action is to establish, build and improve meaningful relationships with consumers, in order to increase their loyalty. And, obviously, inform and advertise about the business and its services.

The name of the blog will be just *Quinta da Suratesta* (see figure 15), because it is a way of keeping the uniformity and consistency of the brand. It has the same name as the other online pages of the brand – Facebook, Instagram, YouTube channel or the website. The blog will be about the events world and it will report each event that happens in *Quinta da Suratesta*. The report will include a slogan for the event, according to the decoration and the type of event, photos of the event, as well as the bride and the wedding video in the case of a wedding, and a text describing the event. Besides that, it will also contain posts with tips for the big day, such as decoration tips and inspirations, details and special moments so that the event can be different and unique, posts about brides' dresses, brides' cakes, trends for the guests' clothes, original invitations, among other posts. But an event management business is not only made of weddings. The blog will also have posts with tips for kids' parties, ideas of thematic parties, fashion brands to make their parties, games and activities for kids to play with. And also posts about current trends to be a hit girl at parties, posts about details and inspiration photos of party decorations or garden decorations in summer or even house decorations to apply in parties. Summing up, the main topics written about on the blog will be weddings, decoration, tips, ideas and parties. The link of the blog is <http://quinta-da-suratesta1.webnode.pt/>.

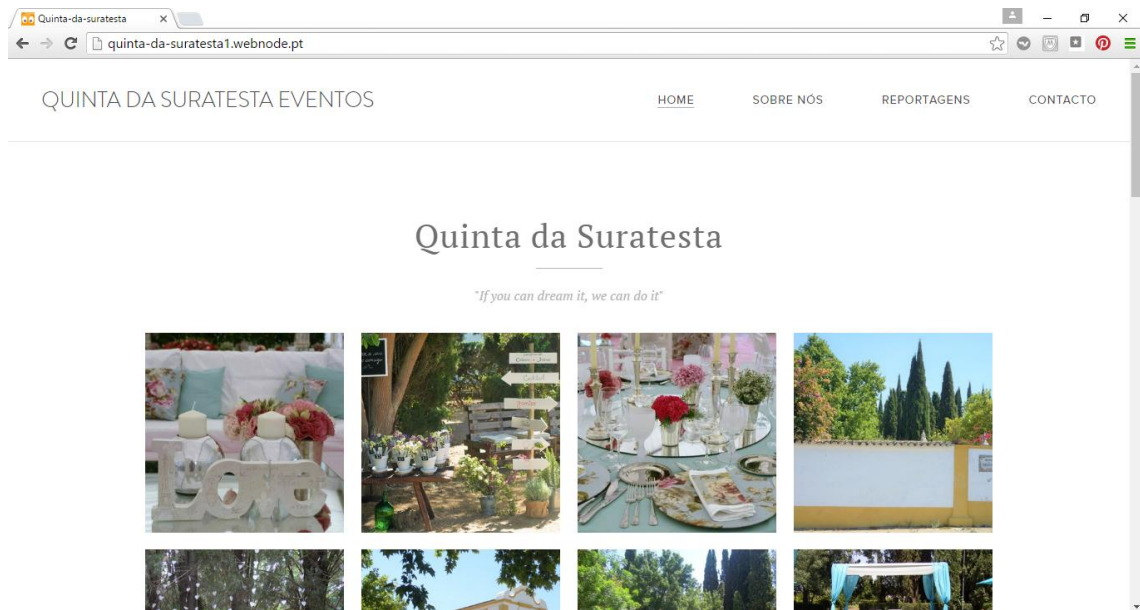


Figure 15 – Example of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s blog (own elaboration)

○ **YOUTUBE – PARTNERSHIP WITH WEDDING VIDEOS**

YouTube is a social network of online video that allows users to upload video content. In today's reality most brides and grooms buy a service of photographic report. Almost all of them are composed of photos and a video of the wedding. Usually, the video shows everything the bride and the groom do on that particular day, from the moment they are preparing themselves up to the end of the party. So the video has all the moments registered, like, for example, the bride going to church, the wedding ceremony, the wedding reception, the bride's cake, the waltz and the party all night long. We are talking about a three-minute dynamic video, summing up the wedding. All guests are willing to see it, as well as the bride and groom. So, why not have a YouTube channel to upload the videos (see figure 16)? We just need to talk to the brides and grooms and reach an agreement, so that they give us permission to publish their wedding videos on the social media. Therefore, the YouTube channel is composed of the wedding videos identified by the names of the brides and grooms, and also mentioning the names of the persons who made them, in order to advertise it. The videos will be shared on the Facebook page of *Quinta da Suratesta* and on the blog, along with the photos of the events. The YouTube link is https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1HKdHu3X3L69_91bJCnU2A.

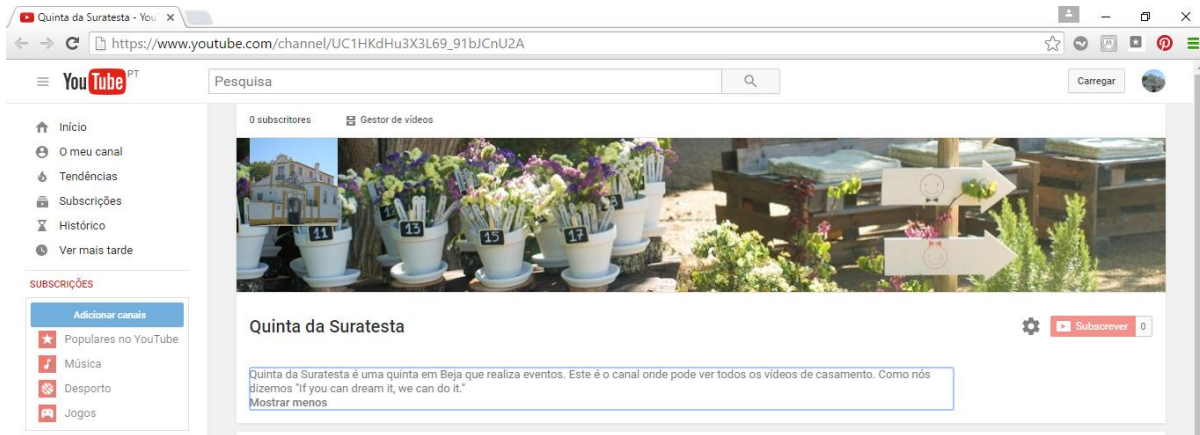


Figure 16 – Example of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s YouTube page (own elaboration)

○ MICROSITE

A microsite is an individual webpage of limited duration within an existing website. Thus, it is possible to access to this microsite through *Quinta da Suratesta*'s website (see figure 17). The microsite will be available every time there is an event in *Quinta da Suratesta*. Its content is made up of the photos of the event. As all the photos of each event are already posted on Facebook without a limited duration, the microsite will only have photos thinking about the ones who go to the website to see something about the business. However, it will be for just a limited period of two weeks per event. When the two weeks are over, the microsite disappears and the website will have just a small sample of the event's photos. Thus, if people want to see the whole photo report, they will have to go to the Facebook page of *Quinta da Suratesta*.

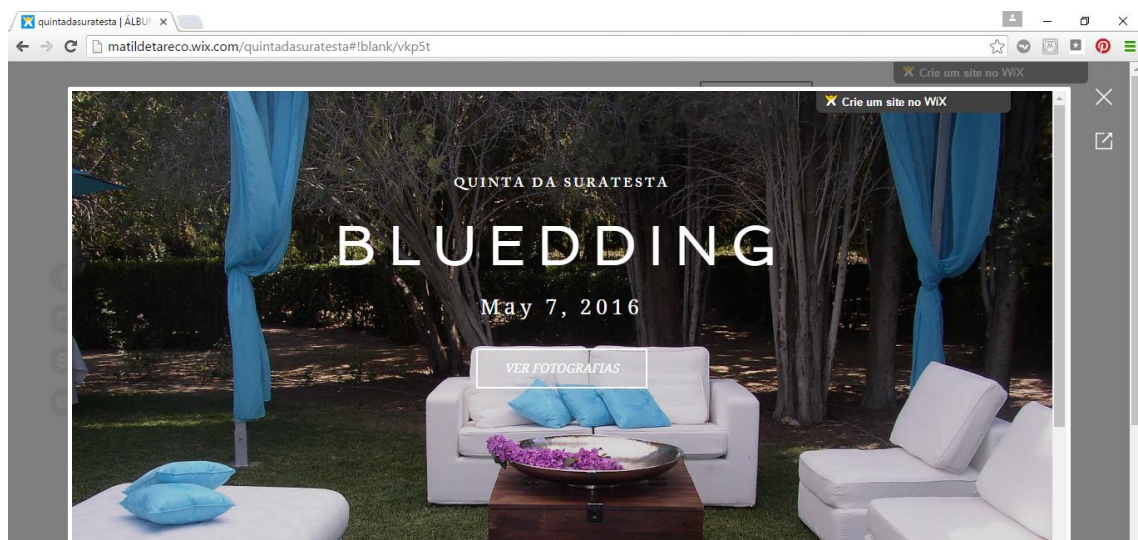


Figure 17 – Example of the microsite with photos of a wedding (own elaboration)

○ SMARTPHONE APP: “WHERE IS THE BRIDE?”

This app will only be available for weddings and only for *Quinta da Suratesta*’s grooms. It is a very simple app; it just consists of an application through which it is possible to see every step of the bride. With this app, the groom can get the bride’s location and know exactly where she is (see figure 18). If she is still at home, if she is at the hairdresser’s, if she is near the church or even if she is in the church. As the bride gets closer to the church, this app makes a countdown of the sort: “3, 2, 1 and keep calm, the bride is coming!”.

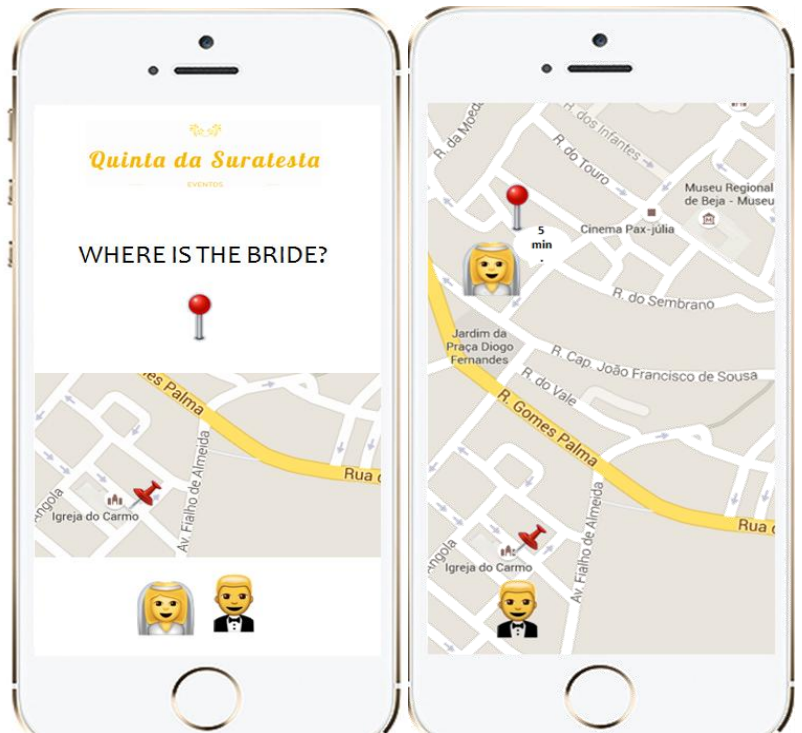


Figure 18 - Example of the app “Where is the bride?”
(own elaboration)

○ WEB DISPLAY

Web display is equivalent to digital advertising. The idea is to boost the brand through others’ websites. The best partners to work with, concerning web display, are the bloggers. It is the best way to advertise a product/service, because it often ends up in a good word-of-mouth. And most of the time consumers rely more on others’ opinions and recommendations, mainly if they are influential people, than on a simple ad.

This action consists of advertising *Quinta da Suratesta* in specific blogs that have some credibility and some followers. The type of advertising they will do is making a post talking about *Quinta da Suratesta* and its event management business. It is their function and it is what they usually do when promoting other brands. In order to become a more attractive proposal, we will invite bloggers to come to the place. This way, they can have a more personal opinion and see it with their own eyes. Every year *Quinta da Suratesta* accommodates a very requested and trendy charity summer party, so it is the perfect time to invite bloggers to go to the place, in order to experiment the magical moments that happen

there. Thus, the blogs we will make a partnership with are: *Casar com Graça*, *Blog da Carlota*, *Monozigo Sisters*, *Stylista from Maria Guedes*, *Frederica from Vanessa Martins*, *Casal Mistério* and *NiT (New in Town)*. The *Casar com Graça* blog is the one that is only about weddings, suggestions of places, dresses and decorations, tips, wedding inspiration photos and wedding reports. So, this is the blog we really want to bet on, because there is no one looking for places to marry or other services for their weddings who does not go to *Casar com Graça*. The others are trendy blogs about family, lifestyle, fitness, weekends, tourism, among other themes. They write about it and people not only read what they write, but they look for their posts, so we think there is no better digital advertising than this one.

○ **THEMATIC WEBSITES**

Quinta da Suratesta will be present on specific wedding websites. There, only the wedding side of the business will be advertised, because it is the one that gives more revenue and, at the same time, it is the one people search most. Consumers want the right place, they want it to be a magical place, so they look deeper for it. However, for now, we will only put it on free websites (for example, www.casamentos.pt), in order to see if it actually pays off the effort. Later, if it ends up being a valuable tool for the business, we will think and evaluate the hypothesis of advertising it on paid wedding websites, in order to reach more people.

○ **E-NEWSLETTER**

The e-newsletter will be made after every event, just like a small journal reporting the event. It will consist of the most important and beautiful photos of the event, the wedding video, if the event is a wedding, and a written text describing the event, as well as the catering, the music and the decoration. It is a summary of the event and of what is written on the blog about it. It will serve as a digital recall of the good moments. This e-newsletter will be sent by e-mail through the data base created by *Quinta da Suratesta*. As we have already said, there will be a place on the website available to get consumers' e-mails and, to facilitate this action even more, we will also propose it through Facebook. Thus, the ones interested in receiving it leave their e-mails there. It is a way of interacting with consumers and making them recall the memorable moments lived with their friends and family. Through it, consumers can get the news and updates of the brand and also become informed about what is happening in *Quinta*

da Suratesta. The first edition of the e-newsletter will be a short report of a wedding, as we can see in Appendix 5. There will be others about the new services and activities that *Quinta da Suratesta* will have from now on.

○ **SEO (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)**

The search engine optimization actions consist of proposing actions in order to maximize the number of times *Quinta da Suratesta* appears on searches. The objective is that every time a person searches for *Quinta da Suratesta*, it appears in a good position on the ranking of results. If we resort to this tool and to specific companies, we will improve the position of *Quinta da Suratesta* in the search engines. The main goal of this action is to increase the notoriety of the brand, as well as the number of sales.

● **Evaluation metrics**

The communication actions of a social media marketing plan must be measured. This evaluation should be done regularly, in order to see if everything is going as planned. However, each communication action has different goals so, to measure business results, such as communication effectiveness and goals achievement, there are many tools we can use according to the type of action. Although they have different goals, there are metrics that apply to different communication actions. This being so, the main measurement criteria for each action are the following:

Communication actions	Evaluation metrics
WEBSITE	Number of webpage visitors, number of clicks, number of references to the website in other social media (online/offline), number of messages.
FACEBOOK	Number of followers, number of likes, number of comments, number of shares, number of reached people by post, number of page views, number of clicks, number of likes on friends' shares, number of contacts, level of interaction and engagement.

INSTAGRAM	Number of followers, number of likes, number of comments, number of reposts, number of messages by insta-direct, level of interaction and engagement.
BLOG	Number of visits to the blog, number of comments, number of reblogs, number of references to the blog in other social media (online/offline), level of interaction and engagement.
YOUTUBE	Number of video views, number of likes, number of comments, number of page views, number of subscribers, number of times republished in other social media (online/offline), level of interaction and engagement.
MICROSITE	Number of webpage visitors, number of clicks.
SMARTPHONE APP	Number of downloads of the Smartphone application.
WEB DISPLAY	Number of likes, number of comments, number of contacts due to these posts, number of references to blog in their blogs, number of posts shared.
THEMATIC WEBSITES	Number of views, number of contacts, number of webpage visitors.
E-NEWSLETTER	Number of emails on the data-base, number of replies.
SEO (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)	Number of time people search for the brand, position of the brand on the search engines, number of clicks on the business social media pages.

Table 9 – Evaluation metrics of the communication actions (own elaboration)

- **Scheduling and budget**

In order to define the communication actions' scheduling, we need to consider the goals defined for each one and also its seasonality. Thus, there are actions that are supposed to be

done during the whole year, others need to happen daily, others are scheduled monthly and there are other very specific actions that are scheduled to take place just on a specific day or time of the year. The following chronograph (see table 10) presents the communication plan, including all the actions thought for the year 2017. Besides the scheduling, the chronograph also presents the actions' budget.

Actions	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Budget
Website													N/A
Facebook													375 €
Instagram													N/A
Blog													N/A
YouTube													N/A
Microsite													N/A
Smartphone App (launch)													N/A
Web display													140 €
Thematic websites													N/A
E-newsletter													N/A
SEO													260 €
Total:													775 €

Table 10 - Chronograph of *Quinta da Suratesta* communication actions for 2017 (own elaboration)

The value mentioned for the Facebook action concerns the paid advertising, in order to promote the page. The web display's amount of money is related to the summer charity party; 140 € is the total price of the dinner for the bloggers invited. Most values of the budget are 'N/A', either because the price is non-applicable, or because it was impossible to obtain. In this case, almost all 'N/A' values are due to the fact that they are non-applicable (Website, Instagram, Blog, YouTube, Microsite, E-newsletter and thematic websites) – these actions have no price, they are free. The total amount of the potential budget is, thus, 775 €.

10.2.5. PEOPLE

People are the company's face and thus one of its major components. It is necessary for human resources to be willing to "incorporate" the vision and mission of the company and to transmit it to the outside. It does not only matter to have a great service on the market; the level of development of the people who provide it is a key differentiating factor. They are the ones who give life to any brand and, besides that, they help spreading the business identity.

However, a business is not only made up of workers, but also of its clients. When talking about people, consumers are another key factor in a business.

Quinta da Suratesta is a small, familiar business, so it does not have many persons involved. It is a small team, composed only of family members. Yet, it also has other human resources, such as the gardener or the housekeepers. Employees should be as prepared as possible to respond to any situation that may arise. As it is a personal business, each person is committed to it, showing a knowledge that nobody else has about it. It is important to have a great interaction with consumers because, after all, this interaction reflects the brand's image. The focus of *Quinta da Suratesta* is always the consumer and that is why we want to improve our social media interaction with them, because nowadays the new technologies make it easier to reach them.

10.2.6. PROCESS

The process of *Quinta da Suratesta*'s business is very simple, since it is not a product, but a service of events. The process is how the product/service reaches the market, from the producer to the consumer. In this case, the process begins on our social network Facebook, because it is through it that we interact with consumers and it is where they can know about *Quinta da Suratesta*. However, although the interaction with clients is usually made through Facebook, it can also be done by phone. Afterwards, people come to the place in order to know it, or just to see it. The next and last step is the event's day, which is actually when we provide our service. Instead of the Facebook, the process can begin in the place itself, in any event. Nevertheless, after that usually comes the contact by Facebook or by phone. And then all the process is repeated. In fact, one of the main characteristics of this process is the advertising on Facebook; it is really a viral platform that reaches more and more people.

However, considering the new proposals on this communication plan, the process can begin not only on the Facebook, but also on the website, the Instagram or even on the blog.

10.2.7. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Due to the intangibility of services, it is more difficult for consumers to measure their quality, when still in the negotiation phase. Most of the times, in this type of business, consumers try to measure tangible evidences about the service to help them assess it. These tangible evidences consist of the physical environment of the business. And by that we mean everything a customer perceives right from the moment he establishes a contact with the company. Usually it begins at the shop or at the office. Concerning *Quinta da Suratesta*, there is no shop, because there are no products involved and its office is the place of the events itself – *Quinta da Suratesta*. Thus, when people assess the physical environment, they evaluate the place and its conditions. Everything matters, such as the way the company interacts with consumers, the way they present the place to clients, the place's design, its environment, its quality, its cleanliness, the employees, the speed of the service and of the resolution of eventual problems and even the dynamic and appearance of their social media. All these factors naturally influence the perception consumers have of *Quinta da Suratesta* and they help comparing it with other event businesses.

CHAPTER 11. CONCLUSION

The main objective of this master's thesis is to develop a social media marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*. In order to achieve this goal there are some steps that need to be followed.

Firstly, a literature review was conducted, in order to gather proper and scientific background information related to the project. Thus, a research was carried out on the main topics concerning a marketing plan, the evolution of marketing, digital marketing, the new era of the Internet, social media, integrated marketing communications, consumer behaviour on social media, word-of-mouth, event management, event tourism, e-tourism and the event market in Portugal.

To complement the previous study, an external analysis of the market and competition, an internal analysis of the organization and its portfolio, and a competitive analysis were undertaken.

The market analysis, in a macro environment, concluded that, due to the political instability and the current economic situation, the Portuguese market of events is being affected. However, we can see that the unemployment rate is decreasing and, on the contrary, the purchase power is increasing. In spite of that, people do not want to waste money on a wedding, so the number of weddings is decreasing. The good news is that Beja is the city in Alentejo region where more weddings are celebrated. Yet, the population is becoming older, which means that this number is decreasing. Concerning the technological environment, there is a chance to take advantage of this new era of the Internet and social media, in order to better engage and interact with consumers. In a micro environment, on the other hand, the event tourism market is growing at a large pace. The Portuguese market is growing and it receives important events more and more. Events are very important for brand communication; they have more weight within the communication strategies than ever before. This market is fragmented, in the sense that it has many types of events and many brands working in the area, with a lot of services available. It is an industry with a high level of attractiveness.

Concerning the external analysis, *Quinta da Suratesta* has some competitors that provide the same service in the region of Beja. Its competitors fall into 4 categories: farms, homesteads,

hotels and *pousadas*. The direct competitors are *Quinta dos Estudos*, *Monte da Diabrória* and *Herdade dos Grous*. And the indirect ones are *BejaParque Hotel* and *Pousada de S. Francisco*. These last two are indirect competitors because events are not their core business. According to the dimension of the space and the beauty of the garden, the one which is more similar to *Quinta da Suratesta* is *Herdade dos Grous*.

As far as the internal analysis is concerned, *Quinta da Suratesta* is a Portuguese farm in Beja that began its event management business in 2003. The objective is to provide a beautiful, large, green space, so that amazing events can be organised. Its competitive advantage is its great capacity to accommodate large numbers of people and its huge and beautiful gardens. The market's main opportunities for this project thesis are the good weather conditions in Portugal, the growing event and tourism industry and the increasing use of social media and the changing of consumer behaviour. Its main threats are the business seasonality, the high maintenance costs and the current economic and political situation. The most important critical success factors for the event market are the dimension of the garden, its diversity, the quality of the offers, the history around the place and the big capacity to accommodate people.

The previous analysis, along with the questionnaires and the interviews, is a useful part of this thesis because, based on it, we can take decisions concerning the implementation proposal. The questionnaire analysis showed that everybody is present on social networks and the ones with more people registered are first of all Facebook and then Instagram. These two are also the ones that respondents most use; however, Facebook has a much bigger percentage of use. People normally use them every day, mainly through their smartphones. They even claimed they use the social networks when looking for a brand. The main reason for them to be present on social media is to keep in touch with friends and family. Other reasons also very much mentioned have to do with entertainment and with keeping up to date with what brands are doing in real time. The fact is that, although not all respondents follow brands on Facebook, almost everyone (93%) does and these ones follow more than 10 brands, including mainly fashion brands and influential people, such as bloggers. They think a brand should do just two posts a day, if possible showing photos, but mostly they consider brands should be on social media mainly to communicate and engage with customers. Concerning *Quinta da Suratesta*, most of the respondents know it and the main reason they follow it on Facebook is to see their events' photos.

The main conclusions to take from the interviews concerning other places in the region is that some of them mostly organise weddings and celebrations related to birthdays and people's lives, while others focus more on activities, promotions and workshops for companies. Almost all of them suffer from the same problem, and that is seasonality, because there is a time of the year – clearly summer – when more events occur. However, this is not a crucial factor conditioning their business, because they always try to develop strategies to fight against seasonality. The place that accommodates more people is *Pousada de S. Francisco*, which has a capacity for 450 persons. Some of them not only rent their space, but they also have services such as catering, decoration or even hosting. The consumer profile differs from place to place, but there is one characteristic in common – the way people contact these places is usually by e-mail or by mobile phone. Conclusions about the frequent use of the social networks show that the main goal is to promote the place and the business, to inform about their promotions and also to interact with consumers. Concerning the interviews applied to the catering and decoration companies, we can realise that the places where they organise more events are *Quinta da Suratesta* and *Quinta dos Estudos*. The reason to choose *Quinta da Suratesta* has to do with its capacity to accommodate large numbers of people and also with the fact that it is the most beautiful place in the area. These characteristics are also what they consider to be the main critical success factors in the case of *Quinta da Suratesta*.

The implementation proposal of this master's thesis is divided into the strategic marketing plan and the operational marketing plan. The strategic marketing plan allowed us to take decisions about segmentation, targeting and positioning. The segmentation defined led to the definition of three main targets. In terms of positioning, *Quinta da Suratesta* wants to be seen and identified as one of the best places for organising events in the region; its positioning statement is "If you can dream it, we can do it". We can say that *Quinta da Suratesta* differentiates itself from the others through its beautiful, huge and century-old gardens.

The operational plan includes the development of the marketing-mix, and so we decided to work based on the existence of the 7 Ps, instead of only the 4 Ps. The main service recommendations we created were kids' parties and their organization and decoration, a decoration service, the wedding night, a partnership with a catering company, which means *Quinta da Suratesta* can start offering a catering service as well, the party planner service and finally the annual market of events' decoration. Besides all this, it keeps organising events such as, for instance, weddings, birthday parties and business lunches. Concerning prices, the services already provided maintain the same values and to the new services prices were

applied according to competition, the already existing services and costs. In terms of the place, as we are a service, the distribution is made at *Quinta da Suratesta*, where it reaches the final consumer directly – so, we are talking about a direct distribution channel. However, we also have an online distribution channel, since the social media are our greatest allies in what concerns the “selling” of our “product”. It is through Facebook that people know about us, see our events’ photos and also interact with us. From now on, as we explained on the part about promotion, Facebook is not going to be our unique online channel, as we have developed other online social media resources in order to “sell” our service. Thus, as far as our communication actions are concerned, we are going to: create a website, improve the Facebook, create an Instagram, a Blog, an YouTube channel, a microsite with the events’ photos, a smartphone app, web display actions with bloggers, advertise in thematic websites as in websites of events to promote the place, create an E-newsletter and, at last, search engine optimization (SEO) actions. The main goals of this communication plan are to increase brand awareness, to enlarge the number of potential clients, to gain exposure, to build loyalty and to create buzz around the brand. It is settled up to the year 2017. The messages provided on this communication plan have the objective of making consumers feel closer and more and more involved with *Quinta da Suratesta*, using an emotional, happy, fun, friendly, close and direct tone of voice. For each of these communication actions a budget and a schedule were defined, in order to better plan the time of the actions. Some metrics were defined too, so as to measure the actions’ results. In fact, the metrics allow us to check if the goals are being achieved as planned.

11.1. LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

Through the development of this project thesis we found some limitations. It all began in the literature review, when we started searching for the scientific papers. It was a difficult task to find journals and scientific papers on the events market. However, we had to surpass this difficulty and find good and relevant articles about the topic.

Further on, when developing the data collection of the primary data – questionnaires and interviews – we found some financial and time constraints. Those constraints limited the number of questionnaires delivered, as well as the number of interviews. As it was not possible to collect data from the entire population, we selected a sample and used the

convenience sampling method. This enabled us to reduce the time limitation and the overall costs. Another limitation due to this sample method and the lack of time we experienced was that the results of this research are merely indicative and not representative of the universe, which necessarily affects the results. The in-depth interviews were also conditioned by time constraints; it was impossible to make as many interviews as we needed; on the other hand, some places had no time or availability to receive us and to talk to us.

Still another limitation was to find current data about the events' market in Portugal for the external analysis. Concerning the competition analysis, we did not find the amount of information we wanted, because not all places were available to provide it.

In relation to the implementation proposal, the main limitations we found were related to the prices of the services and of the actions of the communication plan. It was not an easy task because, due to time constraints, it was not possible to contact all companies that could provide budgets for each action. Besides, some companies we contacted were not available to provide that information.

11.2. PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS

As it was said several times before, the main goal of this project thesis is to develop a social media marketing plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*. The operational plan is the implementation proposal that includes the marketing-mix policies. It was defined within a time horizon of one year, up to 2017. This social media marketing plan intends to help future researches about the organization of events and about social media marketing plans. It gives guidelines about how to develop a marketing plan and also, specifically, about how to develop one for the social media. Concerning the theme studied – events – it has useful information that can help to develop future projects in this field. Thus, it provides theoretical knowledge about the concepts of marketing planning applied to the events market.

Before this project, *Quinta da Suratesta* was not very dynamic concerning marketing actions. The business was limited to basic things. However, from now on, it is going to implement the marketing proposals and take advantage of them, in order to improve its business. Thus, the objective is to continue developing more marketing actions and communicating its message to

consumers, in order to become closer to them and interact better with them. This way it can surely gain many potential clients.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – QUESTIONNAIRE STRUCTURE

Questionnaire about Social Media and *Quinta da Suratesta*

Matilde Tareco, ISCTE Business School, Master in Marketing

I am a student of the Master in Marketing of the ISCTE Business School and I need you to help me with my master's thesis. My thesis consists of a Social Media Marketing Plan for *Quinta da Suratesta*, a farm in Beja, Alentejo, where events are organised. For this reason I have developed online questionnaires in order to collect data regarding our target's consumer behaviour, the type of social media considered to be the best choice and the most appropriate content to post. Responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Your collaboration is essential for the conclusion of my thesis. Thank you for your availability and participation. The questionnaire takes around 5 minutes to complete.

a) Sample characterization

1. Age: - 10-15

- 16-20

- 21-25

- 26-30

- 31-35

- 36-40

- 41-45

- 46-50

- 51-55

- More than 55

2. Gender: Male__ Female__

3. Place of residence (District):

- Lisboa
- Porto
- Beja
- Évora
- Santarém
- Viseu
- Leiria
- Other: _____

b) Consumer behaviour on social media

4. Are you present on social networks?

- Yes__
- No__

5. In which social networks are you registered?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter

- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- YouTube

6. Considering the ones you have selected, how many times do you use them?

- Every day
- Three times a week
- Twice a week
- Just once a week

7. Which is the one you use most? (Choose just one option)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- YouTube

8. How do you usually access your social media?

- Desktops/Computers
- Laptops

- Mobile devices: Smartphones
- Mobile devices: Tablets
- Other: _____

9. When looking for a brand you do it through...

- social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest)
- blogs/opinion leaders websites
- content communities (YouTube, Instagram video, vimeo, vine)
- search engines (Google, Sapo, Yahoo!, Bing, Internet Explorer,...)
- brand websites
- offline methods

10. Why do you want to be present on social media?

- To keep up to date with what brands are doing in real time
- To share your experiences with products
- To share your own daily life
- To generate content
- To tag, edit or create information
- To keep in touch with friends and family
- To engage in peer-to-peer conversations (Word-of-mouth)
- To help you make decisions about purchases
- To entertain yourself

- To feel you belong to a community where you can communicate and engage with your friends, as well as with brands

11. Do you follow brands on social media?

- Yes__
- No__

12. If you answered 'Yes' to Q11, what kind of brands do you follow?

- Fashion
- Sports
- Food
- Entertainment (Music, TV shows,...)
- Events planners/Places for parties
- Influential people (Bloggers, actors, models, artists,...)
- Other: _____

13. Why do you follow brands on social media?

- To know about sales/discounts/promotions
- To be notified about special offers
- Just because you like the brand
- To know the latest products information
- To be aware of customer service
- To find entertaining content/ideas

- To be able to offer feedback
- To learn about new products and services
- Favourable opinion of the company
- Work there
- Current customer
- Loyal customer
- Other: _____

14. How many brands do you follow?

- 2 to 5
- 5 to 10
- More than 10

15. Do you think brands should be on social media?

- Yes__
- No__

16. Why?

- To become well-known
- To create awareness
- To communicate and engage with customers
- To post information about their products and services
- To increase brand exposure

- To increase web traffic
- To gain market exposure
- To acquired new customers
- To retain loyal customers/To interact with their target

17. Have you already recommended a brand Facebook page to a friend?

- Yes__
- No__

18. Which type of social networks do you think influences your buying decisions most?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Google+
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- YouTube

c) Reactions to marketing campaigns

19. Are you used to sharing brands you like or their content with friends (on social media)?

- Yes__
- No__

20. Which type of content do you prefer a brand to post?

- ☐ Images
- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Videos
- ☐ New product information
- ☐ Upload status
- ☐ Other: _____

21. Have you already unfollowed a brand because it posted too much content?

- Yes_____
- No_____

22. Which is the maximum of posts you think a brand should do?

- Just 1 post a day
- 2 posts a day
- Between 3 and 5 posts a day
- More than 5 posts a day

d) Top of mind

23. In Beja region, which is your top of mind brand/place for making events such as weddings?_____

e) Brand awareness

24. Do you know *Quinta da Suratesta*?

- Yes__

- No__

25. If you do, how did you know about *Quinta da Suratesta*?

- ☐ Through friends
- ☐ Through family
- ☐ I have been there
- ☐ Through social media
- ☐ Other: _____

26. Do you follow *Quinta da Suratesta* on Facebook?

- Yes__
- No__

27. If you follow *Quinta da Suratesta* on Facebook, why do you do so?

- ☐ I don't know *Quinta da Suratesta* (choose this option if you answered 'No' to Q26)
- ☐ I like the brand
- ☐ To get the news or updates on the brand
- ☐ To see their events photos
- ☐ I just want to show my support for the brand

- I have already been there
- To interact with the brand
- One of my friends recommend me to follow it
- I saw that one of my friends likes it
- I saw photos and I was curious about it
- I have already made an event there
- Other: _____

28. Have you already recommended *Quinta da Suratesta* to a friend?

- Yes__
- No__

f) Perceptions about the brand

29. How do you classify *Quinta da Suratesta* in terms of the following variables?

1 – Bad; 2 – Average; 3 – Good; 4 – Very good; 5 – Excellent

	Do not know/do not answer	1	2	3	4	5
Garden						
Dimension of the space						
Pleasure						
Facebook						
Interaction with consumers						
Communication/Advertising						

30. Have you been in *Quinta da Suratesta*?

- Yes__
- No__

31. If you answered 'Yes' to the previous question, in which type of events were you there?

- ☐ Wedding
- ☐ Business dinner/lunch
- ☐ Kids party
- ☐ Summer party
- ☐ Working for events
- ☐ Christenings
- ☐ Other type of party: _____

32. How many times have you been in *Quinta da Suratesta*? (Just if you answered 'Yes' to Q30)

- Once
- More than once
- Between 3 and 5
- More than 5
- More than 10

33. Did you like it? (Just if you answered 'Yes' to Q30)

- Yes__
- No__

APPENDIX 2 – FREQUENCY TABLE (QUESTIONNAIRES ANALYSIS)

Frequency Table 1 – Variable Age Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20	16	14,2	14,2	14,2
	21-25	49	43,4	43,4	57,5
	26-30	20	17,7	17,7	75,2
	31-35	5	4,4	4,4	79,6
	36-40	1	,9	,9	80,5
	41-45	7	6,2	6,2	86,7
	46-50	8	7,1	7,1	93,8
	51-55	3	2,7	2,7	96,5
	>55	4	3,5	3,5	100,0
	Total	113	100,0	100,0	

APPENDIX 3 – INTERVIEW SCRIPT FOR COMPETITORS

1. Which type of events do you organise more?
2. Is there any time of the year when more events take place?
3. Do you consider that seasonality affects the functioning of the business? How do you adapt to that?
4. How many events do you make per year?
5. How many people does your place accommodate?
6. How do you establish your prices? How much do your services cost?
7. Which type of services (e.g. catering, music, decoration) do you provide for people who want to make an event?
8. What do you consider to be the CSF (critical success factors) of your business?
9. What do you consider to be the main consumer profiles of your place/farm?
10. Who do you think are your main competitors?

11. Concerning now social media and social networks, do your clients talk to you more through your social networks, such as Facebook or Instagram, for example, through e-mail, by phone or face-to-face?
12. What is the return you have by advertising your place on proper websites? Is it worth the effort?
13. What is your target's age?
14. What are the objectives of your social networks?
15. Which areas do you consider can be developed in the business? (in terms of product, services, social media, communication)

APPENDIX 4 – INTERVIEW SCRIPT FOR CATERING AND DECORATION SERVICES

1. In the Alentejo region, where do you usually make more events?
2. When brides and grooms talk to you in order to organise their weddings, why do they choose *Quinta da Suratesta*?
3. What do you consider to be the CSF (critical success factors) of making an event in *Quinta da Suratesta*?
4. If you know its competitors, how do you compare *Quinta da Suratesta* to the others?
5. Refer 3 points/recommendations that you think *Quinta da Suratesta* should implement or improve.

APPENDIX 5 - E-NEWSLETTER

“Love Story”



“We were both young when I first met you” – this could be the way a love story begins. This wedding was a true love story. The bride wished for a fairy tale and her wishes were granted. *Quinta da Suratesta* was transformed into a real farm, like the ones we are used to seeing on Disney fairy tales. It was a romantic wedding, where pink was present in the main details.



The tables were amazing, decorated with beautiful flowers.



The bride, the groom and all the guests loved the place and also the party. It was a lovely and romantic wedding, where all the decoration seemed to be taken from a dream story. After dinner, everybody went outside and they amused themselves all night long, dancing to the sound of music and enjoying themselves with their friends. The bride and the groom described the whole wedding as a “love story”.

