INSTITUTO
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DE LISBOA

The IGO'OUT app

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Master in International Management

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September, 2025

BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Resumo

O objetivo do estudo pretende desenvolver um plano de negócio inovador para a aplicação IGO'OUT, um projeto que pretende explorar o potencial da aplicação de técnicas de "gamificação" aos velhos conhecidos estabelecimentos de experiência de consumo, como bares e restaurantes. Para tal, serão aplicadas mecânicas de jogos com recompensas reais, capazes de trazer inúmeros benefícios para estes estabelecimentos, como o aumento do tráfego em loja, fidelização de clientes e aumentos do ticket médio de consumo. Traz também vantagens aos clientes com descontos e prémios exclusivos, bem como uma inovadora exploração da vertente social, nestes estabelecimentos.

Ao dia de hoje e cada vez com mais recursos ao seu dispor, as grande empresas e franchisings' internacionais estão a apostar nos seus próprios programas de fidelização, onde a cada dia que passa têm mais sucesso no que toca à retenção de clientes. Isto faz com que as pequenas e médias empresas deste sector (bares e restaurantes) que não têm capacidade de desenvolver os seus próprios programas fiquem para trás em relação à concorrência. O que a IGO'OUT procura fazer é criar uma solução diferenciada, de fácil adoção e alta personalização que permita às empresas desta realidade competir com os "tubarões" do mercado. Ir também um pouco mais além das expectativas dos programas de fidelização tradicionais, ao integrar desafios sociais e recompensas dinâmicas que aumentam da mesma forma que o consumo aumenta.

A validação da proposta de valor foi efetuada através de uma investigação quantitativa, através de um questionário online que contou com 128 participantes. O estudo demonstrou que este tipo de abordagem, gamificada, pode influenciar positivamente a decisão dos consumidores na escolha de locais para os seus momentos de lazer, incentivando um maior gasto do que o inicialmente previsto e proporcionando experiências mais enriquecedoras através da vertente social da inovação.

O plano de negócios elaborado toca em todas as áreas funcionais da empresa: aspetos estratégicos, tecnológicos, de marketing, financeiros e organizacionais. O desenvolvimento destes pontos, juntamente com o hipotético financiamento podem levar à sua implementação. Tendo em conta as previsões financeiras, espera-se que este projeto comece a libertar lucros operacionais pelo final do 4º ano.

Palavras-chave: Gamificação, Engajamento do cliente, Programas de fidelização, Indústria de restauração e bebidas, Motivação do utilizador, Modelos de negócio digitais, Plano de negócio inovador

Classificação JEL:
M31: Marketing
L83: Sports; Gambling; Recreation; Tourism
O33: Technological Change: Choices and Consequences
L26: Entrepreneurship

Abstract

The objective of this study is to develop an innovative business plan for the IGO'OUT app, a project that aims to explore the potential use of gamification techniques and applied them to the "old known" Food and Beverages establishments, such as bars and restaurants. Therefore, game mechanics will be applied with real rewards, capable of bringing many benefits for these businesses, likewise increase of the foot traffic in store, raise customers' loyalty and increase of the average ticket price per client. It also brings advantages to the clients like exclusive prizes and an innovative way to explore the social dimension of these establishments.

Every day that goes by, big companies and franchises are investing more and more resources on their own loyalty programs, and each day, they are getting more success when it comes to customer retention (by using more advance tactics). That makes small and medium-sized companies in this sector (bars and restaurants) that don't have the same capacity as those, to get behind in this competition. The IGO'OUT aims to create a differentiated solution with easy adoption and high customization to enable smaller reality businesses to compete with these "big sharks". The idea is to go even further than the traditional loyalty program also integrating social quests and dynamic rewards, that will get more exciting as you keep engaging with the system.

The proof of concept was validated through quantitative investigation, via an online survey that had over 128 participants. The study demonstrated that having gamification features can influence positively the customers' decisions when it comes to the selection of the venue for their leisure moments, incentivizing the user to spend more than initially planned and enhance the overall experience with the innovative social features.

This business plan reaches all the functional parts of a company: strategic, technological, marketing, financial and organizational aspects. The development of the previous points, along with a potential investment, can lead to real implementation. According to the financial forecast, it is expected that this project with accomplish operational profits by the end of the 4th year.

Keywords: Gamification, Customer engagement, Loyalty programs, Food and beverage industry, User motivation, Digital business models, Innovative business plan

JEL classification:
M31: Marketing
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1. Introduction

After much consideration, I´ve decided to go with the innovative business plan for my Master´s thesis. I believe that it is clearly the option that will provide me with more value as a professional in the long run. It excites me the fact that not only will I have the chance to display my creativity, but also that I will be able to put in practice all the skills and tools that I gathered during my professional and academic experiences, now including the first year of this master

Ever since I was a little kid, I´ve always been an entrepreneur, I´ve always dreamed of building something that could be beneficial for the society. Something that could positively impact people around me. Helping others while generating value, so that I can improve my family and friend´s condition always has been my goal. Now I have this opportunity, the chosen approach for this master thesis will bring me closer to that vision. Provide me with a more realistic insight into how complex and hard it can be building ideas from scratch and get me a better understanding of each phase of a startup creation. It is time to take the first steps in this direction, as just as any other company in the market, even the "big sharks" all started with a dream…

On a certain day, I was reflecting about the foods and beverages industry (F&B industry), which was evaluated in about 3-4 trillion in the year of 2023, and I couldn't stop noticing how unchanged most of the industry has remained in the recent year. It is hard to create new business models. The F&B establishments already approved by the market. I thought it was only a matter of position between prices and quality of the raw materials/services. However, I paid attention to the disruption and heard about a whole new set of concepts that were launched that innovated customer´s experience in this kind of establishment. One that really got me excited was the "Lisbon Stock Exchange Bar", a place that allows the prices of their menu to fluctuate depending on the demand of each item on the menu. In this new era of digitalization, there are still opportunities to seize, and concepts like this open my mind to the possibility of alternative experiences, that can turn this industry much more interactive and immersive.

My objective is to make this app available for any business that wanted to use this "wow factor" as a competitive advantage while presenting the opportunity to help many entrepreneurs to stand out, while providing a whole new experience to their clients.

Having this in consideration, that's why the IGO'OUT app was created, an app that will use the concepts of gamification and digitalization to create interactions between clients and venues, reward consumer´s loyalty on their recurrent go to places and provide visibility to discover new ones that might interest them.

The concept is quite simple, the main advantage for the users of the app is to benefit from discounts for more they consume, get rewards for repeated visits in different days and also engage in social interactions, which will present the client in the form of "side quests" that will allow them to interact with their own and other tables. On the other side, for the owners, they will capture the attention of the clients with discounts and rewards in their low traffic periods, have more visibility due to our platform and have access to a whole new set of data about their client´s preferences.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Core concept:

Gamification is essentially the process of adding elements of games to non-related games contexts. Such as points, badges, levels, leader boards, among others. Following Gandasari, R. A., & Mauritsius, T. (2023). "Gamification refers to the use of game design elements in non-game products or services to encourage value-creating behavior, such as increased consumption or greater loyalty"

In the case of the IGO'OUT the main feature of games that we are trying to implement is the concept of "leveling up". In most of the games the more you play it, the better your character will become and the more advantages you will get in the game. It is a common element of games that rewards players for common interactions, and it grants access to privileges or new challenges. Werbach, K., & Hunter, D. (2012). Transporting this idea to the IGO'OUT app, the principle will be the same. The more you consume at a certain establishment, the more advantages you will get, in the short-term, contributing to the various levels of discounts. On the long term, by going regularly to the same establishments it will increasing your "establishment level" that will grant you some lifetime rewards, such as free and discounts on specific items

Besides the financial part, there is still a social component associated with this project that comes as a second layer in the value proposition. The possibility to engage in interactive missions, such as "side quests" will be presented to the user. This means the app allows the user to deviate from the first scope of the app (consume items and repeat visits that generate discounts and offers) and provide alternative "side quests" that involved human interaction to also earn rewards. "Quests, both primary and side, are essential in gamified systems, allowing users to take on optional tasks that provide rewards and foster a sense of discovery and progression" Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011).

Adding to the social part of the value proposition, there are also **"**badges and leader boards.**"** Badges are visual representations of achievements or milestones that users earn by completing specific tasks or reaching certain goals within a system. They serve as motivational tools and indicators of progress, often providing social recognition and rewarding users for their efforts, according to Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011). Leaderboards rank users based on their performance or achievements within a system, they are designed to increase engagement by allowing users to compare their progress with others and strive for higher positions. Chou, Y.-K. (2015).

Both elements express the current level of engagement within the app and can lead to an increase in competitiveness between users. Creating "rivalries" will foment the use of the app, which ultimately can generate more sales for the businesses and more traffic to the app. Chou, Y.-K. (2015).

There is one more concept that needs to be explained in order to fully understand one of the purposes of this app, which is dynamic pricing. This means when a business adjusts the prices of their products in real time as a reaction to market factors by Kannan, P. K., & Kopalle, P. K. (2001). The way the app is built allows the owners to easily change their prices based on the live demand and appear more attractive to their clients.

2.2 Applications of gamification in various sectors

There's already a reasonable amount of research on gamification, especially in fields like education, marketing, and customer loyalty programs and even on the food sector, let's go deeper into that:

When looking to the largest fast-food franchise in the world we can see that this concept of gamification is already implemented. Take McDonalds for example - they already have their gamification plan incorporated as they were one of the pioneers of this concept. By gifting merchandising in their famous "happy meal" has always been a success worldwide. It promotes a beneficial interaction between the kids which will act as an incentive to consume their menus in order to collect the respective prize. Meanwhile, the parents can give their kids "a new toy", without having to spend money directly on that item. The strategy is very clear; McDonald's created a plan to increase sales through collectible game pieces and prizes through which the brand consolidated a loyalty points system, rewarding customers for repeated visits, all while fostering brand connection, through social media contests. ("How McDonald's Uses Gamification to Boost Sales and Retention")

It is also possible to observe gamification implementations in other sectors like Marketing. Marketers are always looking for new ways to impact their clients and they have been one of the early users of gamification. Resorting to gamification to try to create stronger customer engagement. In the article wrote by Smalianets (2024) it points out that loyalty programs are one of the most common examples - customers earn points to unlock rewards through continued interactions with a brand. This system aims to reinforce people's needs for recognition, resulting in them coming back in the long term that will result in rewards and preventing them from turning to competition. It is mentioned in the study that "the gamification market that was evaluated in 9,1 billion dollars in 2020 is expected to increase to 30,7 billion dollars, with an annual growth of 27,4%". It checks out - gamification is on the rise and expected to be even more present in the near future.

Another unlikely industry that also uses gamification is the banking industry. Very often perceived as a "boring", they found in this concept a way to create a bridge between them and their clients. This strategy revealed more effectiveness in their younger clients, which is easily the most difficult audience to reach, from a business perspective.

Gandasari and Mauritsius (2023) explored how Bank Neo Commerce a bank located in Indonesia, introduced gamification in their digital banking experience.

The set of implementations that were done had a great impact by relating both concepts: hedonic and utilitarian values. They were able to manipulate the user's emotions and combine them with practicality. Altered the user experience and used fun as fuel for completing the activities and redeeming their prizes, which is possible to consult in the article: "Quests are in the form of tasks for the users to use certain features and get coin rewards after doing them". With the introduction of social graphs, the user can interact and engage with others which provides a sense of inclusion, as mentioned: "Social Graphs are in the form of Town Halls, where users can make friends with each other, take coins from other users, give coins to other users, and interact in other ways".

The leveling system introduces a notion of progression where users can advance in the ranking. "Levels are in the form of regular, silver, and gold memberships, where users can advance

based on their activities and engagement with the platform, offering different rewards and benefits at each level". Finally, virtual goods enable the user to receive virtual items as a reward, this promotes these goods, such as coins or vouchers, gives a playful sense of accomplishment, motivating users to continue engaging with the bank's platform for enjoyment beyond the functional aspects of banking.

With this action they made the banking experience more engaging and dynamic, giving new colors to the previous experience. This adaptation is crucial to keeping up, most of all, with the younger generations that generally are not very sensible to these topics. By making these modifications in the way they communicate with their clients, the bank creates a positive interaction, which in the long run it can contribute to increasing their customer loyalty.

In education, the potential of gamification is particularly striking. García-López et al. (2023) found that using game elements such as progress tracking, challenges, and badges significantly boosted student engagement and motivation.

It was proved that gamification can be used as motivational tool. The study evaluates the potential increases in the learning process with the addition of game related elements. On one side, it generates healthy competition in the class, which every student can benefit from. On the other side, it also makes the learning process much more interactive. The authors noted that gamification adds to the students' motivation, turning normal tasks into more exciting and providing some sense of accomplishment. Also, students admitted to feeling more engaged in their learning when game-like features were introduced

This experience also revealed a positive impact on the results measured by academic performance. The article discusses how gamification positively impacts student´s performance, helping them achieve better results in their academics. It refers that: "students who participated in gamified activities demonstrated measurable improvements in both short-term academic performance and long-term retention of material."

One last conclusion of the impact of gamification on education is the fact that the learning experience is customizable. It allows the students to progress at their own pace, the study remarks. The flexibility of the gamification of different learning styles enables a better environment because the learning process can be crafted especially for each student’s needs.

In healthcare, Cheng and Ebrahimi (2023) discussed how gamified mental health apps can have a positive impact on the recovery of some patients. The application of this concept in the health field is not new and was first implemented in 1998 with the creation of the exercise game “Dance Dance Revolution” for cardiovascular fitness and weight control.

Nowadays technology has advanced a lot, which creates opportunities to implement it in various contexts. One possible application is to use gamification as a mental health tool. It is clear in the study conducted in the article that integrating game elements like points, rewards, and challenges into therapeutic practices can enhance the patient’s engagement. As it is mentioned in the article: “Gamification has emerged as a novel technique for improving mental health and enhancing treatment effectiveness.… identifies factors that may be related to variations in treatment effectiveness and discusses possible strategies for tailoring gamified interventions to clients’ needs.”

On top of this, the level of personalization that a gamified approach can take is adaptable to each patient, so every client has a tailored solution, while maintaining a decent level of standardization to ensure consistency and effectiveness across diverse demographics. This can also be verified in the article, which mentions that a personalized approach in gamification makes interventions more relevant to clients, improving their engagement and outcomes; however, standardization ensures consistency, reduces bias, and simplifies effectiveness assessment across different groups.

With that being said, gamification can also be applied from another point of view, when combined with virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). This enables a whole new approach when it comes to the treatment of anxiety and post-traumatic disorders. It offers customizable, immersive environments to help with therapies, as it is expressed that, due to their level of customization, VR-based interventions can eradicate real world distractions, which creates a more immerse experience in virtual worlds and makes it easier for professionals to assist their patients. Its already being used to replicate isolate environments that can be beneficial, here is an example: "A recent review found that immersive VR interventions may offer greater benefits in treating PTSD symptoms among military service personnel".

Is is clear that gamification has the possibility to take a crucial role in the healthcare industry in the future. So far, the results have shown that such techniques have an untaped potential, with outcomes higher than expected. It is very likely that more medical experts will start to resorting to gamification in order to help improve their patient's condition. It transforms otherwise mundane tasks into engaging and rewarding experiences. It fosters deeper engagement, enhances motivation, and drives user loyalty across various industries, it gives emphasis to the progression and its reward, enables a great level of personalization and provides a wide application since it can be used in essentially every context.

2.3 The importance of motivation and its key drivers in gamification

After taking a deep look into the information already available in several fields, there is one unanimous aspect that's crucial to keep a gamified system alive, which is the motivation of the users. A highly motivated user will interact with the system more often and add value to the network. Motivation incentivizes initial participation and sustained engagement that grants long-term retention and immediate interactions. As can be perceived in the article "Motivation is the psychological foundation of gamification, satisfying needs such as autonomy, competence, and social connections", García-López, I. M., Acosta-Gonzaga, E., & Ruiz-Ledesma, E. F. (2023).

There are two types of motivation. On one hand is the intrinsic type. This states that the user will be entertained by the activity itself, finding it enjoyable or fulfilling. A perfect practical example of this motivation would be a child that loves Pokémon Nintendo games. He might be playing the game out of curiosity of the many different creatures that he will encounter until the end of the game. Maybe he keeps playing the game just to improve his skill level because he wants to beat his friends in competitive battles in the future. There is no additional reward, the user finds motivation just by interacting with the system.

On the other hand, there is also extrinsic motivation. This type of motivation is moved by external elements that are not directly related to game itself. These can be such things as prizes/points earned by the users due to their performance in the system. There are also badges

and leader boards that are both a visual representation of the accomplishments achieved by the user on that same system. In the case of the IGO'OUT app, extrinsic motivation will be the go-to motivation for our users. Since our users seek the app mainly for 2 reasons - the first being the prizes and discounts that they will be able to obtain by using the app in their favorite places - and the second which is the social part - where they can compare their progress with their friends via leaderboards and badges.

After detailing the importance of motivation for gamification, let's identify their main drivers:

a) Progression, achievements and rewards impact.
b) Continuous feedback and reinforcement.
c) From social interaction to competition.
d) Balance between autonomy and control.

When it comes to progression and achievements, they are an important aspect of motivation. It provides the user with milestones and goals that combine in a sense of continuous advancement and encourage them to keep participating in the system to achieve objectives. "Progression systems and real-time feedback motivate users by making achievements visible and creating reinforcement loops". García-López, I. M., Acosta-Gonzaga, E., & Ruiz-Ledesma, E. F. (2023). This effect can be enhanced by the usage of badges, they make the user feel like they are collecting "pieces of a puzzle" and create the need to gather all the pieces. On the other side, we have the leader boards, they create competition between the users and can also influence motivation. (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011) and (Chou, 2016)

With that being said, the psychological triggers mentioned are indeed important, however there is still one issue that can have even more impact in the case of the IGO'OUT app. The progression/rewards ratio. This factor will be the key to the success of this project. The "flow state" ensures that the user is getting appropriate rewards for running through levels, tasks or milestones, smoothly. Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011). Neither is the system too difficult or slow to improve, which prevents frustration and boredom. Neither is it too easy to climb, which can lead to a depreciation of the value of the system. By understanding the flow of progression and the progression/reward ratio, it can provide optimal experiences, ensuring users stay engaged and motivated over time without experiencing burnout or stagnation. It is possible to use both long term and short-term variables so that the system can be more dynamic. Effective gamified system has a good balance between short and long terms gratifications, which lead to a sustained motivation "without causing reward fatigue". Chou, Y.-K. (2015).

Immediate and continuous feedback is critical for sustaining user engagement. By reinforcing positive actions and guiding users toward their goals, gamified feedback mechanisms ensure that users stay motivated throughout their journey. Impacting the user with real time push notification, scores or updates to show the user the impact of their actions, this behavioral reinforcement creates a positive loop that rewards the user consistently for achievements and effort. "Immediate feedback serves as a bridge between effort and reward, creating an effective reinforcement mechanism" Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011).

Humans are social beings, as individuals we have the need to express ourselves and to hear from others. There is something in our nature that craves interactions with others. These interactions can occur in two forms. On one hand, physical interactions. When surrounded by others it is likely that we engage in conversations, which aligns with the purpose of the IGO'OUT app. By delivering an interactive experience through social games, within the app,

to be played with people on your table or even change the dynamic a little bit, it can also present side quests to get to know strangers in other tables that are also using the app. This feature helps to fulfill the relational need of Humans by facilitating the social interactions between users. On top of this, social competition and recognition drive users to interact with others and continuously improve their performance. Acknowledgment of achievements by peers or within communities encourages further engagement. Zichermann, G., & Cunningham, C. (2011). All of these factors can influence the motivation of the users

Last but not least, autonomy plays a crucial role in intrinsic motivation. When users have control over their experience, they feel more invested and motivated to engage. Gamification systems often provide opportunities for users to choose paths or tasks that align with their goals. Providing the users with some sense of choice makes the whole experience more personal, leading them to believe that they can navigate their own journey through the system. An applicable example is that at the beginning of the game in the app, the user will be allowed to share their preferences and indicate their favorite items. Their preferences will be used later on when it comes to the random rewards, they will get by completing the side quests. This makes the experience more familiar and provides that sense of path. Chou, Y.-K. (2015).

2.4 Risks and challenges of gamification

After extracting some conclusions of the articles and books used in this literature review, we got a better idea of what is gamification and its possible applications in many different dimensions. Although there are also some negative sides to gamification that still need to be considered and explored.

One of the most concerning issues is the risk of behavioral addiction. It can lead to over-engagement, where users become excessively focused on rewards and progress, potentially fostering addictive behaviors. The need to keep improving and to get more and more rewards can get to people´s heads, since we all react differently to the gamification stimulus. It can generate different impacts from individual to individual. In the article about healthcare, Cheng and Ebrahimi (2023), is mentioned that "Gamification for mental health interventions has shown benefits, but there are risks of over-engagement and behavioral addiction to gamified components", This risk is a matter that must be kept in mind when building a business that integrates this mechanism. Even more aggravated due to the fact that this app is partially related to the consumption of alcoholic drinks. The opposite can also happen, if not well implemented, gamification can create a reward fatigue diminishing the extrinsic motivation and resilience of the users.

Creating a gamification system can be very time consuming, always needs to be in constant adaptation, it leads to a huge implementation complexity. Designing and implementing a gamification system requires significant resources and a deep understanding of user behavior and psychology. Poor implementation can lead to ineffective systems and even create a bad will towards the brand that is exploring it. It is possible to validate this idea in the article Smalianets, A. A. (2024), when it is mentioned that the main challenges of gamification include complex implementation, user rejection, and lack of motivation. These issues arise when companies adopt game elements without understanding human psychology, leading to ineffective achievement systems and engagement failures.

Besides the problems mentioned above, if the variables used in the gamification are not appealing to the user, or too complex for their understanding, it can contribute negatively to the experience.

2.5 Research gap in gamification for the F&B establishments

Despite the extensive research on gamification in the main books and articles in many different fields such as franchising, education, marketing, banking and healthcare, there's a significant gap when it comes to its application in small and medium businesses (SMBs). Most studies have focused on how gamification can improve engagement in large franchises likewise McDonald's, Starbucks, Domino´s but little has been done to explore how it can enhance the performance of those smaller companies. This happens due to limited budgets for technology, lack of knowledge of gamification strategies, absence of specialized platforms for SMBs that provide a complete solution and preference for habitual marketing over digital engagement. Large franchises succeed in gamification because their size justify making investments in their loyalty programs and enables building large scale initiatives to achieve competitive advantages, while small businesses struggle due to limited resources and expertise. Smalianets, A. A. (2024).

Besides the small number of practical implementations in SMBs, there is also a shortage of research produced on the impact of gamification on those same businesses. There are still information gaps about the best practices for low-cost gamification in these small and medium companies. There is no consumer behavior analysis on gamified systems and how those systems can impact traffic and repeated visits to local bars and restaurants. It is a never-ending circle. Since there are no implementations or research, it results in no proven strategies what makes this cycle keep going and makes it really hard to have proof of concept on smaller realities.

With that being said, this unexplored field can be a major opportunity, as there is still plenty of room to explore how gamification can dynamize real world social interactions and in-venue engagement. Rewarding the users of the system with real physical rewards and discounts on those physical products like drinks at a bar or even your favorite dishes and sides at the local restaurant.

To conclude, gamification in the F&B establishments is dominated by large enterprises, leaving SMBs without any structured guidance. Research is needed to develop affordable, accessible strategies for those businesses - the IGO'OUT app has the potential to fill this gap, offering valuable insights into how gamification can drive customer engagement in a social and leisure context, for the sake of generating competitive advantages both in the long and short term for those businesses.

3. Methodology

Methodology ensures that the research conducted in the study is structured, valid, truthful and reliable. Given the fact that this master thesis will be a business plan, about an innovative idea, the role of this part is to produce data that will validate the value proposition of the IGO'OUT app, either for the users of the app, either for the owners of the establishments.

Considering this duality of the IGO'OU app, it makes it hard to use the same approach for both stakeholders (owners and final users). It is mandatory to create different ways to assess the value of this idea for both parties.

Firstly, let's start with the client side, the chosen approach is the questionnaires. Why was the quantitative approach selected? This method enables a large date collection which is important to validate the value preposition. The more answers it gets, the more robust the conclusions will be. It is crucial to have a large amount of feedback, it will make it easier to generalize the tendencies observed in the data collection and consequently also easier to draw conclusions. As per Bhandari (2020), quantitative research is the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data, then used to find patterns and averages, make predictions, and generalize results to wider populations.

The development of this survey will enable the use of descriptive statistics, which summarize the collected data through measures of central tendency and variability, as well as facilitate the creation of graphs and frequency tables to identify trends and potential outliers (Bhandari, 2020a). Furthermore, the data will support the application of inferential statistics, allowing for predictions and generalizations based on the findings (Bhandari, 2020a).

The survey consists of 19 questions, primarily using multiple choice and Likert-scale type questions, where respondents indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement regarding specific statements (Taherdoost, 2019). In this context, the Likert scale will assess perceptions about the idea itself, its usefulness, and the value propositions associated with it. This approach also enables the estimation of population parameters, such as the population mean, which describes characteristics of an entire population (Bhandari, 2020b).

The online survey was conducted using Google Forms and received a total of 128 complete responses, meaning that all participants answered every question. The full list of survey questions and corresponding responses can be found in Anex B, in the appendix section. The end game of this survey is to find how the respondents will react to the main value prepositions: the short-term levelling up, the long-term rewards for repeated visits and the social part of the app (leaderboards, interactive side quests, rankings and badges.) All of these terminate with a broader question about the overall app, the NPS (Net Promoter Score, this determines the likelihood of the respondents recommending the app to someone else.

Finding and data analyses:

Before taking any conclusion the first thing to do should be to define the population that we want to target. In this case our target are people between 18 to 34, why? Because of this age intervals are young adults. Meaning people that are still juvenile, most likely not yet in their financial prime which indicates more elasticity to price, they are up to date with technologies

(anticipating that learning how the app works will be more intuitive), approximately 70% of individuals under 25 prefer gaming over watching videos, indicating a strong inclination towards interactive content (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

They have more energy to engage in social activities, like going for food or drinks in their free time. For example, Gen Z and Millennials dine out frequently, with Gen Z averaging 2.1 nights per week and Millennials 1.9 nights per week (Homerun Inn Pizza, 2023).

By focusing on the 18 to 34 demographics, IGO'OUT can leverage these behaviors to create a platform that resonates with their dining preferences and desire for gamified, interactive experiences.

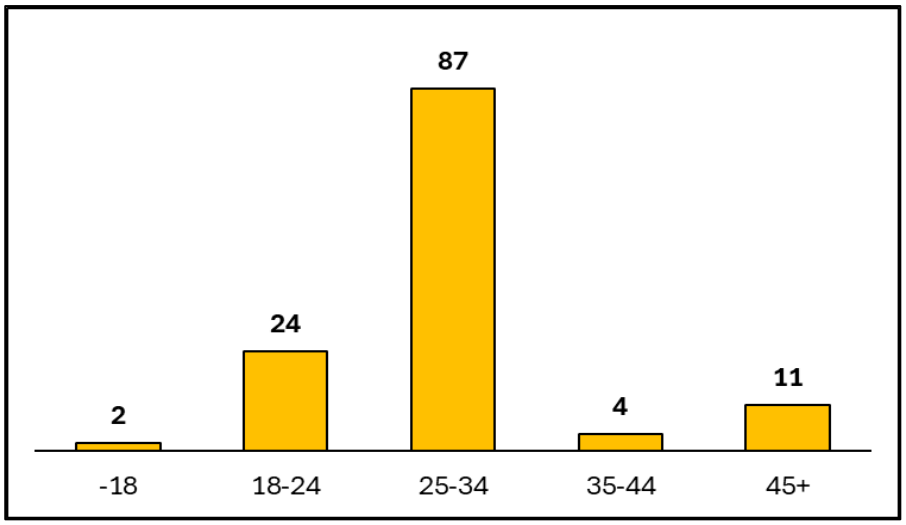


Figure 1- Age groups of the respondents.

A positive take about this survey is that the sample is composed by approximately 87% by our target, which means by using indictive logic, the results will be representative of the whole Portuguese population between 18 to 34.

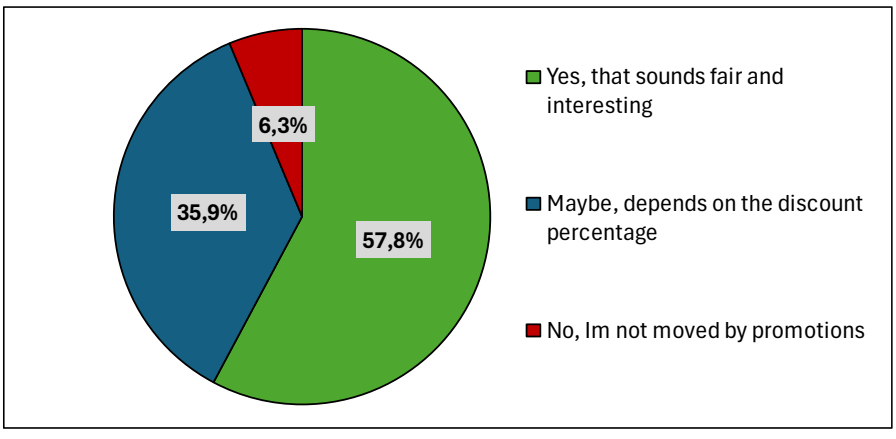


Figure 2 - Interest in an App Offering Discounts Based on Table Spending

Having the result in consideration, is clear that the dynamic of the app was approved by respondents. Around 58% of the responses indicate that they agreed with our short terms value proposition (short-term gamification, that enables the user to level up depending on the table spend per user), and if we sum the 36% of the people that could be potentially interested, depending on the discounts, that results in a total of about 94% that are open to this idea. To extract deeper conclusion, it is mandatory to look at the "maybe's" to understand if the standard discounts are enough to please these respondents.

(€) spent per user	(%) of discount for the next order
-9,99	5
10-19,99	10
+20	20

Figure 3- Standard instant Discount System

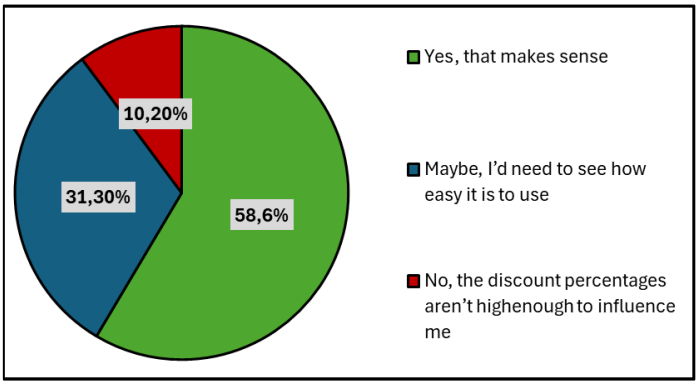


Figure 4 - Satisfaction about the discounts on the left

Above, on the left, is it possible to observe the standard discount system recommended by the app (these discounts are only a reference, each venue will operate at the levels they feel comfortable). On the right, the chart illustrates respondents' happiness about the system on the left.

After observing the results, it is safe to safe to say that the respondents are aligned with the standard discounts levels. Another green flag is that around 59% of the answers totally agree with the discount levels, about 31% that are ok with the system, as long as it is easy to use and only 10,2% said that the discounts were not enough to influence them.

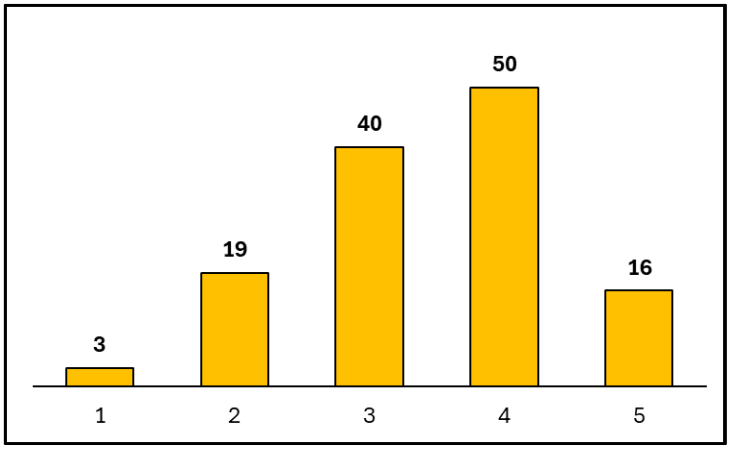


Figure 5- Likelihood of the previous discount system influence your choice of the venue over some that don't (1 » no influence; 5 » very high influence)

The data above reflects respondents' level of impact that this discount system could have on their venue choice. The responses indicate varying levels of interest, from strong enthusiasm to skepticism, providing insights into the potential adoption and success of such a gamified loyalty program.

Once again, the results look really promising. The most selected option was the "4" in the Liker-scale, meaning that 50 people, 39% of the total respondents have admitted that such a discount system would influence their choice to the venue. If we sum it with the 16 more (corresponding to 12,5%) that said that it would have a very high impact on their choice ("5"), that results in 66 people out of the 128 (almost 52%) would be more likely to go to places that have this type of system. Having that in consideration, with the available data, It is possible to conclude that this system could create competitive advantages and skewer the user's preferences towards places with the app.

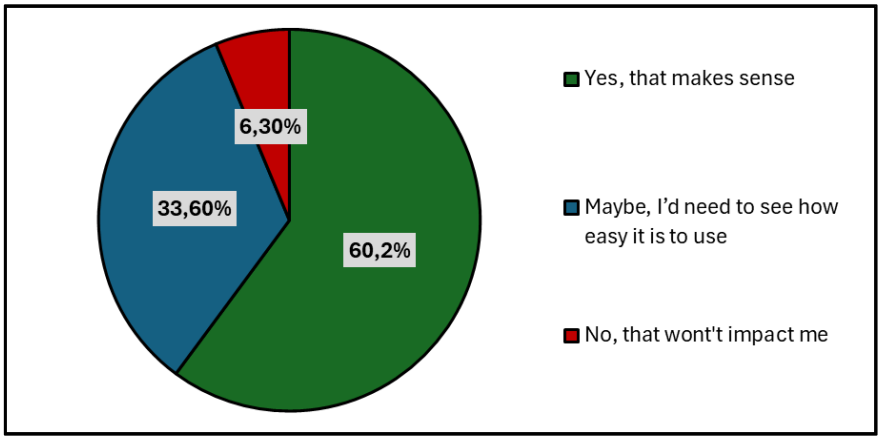


Figure 6 - User Interest in a Loyalty Reward System for Repeat Visits

(#) Number of check in via app	Prize
1st	Free beer, coffe or 50% discount on a appetizer or spiritual drink
5th	25% off: beer, coffe, appetizer or spiritual drink
10th	Random reward (1 free item)
15th	Free soft drink or 3€ discount on a cocktail
…	…

Figure 7- Standard Reward System for repetitive visits (long-term)

Both figures above, illustrates how users perceive a gamified system that rewards repeat visits to the same venue with gifts. The responses help assess whether this approach fosters customer loyalty and enhances engagement, providing valuable insights into user preferences for long-term rewards.

More than 60% of the respondents (77 answers) revealed that a dynamic like this would make sense for them. Leaving only 6,30% (8 people) won't be impacted by this concept. 43 responses admitted using it, if the rewards were easy to claim.

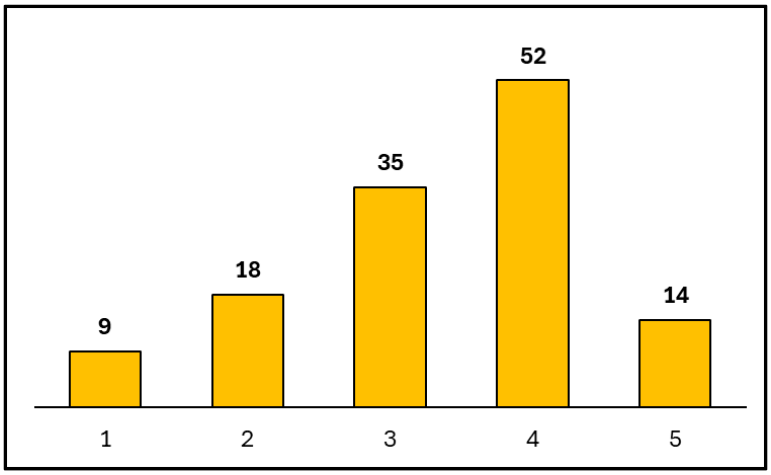


Figure 8 - Influence of Rewards on Venue Choice
(1 » no influence; 5 » very high influence)

The figure 8 examines whether the availability of rewards would influence users' decisions to choose a venue where they can collect them over one that does not offer such incentives. The responses provide insight into the effectiveness of the reward system above in driving customer preference.

These results show that there is a moderate to a high influence. Most of the responds rated the influence of the reward system above (figure 5), on the venue choice as 3 or 4, with 35 people (rating 3) and 52 people (rating 4). This indicates that the system might play a significant role in the decision making. Also, we found a strong relevance for some. While in fewer number 14 people rated the influence as 5 (very high), meaning that 10% of the users see a high value in this concept.

The low influence responses are few. Only 27 respondents (21% of the total) rated #1 and #2 (no influence and low influence). Showing that a minority of the respondents finds no to little relevance in the reward system when choosing a place to go.

Results show that implementing a reward system like this is likely to increase customer engagement and influence venue selection. The effectiveness may vary based on individual preferences and the reward system itself. This system can be used by companies to implement their strategy.

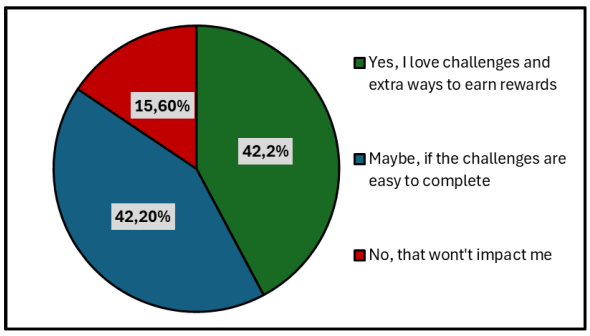


Figure 9 - Impact of Side Quests on App Engagement

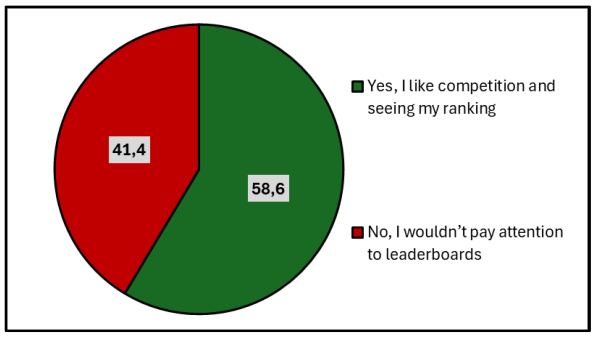


Figure 10 - Effect of Leaderboards on User Engagement

Both figures 9 and 10 examine user interest in gamified features that are correspondent to the social part of the app. Both charts express the level of enthusiasm present in the respondents, about the side quests (mission that can be done in order to obtain random rewards) and leaderboards (rankings that keep track of the consumption level of each user). The results indicate whether these competitive and interactive elements enhance engagement and contribute to a more immersive app experience.

The survey results validate IGO'OUT's core value proposition, confirming strong interest from the target demographic. Respondents showed clear enthusiasm for gamified features, particularly dynamic discounts, loyalty rewards, and social interaction. The findings indicate that such mechanisms can influence venue choice, increase customer retention, and enhance overall user engagement which supports the viability and strategic relevance of the project.

4. External Analysis

To understand the macro landscape of the industry that the IGO´OUT app is trying to penetrate, It is important to keep in mind that this project is at its base level a digital product (a mobile application) whoever is also highly related to the F&B establishments. This duality makes it mandatory to always shift from one to another and provide insights into an industry more relevant than the other. This tool consists of evaluating every dimension that can impact the success of a business, it covers Political, Economic, Social, Legal, Environmental and Technological aspects. With this holistic approach, It is possible to assess the state of the industry through several lenses and get multiple points of view.

To clarify the reading of this part of the paper, it is important to note that this analysis will focus on one hand in the present condition of the industry, assuming that the IGO'OUT app will receive the investment in the short term and will be able to operate as soon as possible in the Portuguese market. On the other hand, it will also provide useful insights that preview and evaluate a potential escalation to other countries.

On one side this analysis will provide the reader with a deeper knowledge of the current context of the industry, it will also be complemented with the "Internal Analysis, that will be conducted further in this paper using the SWOT method as a framework.

4.1 Political Factors

Now entering the PESTEL analysis itself, starting with the Political aspects of the mobile app industry. One of the most influential topics that can have a huge impact on the success of this project is the influence of trade relations and international market access. Portugal is a current member of the EU, which means that the eventual expansion to the rest of the European countries won't be much of a challenge. Since the Portuguese market is quite small (only around 11 million residents in Portugal), eventually this market won't be enough to satisfy the potential of this project, having that in consideration the idea that it will have access to new markets with a relatively similar culture with high penetration is considerably positive.

Another political aspect that can impact the industry is the government's support for innovation and digitalization, the Portuguese government actively promotes digital transformation, especially for SMEs, through initiatives like Portugal Digital and programs by entities such as Startup Portugal. Portugal also provides access to funds and incentives for digital innovation, making it favorable for IGO'OUT. These programs can provide not only financial leverage but also some initiatives to help with digital literacy, skills development and promote partnerships with startups, research centers, and universities.

This facilitation and incentivization to digital transformation can also be found in many other countries outside of Europe. Germany and Singapore (more patent for their robust investments in tech startups) are good examples of economies that promote collaboration between recent companies and seek to attract innovative projects that can assist in boosting their economy.

On the other side, there is still a small number of countries that are against the entrance of innovative projects within their border and can impose barriers limiting the market entrance opportunities, such as China, North Korea, Iran, Cuba and Myanmar are some examples.

To mitigate risks associated with regulatory restrictions in certain countries, IGO'OUT's market entry strategy will prioritize regions with favorable digital business environments, such as the European Union, North America, and Southeast Asia. By adapting to local legislation, including taxation policies and data protection laws, the platform can remain compliant while exploring international expansion opportunities.

4.2 Economic Factors

Shifting the focus to the economic conditions in Portugal, and also to the B&F industry, the whole picture is quite beneficial to the IGO'OUT app. According to the *Turismo de Portugal* the F&B establishments revealed in 2023 a tourism boom post-pandemic. It is estimated that the F&B market generated around 25 billion in revenue, which represents an increase of approximately 19% above the pre-pandemic levels, creating a great environment for companies in this field to support medium and small businesses (estimated business partners for the IGO'OUT app).

Another green flag in the fact that the Portuguese market is disposing of income trend, economic recovery has increased consumer spending, especially among younger demographics who may be more interested in gamified experiences. Recent data indicates that in 2022, Portugal's Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) increased by 7.8% in nominal terms compared to the previous year *(European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Portugal. (2023).*

Lastly, an economic factor that also can influence the F&B establishment in Portugal is the level of taxes present in these leisure activities. Looking into alcoholic drinks which are typically subject to heavier taxation due to health reasons, Portugal has quite a soft tax program. Using as an example a 700ml bottle of 40% alcohol, the tax absorbed by the government is around 5,15€, when compared with countries like Finland, the same bottle would represent a taxation of around 14,10€ following *Tax Foundation. (2021).* There is a clear gap between these two countries, almost triple, this disparity can certainly have an impact on how people aim to spend their free time.

Adopting the economic point of view into the rest of the world there are also some questions that may arise, starting with the economic disparities. Meaning that this idea has huge potential when it comes to developed countries. Given the current conditions of those countries, where the population tends to have their basic needs attended to, those are where most IGO'OUT potential users will be. People that don't struggle every day to provide for their families and are very likely to have spare income to go out for drinks and food or leisure. However, this is not the case for every country, there are still some places on earth where people cannot even contemplate the possibility of such activities. In these countries, the general population is either very poor, where they can't have such leisure time, or very rich where they are not sensitive to the price adjustments.

On top of that fact, in regions with unstable currencies, such as parts of Latin America, currency fluctuations can affect pricing strategies and consumer spending., which makes it almost impossible to create strategies that rely on pricing.

While expansion into markets with unstable currencies presents challenges, IGO'OUT can implement localized pricing strategies, adjusting discount thresholds based on regional spending power. By providing venue owners with control over their promotional models, the app ensures flexibility in adapting to different economic conditions without compromising any profit.

4.3 Social Factors

The social part of this analysis might be considered the most important. Given the fact that the success of this project is totally dependent on leisure activities such as going out for drinks or food with friends and family. This is mainly a cultural issue, as some cultures are more open to this behavior. Portugal seems to be the perfect place to start this project, due to the fact that engaging in these activities would be very common within the Portuguese lifestyle. Several factors contribute to this claim, like the pleasant weather, the long amounts of working hours in a week, the need to communicate and interact with our peers, accessibility in terms of prices and the drinking habits of the younger generations. (a conducted study estimated that 88% of the Portuguese population above 18 years old, has ingested alcohol in the previous 12 months and 68% of them in the last 30 days). Statista. (2023). *Share of individuals who consumed alcoholic beverages in the last 12 months and 30 days in Portugal in 2022, by gender.*

All these factors contribute to the growth of the local businesses that provide these environments, especially after 6 pm when most of the working force is done with their workday, that's when those businesses are full of people since the Portuguese in most cases are open to

the possibility of having a couple of drinks with their workmates or friends after their shifts are over. If we put this in contrast with another country like Luxembourg, where around 47% of the workforce comprises cross-border commuters - individuals residing in neighboring countries such as France, Belgium, and Germany. STATEC. (2022, April 29) They travel daily and after a long day of work they and still need to face long traffic before arriving to their homes, it makes much more painful to keep up with the Portuguese habits of going for these activities after work.

Now, from an international perspective, it is relevant to mention that globalization and the habits of some cultures are rapidly spreading worldwide. With that being said, the socialization component which used to be more present in occidental cultures is now reaching other parts of the globe. In markets like Japan, where gamification is highly accepted, adoption may be faster. In more traditional cultures, the concept may require adaptation to local preferences, combining this trend with the fact that in rapidly urbanizing regions like Southeast Asia, social dining culture is on the rise, creating a favorable environment for a socially driven app like the IGO'OUT.

To cater to different social expectations, in the future, the IGO'OUT will offer customizable engagement models for businesses. High-end venues can opt for exclusive experiences rather than traditional discounts, such as priority reservations, invite-only tastings, or premium customer perks. This flexible structure allows the app to attract a diverse user base while ensuring alignment with different brand identities. Statista. (2023). *Share of individuals who consumed alcoholic beverages in the last 12 months and 30 days in Portugal in 2022, by gender*

4.4 Technological factors

If we take a look into the technological aspect of the industry, digital solutions like smartphones app are an integrated part of our daily lives in developed countries. That eliminates the necessity to differentiate between Portugal and the rest of the world for this part of the analyses. The global market size was evaluated to be 252 billion in 2023, and It is projected to keep growing and even reach 626 billion by the year 2030. Grand View Research. (2023). This proves to us that the user adoption of mobile apps is already a giant market, and the tendency is only to get even bigger. There are still opportunities to be explored in this field.

On top of this, there is also technology that is already accepted worldwide such as QR codes. People are used to it and know how to use it, even more now almost every smartphone has a QR code reader integrated in their camera. Overall, this creates a positive environment for projects like the IGO'OUT to flourish.

We can also highlight some recent changes in the market, like the value of the data analytics in the decision-making of the businesses. Following the year 2017, data has become the most valuable commodity, surpassing traditional resources like oil because it allows the companies to gain deeper insights into customer behavior and optimize operations. The Economist. (2017). This facts links with the capacity of this project to grant access to a whole new set of data to SMB.

There are also risks associated with technological factors that might impact the IGO'OUT, those being cybersecurity and data privacy. As mentioned before, the value of the data is increasing every day, at the same pace there is also an increasing number of organizations

that have the goal to steal the forementioned data. Recent studies indicate a clear increase in cyber-attacks, in the third quarter of 2024, organizations experienced an average of 1,876 cyberattacks per week, marking a 75% increase compared to the same period in 2023. Check Point Research. (2024).

4.5 Environmental factors

At first glance it might seem difficult to relate this project to environmental causes, but if we dig deep, It is possible to find some relations. Food waste is a global issue that should be addressed in the Food & Beverages establishment. It is estimated that restaurant and food-based businesses globally incur losses up to 2.6 trillion dollars. The Restaurant HQ. (2024). The hospitality sector represents around 12% of the total food wasted globally. ScienceDirect (2020). Concept like dynamic pricing can become helpful to fight this issue. Adjusting the price in real time, and impacting on the client with flash promotions, equips the venue with more tools when it comes to managing the stocks. Which can have a massive impact on food waste reduction worldwide.

From other perspectives, there are also concerns about the carbon footprint of digital solutions. It is important to keep in mind that digital products like apps must be based on some type of server and that includes cloud computing and data storage in order to keep running. All of the previous, cost energy to remain in function. To be more aware of the magnitude of this matter, there was done a case study in 2023 about TikTok. It was found that the global operations were estimated to produce about 50 million metric tons of CO_2 equivalent, comparable to the annual emissions of Greece. This high footprint is attributed to extensive data processing and user engagement. The Guardian. (2024, December 12). *TikTok's annual carbon footprint is likely bigger than Greece's, study finds.*

One last trend that should be referred is the increase in consumers' preference for sustainable venues. Environmentally friendly businesses have been attracting more clients, since people agreed with their sustainable practices. A study conducted by PwC shows that consumers are willing to pay on average 9,7% more on sustainably produced goods and services. PwC. (2024). *PwC 2024 Voice of the Consumer Survey: Sustainability in purchasing decisions.* Relating this with the app, there can be a part of the venues profile in which they show how eco-friendly their businesses are, this will allow the customer to also decide their go to places, with the help of this information.

4.6 Legal factors

This section explores the last dimension of the PESTEL analyses, the legal factors. Due to dissimilarities in the many different legal frameworks, the first part of the analysis will be centered on the Portuguese system, and then we will proceed to the EU and the rest of the world, except for the GDPR which is common to both Portugal and the EU.

In Portugal as much in the rest of the Europe, there is measures implemented about data protection (GDPR - The General Data Protection Regulation). The European union provided guidelines on how the personal data must be collected and stored. It aims to protect individuals' privacy so that they have more control over it. This was enforced to every organization that

deals with EU residents. European Union (2016). Which is very relevant for this project since the app will manage important data about its users.

Havin in consideration the Portuguese market, there is still legal restrictions that ensures the consumer protection, meaning that all the gamified offers must follow the DL nº 24/2014 that requires transparency in the promotions. The European Commission (2022) under the Omnibus Directive emphasizes that all digital offers, including gamified systems, must clearly disclose terms, limitations, and the nature of the incentives provided. This publication has four main points: "Informação Pré-Contratual", "Direito de Livre Resolução", "Confirmação do Contrato" and "Restrições de Entrega e Meios de Pagamento". This project must be compliant with all the points above. This previews that the gamified reward to have a clarified value, redemption rules and validity. Diário da República, 2014.

Consumer Law and the Digital services Act are also guidelines provided by the EU. The first one, the consumer law states that every platform must avoid deceptive practices. It implies that all the users must understand the intrinsic value of what they are buying (the token system, if there is any and potential monetization). Even though it will be no transaction on the app, this project is still operating under the influence of this rule, because it does promote offers, discounts and digital rewards (to ensure that all the experience points, badges and rankings are clearly explained, transparent and not miss leading). European Commission, (2022)

Secondly, there is the Digital Service Act, implemented in February 2024. This sets obligations for digital platforms operating in the EU and focuses on user safety. It prevents the use of "dark patterns" those being manipulative UI/UX tactics (ex: using countdown timers to press the user decisions); "Algorithmic transparency" which states every algorithm mechanics must be of public disclosure and "User redress mechanisms" for example, if the app moderates users content, like reviews or comments, there has to be a clear justification for those actions. European Union (2022).

In conclusion, although IGO'OUT does not handle direct transactions, it operates within a complex legal landscape that demands strict compliance with both Portuguese and EU regulations. From GDPR and consumer protection to transparency in gamification and digital platform accountability, legal considerations must be embedded into the app's design and operations to ensure user trust, avoid regulatory risks, and support long-term scalability.

5. Internal Analysis (SWOT)

By conducting a SWOT analysis we will be able to understand IGO'OUT's strategic positioning and future potential. This framework examines the project's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats that could impact its development. By identifying these key factors, the analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the platform's competitive advantages and the challenges it can encounter in its lifetime.

Starting with the advantages, internal qualities that project processes that make it distinguished. The IGO'OUT stands out for their innovative gamification model. It is completely disruptive in the market and offers a more complete solution than any other one in the market (since it has the potential to: promote, retain, increase the foot traffic, raise the average ticket price and also entertain).

Concede the possibility to operate on a freemium model to ensure low entry barriers and encourage fast adoption. This condition is very important for the business because it helps to generate the network effect: every new member that gets into the system adds more value that same system.

On one side, social and interactive features make the app increase users' retention and vitality based on social interactions. On the other side, it also presents benefits for the venues as a marketing and business tool (analytics, customer behavior insights and stock management).

Finally, the project presents multiple revenues streams. The "User-side", the "Venue-side" and the other possible future partnerships. This leaves more flexibility due to the fact that is not totally dependent on one certain stakeholder.

In summary, IGO'OUT's strengths lie in its unique value proposition, multi-sided business model, and capacity to drive engagement through gamification, making it well-positioned for scalable growth and market differentiation.

Another strength that needs to be considered is the fact that this project has a strong cultural fit with Gen Z and Millennials' digital and social habits. It combines a dynamic pace and constant engagement as a digital solution, and at the same time promotes the physical in store experience with our loved ones. The advance of technology very often drifts to situations that tear people apart (virtual meetings, home office, etc.), many people feed under connected, initiatives that promote physical experiences are necessary.

Changing perspective to the weaknesses, internal that create a disadvantage for the project. The first one is the dependency on the venue participation. As mentioned, one of the pillars of this project is being able to get a decent interesting place on board. Lack of quality in the partners pool can be very detrimental for the project.

Other aspect to keep in mind is that it requires mass adoption to make the social features meaningful. It is crucial to build a strong network effect to keep the user engaged.

Finally, there is also the complexity of the gamification mechanic that can be misunderstood or underused by the venue's owners. Many venues in this industry are really used to current operations processes. Heavy initial resistance can be found, and it can compromise the growth of the app.

In short, while IGO'OUT presents strong internal advantages, its success will depend on overcoming operational complexity, securing high-quality venue partnerships, and reaching critical mass to unlock the full potential of its social and gamified features.

After analyzing the internal exposures and advantages of this project, It is time to look at the outside world and assess what our opportunities and threats are. This set is all about factors outside of the control of the company, but can be highly impactful, positively or negatively.

Treats are presented as realities that do not contribute to the success of the company and must be worked around. In this case we can point out things like market competition from loyalty apps. Despite being more limited, these types of platforms with their simpler business models are easier to understand and perceive the value.

Another factor that needs to be kept in mind is the venue churn risk. In many cases the ROI might not be immediate, and not seeing instant results can lead to some partners abandoning our product.

Many other situations can occur that can be impactful. Some of them are purely cyclical to the economy like recession and economic downturns. Such a phenomenon can affect both the leisure overall expenditure and the venues' marketing budget. Also, things like regulatory risks around date usage and GDPR compliance are issues that are constantly updated, its necessary to make sure we are ahead of the curve about these matters.

On the opposite side, opportunities come as a beneficial factor that can help the project to thrive. In this case we can identify A rising appetite for gamified experiences and digital loyalty programs. The increase of platforms like Duolingo and Starbuck rewards highlights a significant consumer shift towards interactive and reward-based engagement models. Following Nudge (2024), brands that have integrated gamification into their customer engagement strategies have observed a 47% increase in user engagement and a 22% rise in customer loyalty. Meaning that platforms like the IGO'OUT are well position to "ride this wave".

If we think in an innovative way there are a bunch of opportunities that can be exploited in the current state of the market. We are talking about strategic partnerships with well stablish brands, to create co-events for seasonal events. This was already mentioned in this paper, this type of action creates new revenues streams, enhances app engagement and brings real-world value to both partners. Deals with universities can be made, for exclusive campus quests and interactive official collage parties.

Due to our initial location being Lisbon, in Portugal, it makes much easier for the project to cross-border expand to other heavy nightlife European cities. Our initial location enables geographical scaling by replicating the current model in culturally and economically similar cities, markets like Spain, France and Italy.

While IGO'OUT faces external risks such as competitive pressure, venue retention challenges, and economic or regulatory fluctuations, it also stands at the forefront of a growing trend toward gamified, experience-driven loyalty systems. By capitalizing on market readiness, strategic partnerships, and international scalability, the project is well-positioned to navigate threats and leverage emerging opportunities for long-term growth.

Here is a visual representation of this analysis:

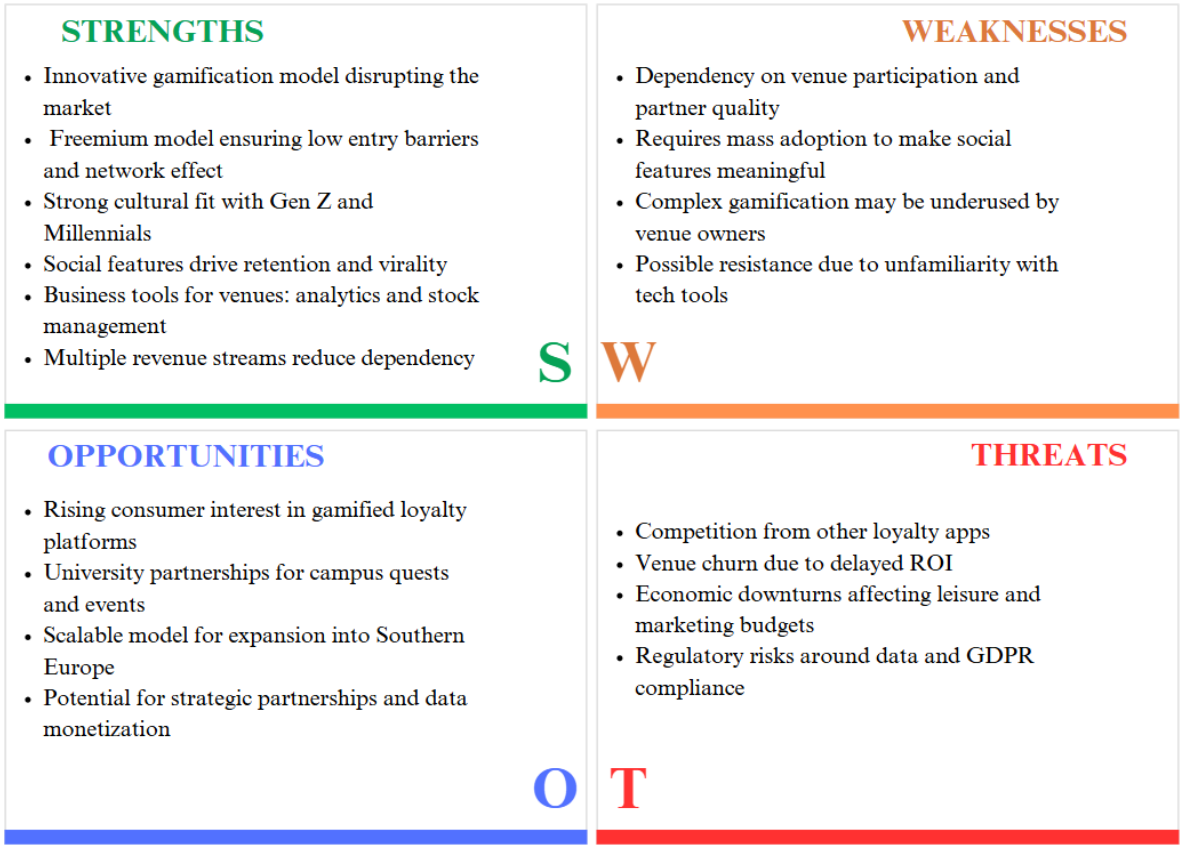


Figure 11- SWOT analysis

6. Competitive analyses

The IGO'OUT app competes in the space of the F&B industry, as a digital product. This project aims to provide the users with a space where they can take advantage of exclusive discounts and rewards and get to know new places through the app. There are also features that allow the user to see if their friends are using the app at which venues and to engage in a social activities by the form of side quests with friends at your table or even with strangers.

This means that the project will overlap with the ecosystem of some already well-established businesses. This includes direct competition, those with similar functionalities and the same target market. Let's start with these ones.

The most popular rival in this space is clearly "The Fork". A platform owned by TripAdvisor which helps the user to find new places based on their preferences such as type of food, price, location, among others. On top of this, they even provide great discounts in some places, and accumulate "YUMS", by other words, points that you earn by using the app that can be

converted into discounts in the future. This works as a loyalty program to hook the users and make them use the platform regularly.

On one side, they benefit from a strong brand recognition, as the platform widely used in Portugal and across Europe. They currently have over 30 million downloads and partnership with more than 60.000 restaurants. TheFork. (2023). On the other side, they are only currently only working with restaurants, which leaves us room to work with bars. Also, their value proposition focuses on reservation-based discounts, lacking gamification, interactive content and engagement elements.

There are more projects with a similar business model as “The Fork”, like “OpenTable” that’s applies the same concept, but more driven towards high-end places, still quite a bit far in terms of notoriety.

Shifting to the indirect competition, there are platforms that influence user choice in bars/restaurants without directly competing in gamification. Social media platforms and reviews on Google must be contemplated in this section, due to the fact that they serve as a tool to find new places. These serve just as an information hub and lack triggers that incentivize spending or repeat visits.

IGO’OUT differentiates itself by combining dynamic discount structures with gamification, driving not only customer acquisition but also long-term engagement. Unlike competitors that focus solely on one-time discounts or discovery tools, IGO’OUT ensures customers return through an interactive and rewarding experience, making it a more sustainable and engaging solution for both businesses and consumers. Players like the “The Fork” and “OpenTable” offer promotions indeed, but don’t drive higher per-table spending like IGO’OUT does (with the short-term discounts percentage levels system). Another positive aspect of this project is flexibility. The app provides businesses with the option to choose the percentage of discount at every level and every reward given. What sounds better than the flat discount applied by the rivals. As far as indirect competition, Google reviews and social media like Instagram and TikTok help users to find venues, but IGO’OUT keeps them coming back (with the long-term rewards system and social interaction).

7. Goals and development of the strategies

The mission of the IGO’OUT app is to change the actual paradigm of the F&B establishments by merging it with gamification elements, creating a more immersive and engaging experience for users and for business owners.

The goal isn’t just to create another company to be profitable and to casually compete with other options in the market. Our objective is to become the leading digital solution for local bars and restaurants, by attracting and retaining customers through innovative ways. Provide the necessary tools to reduce the gap between the local businesses and huge franchises that already have their reputation worldwide, their own rewards and loyalty systems. And of course, making profits along the way.

With that being said, it has become clear what this project aims to achieve, now let’s focus on “what” and “how” we are looking to achieve it. The development strategy is the part where we

break down the different strategies for each dimension of this project. This answers to the question of “what” will be done and then further in the paper, in the implementation plan will explain “how” will be done.

7.1. Strategy on the Product

As mentioned before, the IGO’OUT app is a digital product that rewards the user for interacting with the system. It uses gamification as a hook which can drive to habits formation and emotional loyalty. (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011). It also taps into human psychology by focusing on both intrinsic (e.g., progression, social visibility, unpredictability) and extrinsic (e.g., discounts, free items) motivation, which contributes to keeping the user engaged with the product.

The mechanic of the app is structured around the Octalysis Core Drives: Development & Accomplishment (CD2), Social Influence (CD5), and Ownership (CD4) (Chou, 2014) and it emphasize the user’s autonomy, feedback and progression. All of the above provides the user with a sense of freedom and social validation which raises the chances of engaging repetitively with the app.

7.2. Strategy on the positioning and target market

About the positioning strategy, this project wasn´t meant to be another loyalty platform but an “experience engine”. What does this mean? The purpose of this concept is to create “a more immersive experience” for everyone that enjoys F&B establishments. It enhances the social part of the experience (with side quests, leaderboards and badges), the user’s loyalty (by providing rewards for repetitive visits) and to increase the “spent per user” (by giving away discounts as the table consumption rises)

The IGO’OUT app is different from the competition through emotional engagement. It can deliver a better experience to real-world social contexts and playfulness. It leverages the "fun theory" and “self-determination theory” to frame the project as meaning-driven, not transaction-driven (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Our target market is young adults, students, and urban areas residents. We are focusing on people that most likely have both of the following behaviors: High smartphone usage and habit to frequently go to F&B establishments. If an individual already possesses both habits ingrain in their routine, they are more prone to immediately understand the benefits of our product and start using it. Since the app has no initial cost, this will only be a plus to their option when going.

7.3. Strategy on market entry, scalability and growth

Due to the complexity of this project, the strategy to “attack the market” is going to be a three stages operation: the entry, scalability and growth.

It was decided that the best approach to entry the market would be to follow a city-by-city approach. Meaning that we will focus only on one city to start, apply it, test it, optimize it and replicate it in the next city. First impressions matter and instead of trying to penetrate the country as a whole, we have concluded that this steady and controlled approach would be the one that would take us further. It seems wiser and more doable than trying to implement all at

once. That can lead to major initial problems and generate initial, but not lasting buzz. Our goal is longevity. By creating scarcity in the early phase (with this city-by-city approach), it can affect the user's perspective to avoid banalizing the benefits of the app.

The city chosen to kick off this project was Lisbon. It possesses all the traits of a great prospect. It is a manageable size to control the early operations, is an urban area with good F&B establishment density. Since is capital of Portugal and It is considered by many a trendy city, which will bring more visibility. Due to being a city with a high rotation of people, innovations that appear on this city are easier to spread to other cities in Portugal and even to other countries. All of these factors, especially the last one is what makes this city such a hot prospect to "spread the seed" of this project to other parts of the world, which will make in the future the implementation on those areas easier because some individuals are already familiarized with the concept.

7.4. Strategy users' engagement (B2B & B2C)

As mentioned before, this project will work directly with both the user of the app, customers (B2C) and venue owners (B2B). The way to capture their attention is totally different from one to another.

Starting with the strategy for customer engagement (B2C), it will be centered essentially around curiosity, refers program and FOMO (fear of missing out). In the early stages, curiosity will play a crucial role. We've decided to put QR codes on the tables of the establishment, but also nearby schools, universities and gyms and wait for the users "bit the bait". This approach is more cost efficient and will likely work as a natural filter. In theory, the individuals that will scan the QR code are more adventurous and opener to the new concepts, what makes them the perfect fit to be our early adopters.

Following the referral program. It has a couple of layers. The first one will leverage the influential power of our users to pursue their friends to download the app. If you get invited to the app by a friend that already has the app it will give you a random reward (supported by the IGO'OUT). Also, we will make sure that in the early stage, there will be a side quest that challenges the user to share our app download link in their social media to get a reward, to enhance viral sharing.

On the other side, the venues will also offer 1 reward (free coffee or beer) to first-time visitors. (supported by the venues).

At last, we have the FOMO strategy. This will work as a last layer attraction tool. Due to our city-by-city approach. The scarcity created by this strategy along with the exclusivity (early access to high profile influencers and micro-content creators) will likely be more efficient in persuading people to download the app, as soon as it is available in their city. (Chou, 2014).

Switching to the venues´ side (B2B). The establishment presents the most crucial part of the success of this project. Supposing that we are not effective at capturing the most attractive venues, this project is probably doomed. If the offer pool is not exciting, the user adoption and retention will be almost impossible. If we flip the situation, and we are indeed able to get on board the more attractive or underrated places in a certain region this makes the user adoption and retention much easier.

With that being said, we have developed a strategy that will help us to convince the venues to adopt our project. We will start with a high touch, direct pitch to the venue owners, explaining what the app does, how it works and the benefits for their businesses. (increased foot traffic, more costumer engagement and probable increase of price ticket for client).

On top of this, we will offer a free 6 month trial for the premium plan. This will showcase the additional tools. (personalized side quests and more visibility in the app). It will also highlight the fact that this app is not merely a marketing tool, it can have an impact on the business in other dimensions. Like stock management when it comes to flash promotions (aggressive promotions that the user can only accept for a limited period of time) and information to make decisions thought analytics generated by the app.

Physical in-venue materials will be provided to the businesses, like the table stands QR codes and app instructions, to reduce initial friction and spark curiosity.

The next step is to use case studies and early testimonials from the initial partners and use those conclusions to help build trust and credibility with new venues. If the app is indeed adding value to the initial partners, those statements will work as proof of concept which is crucial to keep climbing the ladder and creating new partnerships. We will use this leverage to target the high-visibility and high-traffic venues to build social approval and organic visibility, following the (pareto principle approach).

The final part of the strategy is to use the power of the network, meaning that we will introduce gamified incentives for owners, to generate competition between venues. (Ex: “top venue of the week” or “top discounter” badges that will grant extra visibility and reputation inside the app). In simultaneous we will leverage the B2B word-of-mouth and get into forums and groups in the F&B industry, to promote our product and generate extra engagement “in this side” of the community.

7.5. Strategy on monetization & business model

Before starting, again, is important to make a distinction between the 2 users: the “User-side” and the “Venue-side”, since both will have their own monetization system.

Let’s dig deep into the “User-side”. This system will operate on a freemium model, the goal is to ensure zero entry barriers, so that the app is totally free to download and to play. In this version you will have access to the all the feature of the app, however, user won’t be able to: skip the advertising, know all the precise location of friends and be able to join the rewards seasons with the spawning of “random happy hours” and “double XP weekend”. (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011).

On top of the freemium and premium models, there will also be the possibility to have in-app purchases. One-time themed events that will take place in secret locations, designed to take your drinking experience to the next level, all guided by the system of the app. This approach combines hedonic and utilitarian gamification strategies to drive monetized user engagement (Gandasari & Mauritsius, 2023).

Following the “Venue-side”, on one side there are the basic tier users. These owners will have access to all the basic features of the app, they will be able to define their schedule, rewards and discounts as long as the regular leaderboards and the standard set of side quests.

On the other side, the premium tier users will be able to navigate within all the previous features and on top of that, they will be able to access the customer behavior analytics (and insights), to personize their own side quests so it can be more in line with their brand and even get more visibility in the app when customers are looking for new spots to visit. (Chou, 2016).

There are still a couple more revenue streams to explore, that are not directly related to either party. Like the typical advertising in the app and more advanced processes. Since this project will lead to massive bulk data about the consumption and behavior patterns of the users, which can be sold to other companies for profit (Bulk data can be sold following the rules of the GDPR). Companies like "The Fork" might have interest on this type of analytics, because they already have data about where people go and when, but they lack deeper information like what are peoples' preferences when it comes to what they eat/drink more often in store.

In the long term, our aim is to build a full ecosystem where all the stakeholders can benefit from. With that being said, we are looking to build partnerships with other companies in the field and for a limited time allow those brands to sponsor seasonal events. (Ex: we made a deal with Coca-Cola and all the coke will give you a bigger discount multiplier and let you earn event points, that the players can exchange for exclusive rewards, like a PS5, a brand-new iPhone, etc). (Chou, 2016; Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011).

IGO'OUT's monetization model combines freemium access with premium features, in-app purchases, and strategic partnerships. This dual approach creates value for users, venues, and brands, supporting a scalable and engaging ecosystem.

8. Implementation Plan

After defining the strategy for each dimension of the project in the previous section, this is the part where we lay out the blueprint for "how" we are trying to implement the strategic decisions that were made.

As mentioned before, we have identified 3 critical stages that will serve as a time stamp that are aligned with our goals in the stage that the project is going through, they are:

a) According to Kotler et al. (2021), phased market rollouts are essential for iterative validation and resource allocation, especially when testing product-market fit in dynamic consumer segments such as nightlife and entertainment. So, we will start with the Launch phase (LP), that's goes from month 1-6 – The goal is to validate the product/market fit, get a better understanding if the there is an actual need for the product for both users, owners and clients. This stage is essentially to assure the onboarding of early users and generate initial traction with minimal cost and try to reduce the user friction as much as possible.

b) Growth phase (GP, month 7-20) – Once the product is well stablished in the first big city, the next step is to initiate the roll-out to the whole country and get recognition on a national level following the city-by-city approach. By fully activating the social mechanisms we will keep prioritizing the user adoption in the new areas and make the app even more engaging, at the same time as we slowly beginning the monetize on the product.

c) Expansion phase (EP, 21 months onwards) – The end game is always to go global. After the city-by-city strategy we will also follow a country-by-country approach. The objective is always to penetrate in the closest countries to Portugal in terms of culture. This will enable us to be as fast as possible in the expansion. Always with the user adoption in mind, investing in the countries we believe we would get less resistance (such as Spain, Italy, France, so on…). By this time, our product should be already established in Portugal and that allows us to focus on diversify and robust our revenue streams.

After having a clear vision of what to achieve in each phase, It is now time to break down the implementation for each part of the project (marketing, operations, organizational structure, finance and cost structure)

To facilitate understanding of this part, here is a table that underlines all the details of each stage:

Phase	Year	Semester	Donwloads	Active User	Premium %	Active Venues	Premium %
LP	1st	S1	2 000	600	-	10	-
		S2	8 077	2 423	0,9%	30	15%
GP	2nd	S1	23 749	8 312	1,1%	70	35%
		S2	51 391	17 987	1,8%	155	35%
EP	3rd	S1	71 849	25 147	2,1%	342	40%
		S2	156 426	54 749	2,6%	466	40%
	4th	S1	362 577	108 773	3,0%	549	45%
		S2	692 293	207 688	3,2%	612	45%
	5th	S1	916 450	274 935	3,4%	753	47%
		S2	1 082 507	324 752	3,7%	1000	47%

Figure 12 – Expected downloads, user, venues and premium % (by phase and year)

8.1 Marketing Plan

For this section of the plan we will explain how we are aiming to apply our strategy in order to reach our marketing objectives. Besides the explanation, we will also detail the timings and KPI's that will allow us to better navigate this complex part of the project and determine if the results are or are not aligned with the expectations. Since the goals are very distinguished from one phase to another, we always indicate what wee trying to do in the short, mid and long terms (aligning the plan with the current phase)

With that in mind, for the LP where the goal is to maximize the user adoption, we will start by pitching the venues directly and get them on board. For this stage we aim to partner with 10-15 trend-forward venues in Lisbon to act as an early adopter. We will provide physical stands for each partner to display on their playable tables with the QR codes (1 to "explanation of the app" and other to "start playing".

At the same time, we will launch a campaign on social media (Instagram and TikTok) where we will post content that will help the user to understand the context and benefits and combine micro-influencers content to help to bring more eyeballs. This will increase the initial curiosity around the product. The use of gamified virality and social contagion for user acquisition is extensively supported by Chou (2016) and Zichermann & Cunningham (2011), who argue that peer-driven incentives and visible progressions are critical for sustained growth in engagement-based platforms. We will take advantage of the initial buzz to leverage our referral program.

For each new friend that you bring to the application you will earn a free random reward, we will also include very rare expensive rewards to make it even more appealing.

In those first 6 months we have the objective to reach +2000 downloads and have at least a 30% retention rate (this indicates the % of users that came back to use the app again, after their first use in the following week or mouth). The success of this phase is highly dependent on the MVP's technical stability and user experience.

The city-by-city expansion approach is supported by Go-to-Market frameworks in high-context markets (Kotler et al., 2021), allowing for targeted communication and localized feedback loops that strengthen operational learning before international scaling. Now, entering the GP that goes from half a year to 20 months. The plan is to roll-out city-by-city, approaching cities with the same traits as Lisboa, like Porto and Coimbra, likewise. Right after making some noise in the capital, it is strategic for us to take advantage of the momentum and apply the same strategy in other major cities. Starting by direct pitching the most attractive and underrated venues in those cities and using our stands as a marketing tool at the same time, we work with local micro-influencers.

To keep growing we will collaborate with some universities and students' associations to organize exclusive campus missions. This will attract even more users to the app and create a bigger brand recognition. At this point, our size will be quite meaningful, enough to launch season events. Those events will be open to every user and will be live for a limited time (no more than a weekend or a few days during the week), to celebrate special events (like Carnival Quest, Hot Days Summer, many more…). These crazy events will enable multipliers and rewards to go crazy. The objective of this initiative is not only to bring attention and more users to the app, but also to test the engagement levels of this limited time events, if the results are positive, the goal in the next phase its to explore this solution but sponsored by big corporations ("e.g., a co-branded 'Sagres Weekend' mission", all the Sagres beer will triple your points).

At the end of this phase, we hope to have more than 50.000 downloads, with around 40% of the acquisition via our referral program. Have more than 150-200 active partners' venues and around 35% monthly retention rate.

International expansion through culturally similar markets is a recommended path for digital platforms aiming to reduce friction and optimize early adoption (Kotler et al., 2021). For the last stage, the EP, that goes from almost 2 years onward. The goal is to expand to other countries and try to get internation recognition. At this point the concept should be already approved by the Portuguese market, and we will have case studies to validate it. We will still follow the same strategy used to penetrate in Portugal, but with the help of cultural ambassadors (local influencers that clearly understand how the local people think) as well as venue scouts (our field team) in each new city. Those roles will help us to have a batter understanding of the cultural and financial situations of the new targets and allow us to make some adaptation to increase our success. The strategy will always be to think globally and apply locally. All expansion cities should start with a pilot program (soft launch with limited venues and A/B messaging).

Besides the initiatives mentioned above we will, on the other side, activate in-venue physical launch events to contribute to the local buzz and execute localize campaigns like Pub Crawls.

To assess the performance of these new cities we have defined metrics to help us measure the success of the operation, we aim to within 3 months to have: 25-40 active venues on board, 3.000-5.000 registered users and around 30% monthly retention rate. Within 12 months: +10.000 active users, with at least 30% referral program, +100 active venues with 30%-40% premium tier and at least 1 B2B brand sponsorship in the local market. By this time, we hope to be breakeven or positive financially in each city within the 1st year.

The marketing implementation plan might be actually the most complex one and it follows a phased, data-driven approach focused on rapid adoption, social amplification, and localized engagement. By aligning each action with clear KPIs, the strategy ensures consistent growth tracking and adaptability across different stages of the expansion.

8.2 Operations Plan

The operations plan translates our strategic intentions into practical steps. It details how IGO'OUT will deliver its experience across different markets, ensuring consistent quality, scalability, and local responsiveness. Operations are also divided into three phases aligned with the overall implementation plan: Launch, Growth, and Expansion.

In the LP, the operational implementation has a distinguished goal, for this section the objective is to develop the MVP (minimum viable product), validate the product-market fit but also integrate the initials partners with minimal complexity. We are going to keep the concept simple and effective. To make this happen, the developers need to start developing the initial code for the app. One of the most relevant tasks, exactly like building a house. If you build it on top of an asymmetrical floor, when It is time to build the roof, nothing will fit. The same principal will be applied to the code. If we rush the MVP and proper testing it can have a tremendous negative impact on the future escalation.

Right after reaching the MVP, we need to work closely with the owners so that they understand how to work the app and how they can implement a strategy, deploying the app core gamification mechanics and basic analytics integration. We are talking about offering hands-on onboarding to each partner venue, including in-person training and ongoing feedback loops. Also ensure technical stability and fix bugs based on user feedback, alongside with the development of the with physical tabletop stands featuring QR codes for app explanation and onboarding, that can/should be aligned with the design of that place. (so that we can take advantage of the reliability of those venues to introduce our product).

A couple of other activities should be also addressed at this stage, such as establishing internal support processes (e.g., email, chat, basic ticketing system) and setting up the programs to implement future payments and subscriptions.

Following the growth phase, the IT structure of the app needs to be more robust in order to fully operate in several cities, meanwhile the complexity of the field teams increase as well so we can have representation in more cities at the same time. The plan is to replicate Lisbon's set up, pitching strategic venues, partner training becomes standardized with playbooks and onboarding kits. To help penetration in new geographies we will implement the following features:

- Launch seasonal in-app events with real-time reward multipliers, to amplify the initial buzz
- Expand into university campuses and collaborate with student associations for exclusive missions.
- Initiate brand partnerships and manage co-branded limited events.
- Ensure real-time technical support for both users and venues.

Reaching the final stage of the EP, at this point we aim to expand internationally and while ensuring operational excellence and regional flexibility so that we can keep expanding to new territories. To make this a reality there are some operational improvements that need to be made. The user's data will increase massively and our IT structure. It is mandatory to Scale cloud infrastructure and analytics to support thousands or millions of concurrent users.

Going international force, us to be more flexible and assertive, to present the quality of service that we envision, we certainly need to integrate a multi-language and GDPR-compliant data system. This will require more effort from our legal department so that the entrance to different countries can be smooth and successful.

On top of this, It is crucial to build local teams from the top down, so they can manage their geographies, the development of tools for Country Managers to oversee city rollouts and local KPIs with the help of their local teams will dictate the success of this phase.

In summary, the operational implementation of IGO'OUT is designed to be lean at the start but deeply structured for scale. As we move from launch to international expansion, maintaining quality and consistency will depend on a few non-negotiable pillars: rigorous quality assurance cycles to avoid compounding technical debt, real-time analytics to guide decision-making across cities, and a well-documented internal knowledge base to preserve learning and processes. Ensuring customer and partner success through agile support systems and feedback loops will be key to driving retention and loyalty. Finally, by developing detailed expansion playbooks and empowering local teams with the right tools and autonomy, we set the foundation to scale efficiently while staying culturally relevant in each new market.

8.3 Organizational Plan

In order to secure the right functioning of the product, we need to have the right team in place ready to solve problems that may arise, continuously making the product better and help any user that needs our help. To ensure all the above and even keep the processes simple and effective we will have to adapt our team to every phase of the project. The aim is to be an efficient and lean team, capable of bringing this app to every corner of the world.

With that being said, for the 1st stage, we will operate with the following core team: 1 founder, responsible for every important decision that will have a fundamental impact on the outcome of this undertaking and aid in every area needed 2 internal developers, that will work on the coding of the application for both operative systems (IOS & Android), those are the people that will bring all this concept to life. At last, 1 partner scout will be responsible for researching, getting in touch with the businesses, onboard them and help with the integration.

Out of the core team, we will also work with 2 freelancers. One designer and one copyrighter. At this stage there is no need to have them fully working with team due to the fact that their activities will be punctual and therefore to optimize costs, they won't be with us at a full time.

We are aware that the leanness of this team may raise the risk of burnout, to prevent that, we will maintain constant communication between all members and set accomplishable challenges. The goal is just to achieve MVP and maintain a tight scope of features.

Launch Phase		
Role	**nº of employees**	**monthly salary**
founder	1	1 000 €
developer	2	1 700 €
venues scount	1	1 000 €
TOTAL	**4**	**3 700 €**

Figure 13 – Launch Phase team composition

Advancing to the next stage, the GP, since we are not operating only in one city and the goal is to conquer new areas, inevitably the team must grow. Most of the alterations on this phase will occur on the field team. That means we will extinguish the partner scout and create the position of field leader and hire 5 more people to report to him/her. This way we will be way more agile when it comes to acquiring new venues and helping underperforming businesses to achieve our product's full potential. The key to this phase is to maintain a very close and warm relationship with those places so that they feel our support in every stage of their integration (from the onboarding, explanation of the app mechanics and even to share some good practices to help them to sell more, among many others). Besides the good results in sales, another layer that must be addressed is that by providing bulletproof assistance to our partners, they are very likely to spread the word to other businesses owners about our product, which leads to a higher adoption rate in those new cities.

At this particular time, we will make only two more additions to our team, the first one, is to hire a business developer to lead our B2B initiatives. His/her utility will be to plan and coordinate the initiatives with the public entities (such as universities, students associations, etc.) to secure partnerships with brands for the corporate sponsored events. This way we grant unpredictability and new dynamics to the users so that they don't get bored with the same functionalities.

The second one will be a part-time support agent. This way we can make sure any client that's having trouble with the app will get support from this agent that will report it and fix it. It also works for the venues side, meaning if any partner asks for some kind of assistance, this agent can help them surpass their technical difficulty or even send a field team to resolve the issue. We will also use outsourced specialists on demand (e.g., for security, analytics, A/B infra) questions that become relevant at this maturity.

Our vision is to create a last-going team, so that we can build the know-how all from the beginning, any changes in staff can harm us and that is why we are looking to maintain a low team turnover. Less than 20% turnover rate (changes in staff in a certain period) within the first 12 months is the objective. To achieve this, It is crucial to keep a transparent and open work environment and sometimes make financial efforts to keep the people with the required skills.

Growth Phase Phase		
Role	**nº of employees**	**monthly salary**
founder	1	1 500 €
developer	2	2 000 €
field team	5	1 000 €
field leader	1	1 200 €
B2B leader	1	1 500 €
part time support agent	1	700 €
TOTAL	**11**	**7 900 €**

Figure 14 – Growth Phase team composition

Entering the EP where the objective is to go international and penetrate in many different cities. For this very sensitive step, we will need to hire 1 territory director for each region (we have divided the regions as 1º - Spain & Portugal; 2º France & Italy; 3º Germany & Netherlands and at last 4º- Czech Republic, Slovakia & Poland) along with 1 region manager that will report to the territory director. Together they will be responsible for hiring local teams. Those teams would involve: 1-2 field team members (to assist on operational issues on a daily basis) and also 1 brand event coordinator per region

To secure that the implementation goes smooth on the broad, its essential to robust our IT team, we believe that the 2 developers are enough to make the app run in Portugal but grow at the pace, we must robust this department. For these adaptations we would need at least one backend specialist, to take care of the account storage, levels and badges, the "invisible part of the app". A frontend/mobile developer responsible for the interface of the app. A cloud keeper, the part that enables the app to run properly and is able to handle the scaling of new users and one assistant developer that capable of giving and hand when in need, perform the quality assurance and also testing for bugs.

In summary, the implementation of IGO'OUT's team structure follows a lean but scalable model, designed to evolve with each growth phase. By strategically expanding roles and preserving internal know-how, the company aims to ensure operational excellence and sustainable international rollout. We will always aim to learn as much as possible in every situation and quickly make any adaptation to the team's structure if needed.

Expansion Phase Phase *(in the final of the 5th year)*		
Role	**nº of employees**	**monthly salary**
founder	1	2 000 €
developer	2	2 300 €
field team	35	1 100 €
B2B leader	1	2 000 €
part time support agent	1	700 €
territory manager	4	2 500 €
brand event cordinator	4	1 500 €
backened specialist	1	2 300 €
front end/mobile developer	1	2 300 €
cloud keeper/ assistant	1	2 000 €
region manager	4	2 000 €
TOTAL	**55**	**20 700 €**

Figure 15 – Expansion Phase team composition

8.4 Financial Plan & Cost structure

To ensure the financial viability and sustainable scaling of IGO'OUT, we will implement a phased monetization strategy aligned with the platform's growth stages. Each phase includes a specific revenue model and an adaptable cost structure, with the overarching goal of achieving break-even by the end of Year 4 and maintaining positive operating margins thereafter.

As mentioned before, the objective of the GP is to maximize the user adoption and prevent any objections. Therefore, there are no revenue expectations at this stage, by applying this freemium model we make sure that implementation plan is aligned with the goals of the phase.

Despite no gains, there are still expenses that need to be considered. Especially at this stage, we need to make the initial push in several directions to create strong foundations that will impact everyday onwards. Areas like the development of the product (including the testing alongside our partners) and brand awareness (marketing) must be addressed properly.

We estimate an operating cost of around 9.000€-10.000€/month. This includes the core team, infrastructure and marketing investments. This resulted in a cumulative burn of capital of around 58.000€ at the end of the six months. It means that to clear this stage we are forecasting around 165.000€ of external investment for the 1st year. We indeed asked for more money that we needed in order to keep some cash in the treasury.

Entering the next phase, the growth phase. The plan is to roll-out to other cities in Portugal, where the goal is still focused in increasing the user adoption, but we also start to monetize in Lisbon via venue´s partners and exclusive events promote via app. It means the cost structure will increase due to expansion of the team, especially in the localized field teams that will be responsible for attracting more partners in strategic cities. Having this in consideration, our monthly operating costs will be close to 14.000€ monthly. This comes up to 200.000€ from the 7th month to the end of the 20th month.

Unlike the previous stage, we will have revenues coming in to help dilute the costs, let's break it down:

- Venue premium subscription: 12,99€-19,99€/ month depending on the capacity and traffic of the venue (those being between 15%-35% of the total venues).

- User premium subscription: 3,99€ (0,9%-1,8% of the total users) and that includes ad-free experience and exclusive gamified benefits.

- Exclusive events ticketing: 9,99€-12,99€ per user, per event. (This one presents a different logic, as the data base of user raises, the % of the purchases drops, in these cases in goes from 3,2%-3,0%).

- First sponsored event (brand-funded): Single themed campaign, where we charge 10.000€ (with a 50% margin since we are considering operational expenses to put on this event).

All of the previous ones can generate up to 50.000€ at the end of the second phase. If we subtract the forecasted costs, plus a margin to grant some cash at the end of the year, we would

need another tranche of 145.000€ in capital need, to make sure we can sustain until the end of the 2nd year. (with a cumulative capital burn of 310k€)

Finally, the last phase and the more complex one, entering the EP. At this point we have built an ecosystem that attracts users, both clients and venues and is already part of their daily lives. The end game is monetized as much as possible as our product while continuing to expand to many other cities all over the world.

The following revenue streams will ensure the financial viability of this project in the long run:

- Venue premium subscription: 34,99€ -99,99€ per month in the mature markets, with growing adoption across cities.

- Exclusive events ticketing: 12,99€ - 24,99€ per user, per event. (buyers between 2,6%-0,8%);

- User premium tiers: 5,99€ - 7,99€ per user. adopted by 2,1%–3,7% of active users;

- Advertising, data monetization and sponsored events: 37.000€ in the 3rd year, 82.000€ in the year 4 and 164.000€ in the last year. This revenue comes from the following B2B streams:

    a) Anonymized behavioral insights and A/B testing partnerships;
    b) A percentage of the revenue made via advertising (for the non-premium users);
    c) Sponsored event (brand-funded)- Strategic co-branded missions (e.g., Coca-Cola weekend), undertakings that can be applied in several simultaneous counties (with a 50% margin operational).

In terms of general revenue, our target is to get to more than 20.000€ monthly on average, by the 30th month (that results in approximately 233.000€ yearly). At the end of the 5th year we also expect to increase the revenue due to the maturity of our markets and be making between around 2M€ annually (roughly 157.000€ monthly).

Bearing in mind the big expansion that we are undergoing, It is also expected that our cost structure will rise as well. This includes global tech infrastructure, local field and brand teams, international event operations, and legal/compliance. Our new cost structure will vary from 19.000€ in the 3rd year to 70.000€ in the 5th. It increases a lot considering every time we get to a new region/city our organizational structure must keep growing to fully penetrate in those areas.

Having consideration of the previsions that were mentioned above, we expect to hit operational profit in the 4th year. By the 5th year we forecast to have more 648.000€ in total accumulated net income.

Here is a table that shows all the expected revenues from each stream and the respective operating costs:

Revenue Streams	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**total**	**Av. per Year**
venue subscription	270 €	8 416 €	67 853 €	198 014 €	441 210 €	715 762 €	143 152 €
premium users	522 €	9 940 €	70 139 €	435 889 €	1 024 172 €	1 540 662 €	308 132 €
exclusive event	2 169 €	19 333 €	58 354 €	186 693 €	261 752 €	528 301 €	105 660 €
data, adds monetization & Sponsored events	-	10 000 €	37 000 €	82 000 €	164 000 €	293 000 €	58 600 €
TOTAL	**2 961 €**	**47 690 €**	**233 345 €**	**902 596 €**	**1 891 133 €**	**3 077 725 €**	**615 545 €**
Cost Structure	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**total**	**Av. per Year**
Salaries Benefits & Wages	95 267 €	129 733 €	224 690 €	422 065 €	851 178 €	1 722 933 €	344 587 €
Third-party supplies and services	15 000 €	25 000 €	35 000 €	45 000 €	60 000 €	180 000 €	36 000 €
Investments in Marketing	6 000 €	15 000 €	30 000 €	50 000 €	70 000 €	171 000 €	34 200 €
TOTAL	**116 267 €**	**169 733 €**	**289 690 €**	**517 065 €**	**981 178 €**	**2 073 933 €**	**414 787 €**

Figure 16 – Table of revenues streams and operating costs

In conclusion, the financial plan for IGO'OUT follows a realistic and phased approach, reflecting the priorities of each stage of the project. Early on, the focus is on building traction and proving the concept, while later phases gradually introduce monetization without compromising user growth. As the platform gains visibility and adoption, new revenue streams are unlocked and optimized. By the time we reach international markets, the structure is ready to support higher costs while also generating significantly more income. With break-even expected by the middle of Year 4 and a strong profit trajectory thereafter, this roadmap gives IGO'OUT the financial stability and flexibility needed to keep growing and adapting over time.

9. Implementation Issues

Like any other project built from ground zero, adversity is expected to rise. Having a clear understanding of problems that may occur in the journey and having some type of resolution for them is a great way to be more agile and reduce their impact. With that being said, we made the distinction between the issues that can surge early (the launch phase) and the ones in future (growth and expansion stage).

Starting with the present implementation issues. The one that presents a bigger risk is indeed the business adoption resistance. Some venues may fear profit margin erosion. One of the core values of the app for the users is the instant discount and long-term rewards they are getting, these offers are going to be paid by the venues. Due to the level of customization provided by the app, it is possible to fight these issues. By letting the businesses decide the "playable" schedule, number of tables, discounts and rewards. This way every business can work on the threshold they feel comfortable with. However, despite this level of personalization there will be still some businesses that are not comfortable with this approach and will not see the value of the app.

Also, within the business adoption resistance, there is still learning curve and skepticism about the app's effectiveness. At the beginning, both users and venues will need time to fully

understand and start to operate the app. If both users and businesses are skeptical because they didn't understand/appreciate the benefits of the app, they will never surpass that learning curve in order to extract full potential. The curve for the user will be more intuitive. The design of the app will enable smooth sailing on the different menus, always with the option to get an additional explanation of every aspect of the app. On the venue side, on one hand, it will be a little more complex due to the fact to extract the full potential, there is data in the app that needs to be analyzed to take some strategic decisions.

On the other hand, there are also concerns about the POS (Point of Sale) integration. Many venues operate with different solutions (different suppliers) for their point of sales, meaning that direct integration with every single one of them will be a never-ending job. For this reason, we have elected not to open this door. Sure, it would be much easier for venues to automatically receive the data from the app in their POS and pass the bill to their clients. We found that the more practical solution would be to consult the items consumed by the clients directly in a device (tablet, PC or smartphone logged in with the venue account) and manually introduce them in their billing system. Ate the end of every game", the staff must "force the price" to match the many different discounts applied in the app. This can be a problem, since it makes it easier for the staff to manipulate the prices and can lead to higher change deviations. If the businesses had in the past some problem with their staff of this kind, this might be a deal breaker for them.

Changing the focus to the social part, "side quest" must be verified and accepted by the venue, that implies a staff member needs to stop for a moment to assess the validity of that mission, so that the user can redeem their prize. The side quests are thought to be rapidly verified, like "pay a shot to someone next table" but there is still some level of coordination that needs to be done by the employees, so that this feature can work properly. Once again this raises concerns, if the staff members are friends with the clients, they can easily validate the quest, even if the mission was not completed.

One last issue that can have an impact on the adoption of this concept, is the fact that this type of app promotes and encourages consumption overall. Inevitably the ingestion of alcoholic drinks. This can be a sensitive topic and might raise ethical concerns, let's take an example of a person with a drinking addiction. In this case the use of this app will provide a more favorable environment to actively engage in addictive behavior. There are some superficial solutions like the possibility of self-exclusion (a action practiced by casinos, for example). Nevertheless, it is still a reactive measure, and the individual can still cause harm to their general health.

It is predictable that a portion of the businesses will find it too complex, too harsh to give up on margins, unnecessary or even distracting.

On top of that, there is still the risk of user rejection. If the value proposition isn't strong enough, we won't attract enough users to create a network effect. Whoever that risk is less probable on the user side, due to the fact that this app brings mostly advantages to the user without any counterparts. They get access to a whole new experience while enjoying discounts and rewards in the process.

Shifting to the future implementation issues that might arise, It is possible to anticipate two. The first one being cultural and market adaptation expansion, entering in new countries may require adaptations such as the discount model, language barriers and cultural adjustment to fit

different user behaviors. All these factors need to be kept in mind in a future expansion stage. If any of those factors are neglected it can result in a failure in the penetration of that market. Another critical issue is legal and regulatory barriers, which vary across countries. Different countries have varying laws on discount promotions, alcohol advertising, and data privacy, potentially creating compliance challenges in international markets. Before jumping to a new market there is a whole set of research that needs to be done into both cultural and legal matters to check if that market is a hot prospect for this project, or if is not quite ready for this project.

Implementing IGO'OUT comes with both immediate and long-term challenges but having a clear strategy to address them will ensure a smoother adoption process and scalable growth. In the short-term, the main hurdle will be business adoption resistance, requiring education, customization, and proof of value to gain venue trust. Additionally, ensuring seamless user onboarding and managing operational demands for staff will be crucial for a strong first impression. Looking ahead, expansion into new markets will bring cultural, behavioral, and regulatory challenges, requiring adaptation in pricing models, legal compliance, and localized engagement strategies. By proactively addressing these risks, IGO'OUT can position itself as a sustainable and scalable solution in the F&B industry.

10. Financial Analyses

The objective of this part of the paper is to materialize the concept that was built and assess if the numbers that this project generate will be financially viable. Besides the viability of the project, it will also provide the investors with more information about how their investment will pay off by investing in the IGO'OUT app.

We will investigate the financial statements over a 5-year span, those being: Balance sheet, Cash-flow analysis, Income statement and profit-and-loss analysis. On top of that, we will also recur to investments metrics, such as ROI (return on Investment), Break-even point, NPV (net present value) and IRR (internal rate of return). By combining the details of the analysis with both financial statements and investments metrics the reader will be able to have a clear understanding of the attractiveness of this project.

Given the scalable and international scope of the IGO'OUT business model, financial projections were constructed using internal rationales, behavioural assumptions and comparable benchmarks, instead of solely regional demographic data. This approach allows for more strategic modeling in line with long-term expansion goals and the different demographics of the total of

10.1 Financial statements

To increase the credibility of this project we produced all the financial statements that enabled a realistic financial reading of this project. The rationale behind these projections is ambitious but also realistic. We translated for each year of this analysis the main purpose of each phase presented previously in this paper. Due to the nature of this project, an application that is aimed at maximizing the user adoption in the early stage, the return will not be immediate. As time

passes and the compound effect of the network becomes stronger the results will start to show up in an exponential way.

INCOME STATEMENT Value in euros (€)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Revenue from services	2 961	47 690	233 345	902 596	1 891 133
Cost of Goods Sold	(1 200)	(3 000)	(10 000)	(23 000)	(34 000)
Gross Profit	**1 761**	**44 690**	**223 345**	**879 596**	**1 857 133**
Advertising and Promotion	(6 000)	(15 000)	(30 000)	(50 000)	(70 000)
Salaries Benefits & Wages	(95 267)	(129 733)	(224 690)	(422 065)	(851 178)
Third-party supplies and services	(15 000)	(25 000)	(35 000)	(45 000)	(60 000)
EBITDA	**(114 505)**	**(125 044)**	**(66 345)**	**362 531**	**875 955**
Depreciation & Amortization	(2 000)	(4 000)	(6 000)	(8 000)	(10 000)
EBIT	**(116 505)**	**(129 044)**	**(72 345)**	**354 531**	**865 955**
Interest Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Interest Expanses	-	-	-	-	-
Earnings Before Taxes					
Income Taxes	-	-	-	(74 451 €)	(181 851 €)
Net Income	**(116 505 €)**	**(129 044 €)**	**(72 345 €)**	**280 079 €**	**684 105 €**

Figure 17 – Income Statement

The figure 17 presents the details about the Income Statement, the purpose of this statement is to summarize a company's financial performance over a specific period.

As mentioned before the “revenue from services” is composed by the total of 4 revenue streams detailed in the chapter 8.4). The revenue grows as the maturity of the product in the market keeps increasing according to the forecasted demand for those 5 years.

The cost of the goods sold is relatively low compared to our revenue, that happens because we do not sell a physical product with an associated cost. This represents the expenses we have for hosting exclusive in-venue events and also possible investments related to those sponsored corporate events. (we are considering this cost 50% of the total revenue generated by this stream). That is why this cost rises as time goes by, we go from 1.200€ in the first year to 34.000€ in the 5th year.

The most relevant expense in this statement is clearly the cost of salaries and wages. In the IGO’OUT app, we really value human capital. With that being said, we must pay them accordingly to the level of requirements we have for our employees. Since we made the choice to internalize the creation of the app, instead of counting on external services, this will put more financial pressure on those first 3 years, who enables us more flexibility and prevent major costs when it comes to the escalation to other countries and later stages. In the average of those 5 years, we expect to spend more than 28.000€ monthly on our staff, this is because we forecast a continuous increase in monthly wages, so we can be competitive in the market and able to

maintain the know-how in the team and prevent a high rotation of staff. On top of that, since he has the desire to internationally, every time we arrive at a new city/region, it implies we create a whole new structure for that region, alongside the local teams, that makes. We expect to grow from 4 members in the first six months to 55 at the end of 2030.

Both lines, "advertising and promotion" and the "third-party supplies and services" follow the same logic, the investments in these rubrics grow as the business volume grows. The guideline was to be as lean as possible in the early stages and raise the investment over time.

To finish, we expect this project to start delivering positive net income from operations in the 4th year, as mentioned, this revenue model takes time to be sustainable, but as soon as results become positive, it gets really promising.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT					
Value in euros (€)	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
Operating Cash Flow					
Net Earning	(116 505)	(129 044)	(72 345)	280 079	684 105
Depreciation & Amortization	2 000	4 000	6 000	8 000	10 000
Cash from Operations	**(114 505)**	**(125 044)**	**(66 345)**	**288 079**	**694 105**
Investing Cash Flow					
Property & Equipment	(10 000)	(10 000)	(10 000)	(10 000)	(10 000)
Cash from Investing	**(10 000)**	**(10 000)**	**(10 000)**	**(10 000)**	**(10 000)**
Financing Cash Flow					
Issuance (repayment) of Debt	90 000	145 000	120 000	(155 000)	(200 000)
Issuance (repayment) of equity	75 000	-	-	-	-
Cash from Financing	**165 000**	**145 000**	**120 000**	**(155 000)**	**(200 000)**
Net variation in Cash	**40 495**	**9 956**	**43 655**	**123 079**	**484 105**
Opening Cash Balance	-	40 495	50 451	94 106	217 185
Closing Cash Balance	**40 495**	**50 451**	**94 106**	**217 185**	**701 290**

Figure 18 – Cash Flow Statement

Above, we can observe the Cash Flow Statement, a financial report that summarizes the movement of cash both into and out of a company over a specific period.

In this case, It is important to mention the need for an initial 75.000€ for the issuance of the company´s equity. Besides this investment we also need a total of 355.000€ in total for the first three years. This investment is asked to the investors in order to to make the operation running, paying the initial expenses, while the company is not able to generate operational profits. This debt is planned to be repaid in the 4th year, as soon as the project is able to generate a positive operational income.

The goal of this statement is to assess the liquidity of the company, the forecast is to gradually be maintain a positive "closing cash balance", always trying to increase the safety pillow, to

remove pressure from the treasury. We expect to pay back the borrowed value in both the 4th and 5th year, It is expected to end in the year of 2030 with more than 700.000€ in the closing balance in cash.

It is also important to mention we preview a continuous investment in computers, monitors, software, between others, this will be represented in this statement in the line "property and equipment", we intend to spend 10.000€ annually so that we can provide the best possible conditions to our employees.

BALANCE SHEET **Value in euros (€)**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**
Assets					
Current Assets:					
Cash	40 495	50 451	94 106	217 185	701 290
Account Receiveble					
Total Cureent Assets	**40 495**	**50 451**	**94 106**	**217 185**	**701 290**
Property & Equipment	8 000	14 000	18 000	20 000	20 000
Goddwill					
Total Assets	48 495	64 451	112 106	237 185	721 290
Liabilities					
Current Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Lonrg-ter Debt	90 000	235 000	355 000	200 000	0
Total Liabilities	**90 000**	**235 000**	**355 000**	**200 000**	**0**
Shareholder´s Equity					
Equity Capital	75 000	75 000	75 000	75 000	75 000
Reatined Earnings	(116 505)	(245 549)	(317 894)	(37 815)	646 290
Total Shareholders's Equity	(41 505)	(170 549)	(242 894)	37 185	721 290
Total L+E	48 495	64 451	112 106	237 185	721 290

Figure 19 – Balance Sheet

All of the previous financial statements allow us to create the balance sheet, where is where we summarize a company's assets, liabilities, and owner's equity at a specific point in time. This resembles the performance analysis of the company in every dimension. We can confirm in this table that it sums up the logic found in the previous statements. A humble performance in the early stages, with a growing result, an increase in equity and assets with a reduction in the liabilities as the time passes.

10.2 Investments Metrics

Entering the final part of the financial analyses, we will resort to investments metric that will be able to quantify the attractiveness of this investment in this project. By putting these results in perspective and comparing them with other businesses we will be able to get a more accurate image of this project's viability, by assessing the output of number and ratios.

One of the most important metrics is breakeven analyses. This helps determine the point where total costs equal total revenue, resulting in neither profit nor loss. In the case of the IGO'OUT app, the breakeven will occur approximately between the 49th and the 50th month. Adapting this value for units (that in this case we will use both users, venues and clients), that would represent around 270.000 total active users and more than 830 venues onboard.

At first sight, this might seem a very long timeframe to get to the breakeven, whoever if we put it into perspective, it with other "freemium" platforms like Spotify, this result start to feel more reasonable. They took more than 6 years just to reach operational profits and around 12 years to achieve their breakeven. *Spotify. (2025, February 4)*. We must keep in mind that there are indeed differences between both business models, since Spotify needed a massive platform and major licensing contracts, among other heavy and expensive infrastructure.

ROI	
Annualized	10,3%
Simple	63%

Figure 19 – ROI (return on Investment)

ROI, also known as Return on Investment, is a popular profitability metric used to evaluate how well an investment has performed. It is expressed as a percentage and is calculated by dividing an investment's net profit (or loss) by its initial cost or outlay.

The annualized ROI is calculated by dividing the final cash closing balance by the total investment, in the case of the IGO'OUT app that results in 10,3%. This value is lined up with reasonable benchmarks (around 10%-15%) for early-stage digital businesses. This result is positive, realistic and confirms sustained growth over the 5-year span.

When it comes to the simple ROI, we have reached the result of 63%, this result might seem too optimistic at first sight, whoever, this is justifiable via 3 factors:

a) For an international project, our initial investment is relatively low (430.000€), which makes it amplify the final ROI.

b) Our closing cash balance is considerably high at the end of the 5th year. This happens because we have elected not to distribute dividends and reinvest that money to expand the operation to other continents in the following years. To have success in those new regions we need to have access to cash so we can keep growing our infrastructure.

c) The freemium strategy will postpone revenues to the later years, this result in an exponential growth mostly in the transition from 2029 to 2030.

These ROI results reflect a strategically sound and realistic financial trajectory for IGO'OUT. While the annualized ROI confirms steady and sustainable growth, the elevated simple ROI is justified by a lean initial investment, deliberate cash retention, and a growth model that prioritizes long-term scalability. This reinforces the project's appeal to investors with a long-term vision rather than those seeking immediate returns.

Investment Metrics	
NPV (5 years)	- 59 537 €
NPV (7 years)*	853 884 €
IRR (5 years)	7,5%
IRR (7 years)*	28,9%
Payback Period	4,6 years
*based on the current trends	

Figure 20 – Other investment metrics

In the table above, we can see the results of the final 3 metrics used for these financial analyses. Since this project is envisioned to be profitable in the long term, we provide results for the NPV and IRR for both 5 and 7 years. Given the specifics of the project, we found it important to add those 2 extra years so that we can look at the bigger picture of this investment.

Starting with the NPV, a metric compares the profitability of a project by comparing the present value of its future cash inflows to the present value of its initial investment costs. In the 5-year scenario, the result is negative (-59.537). This tells us that considering a 10% discount rate (representing the opportunity cost), this project wouldn't be able to generate enough cashflow to achieve financial break-even, in this time span, the investor couldn't get their money back. If we expand the time frame to the 7-years window, the outcome is totally different, the NPV would be 853.88€. That's a very positive NPV and this result reflects the nature of this project, a concept that is supposed to deliver results in the medium/long run.

The IRR (internal return rate) was calculated using the same principles as the NPV and this number reflects the exact percentage of discount rate that makes the NPV zero. In the case of the IGO'OUT, for the 5 years period the result would be 7,54%, that is relatively below the usual benchmark (10%-15%) but it is coherent with the stage of this project and the late monetization. However, the 7 years IRR is way more appealing, resulting in 28,9% which is very attractive to patient investors with long term growth vision.

For last, we have the payback period, the length of time it takes for the cash inflows from an investment to equal the initial cost of the investment. In this case that time would be 4,6 years, which is aligned with what has been mentioned in this paper about the type of investment of the IGO'OUT.

The financial evaluation of the IGO'OUT project reveals a promising long-term investment opportunity. While early profitability is postponed due to a freemium model and strategic reinvestment, the annualized ROI of 10.3% aligns with digital startup benchmarks, and the 7-year NPV and IRR confirm the project's strong potential over time. The payback period of 4.6 years reinforces the narrative of delayed but sustainable profitability. These results position IGO'OUT as a venture tailored for long-term, growth-oriented investors, rather than those seeking immediate returns.

11.Conclusion

This thesis explored the potential of gamification as a strategic tool to enhance customer engagement, motivation, and loyalty in the food and beverage establishments (F&B). The end game of this innovative business plan was to investigate how game design elements could be integrated into the user experience to generate lasting value for both consumers and businesses. After observing many fields of literature on gamification, motivational psychology, and digital business models, the research presented a conceptual blueprint for the development of the IGO'OUT app, a platform that turns casual visits to bars and restaurants into a dynamic, interactive, and rewarding journey.

The results of the external and internal analyses revealed an optimistic macroeconomic and social conditions for a gamified solution in the F&B sector. Especially among younger, tech-proficient consumers. At the top of this, competitive analysis highlighted a clear gap in the market: Despite the existence of many loyalty models, few effectively taps into the motivational drivers found in game design, such as challenge, feedback, social connection, and progression. This validates the project's value proposition, when properly designed and implemented, gamified features can create a differentiated customer experience and stronger emotional connection with the brand.

The proposed solution combines individual and social gameplay mechanics, exclusive rewards, point based progression, and customizable experiences to stimulate repeat behavior and build customer loyalty. Importantly, besides the gains for the clients, the app also empowers small and medium-sized businesses by offering real-time data insights and new touchpoints to engage clients during their visit. Presented itself as a customable standard solution for every owner that wishes to create a more immersive and interactive experience.

The concept showed to be liked by the general market, but also identified potential implementation challenges, such as reward fatigue, user retention, and operational integration with existing business processes. These will require careful planning, continuous feedback loops and a customer support team ready to get into action.

On top of the previous functionalities, there is still room for innovative features. Both exclusive events in local communities and later strategic multinational themed events can work to advertise the brand while generating a whole new stream of revenue.

In conclusion, this thesis contributes to the field of international management by demonstrating how gamification can be strategically applied in traditional industries. It changes the perspective of how disruptive tech solutions can have a tremendous impact in customer loyalty and establishes the guidelines of a replicable model for future applications in other service domains.

This thesis is ultimately a reflection of how we, as individuals and as businesses, are moving toward a world where emotional connection, personalized experiences and genuine interaction matter more than ever. We are here to build relationships, to transform ordinary moments into memorable ones and to turn casual consumers into loyal communities. In a world where our eyes are constantly staring at screens, it makes sense to take advantage of technology in ways that bring people closer rather than isolate them. IGO'OUT aspires to be part of that solution by turning digital interaction into real-world connection.

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Appendix Section

Annex A: City-by-city approach plan

Year	Semester	Active Cities
1st	S1	Lisbon
	S2	Lisbon, Porto & Coimbra
2nd	S1	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga & Guimarães
	S2	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães & Aveiro
3rd	S1	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid & Barcelona
	S2	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville & Malaga
4th	S1	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Rome, Milan & Paris
	S2	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Rome, Milan, Paris, Marseille & Nice
5th	S1	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Rome, Milan, Paris, Marseille, Nice, Berlin, Munich & Amesterdam
	S2	Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, Faro, Braga, Guimarães, Aveiro, Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Malaga, Rome, Milan, Paris, Marseille, Nice, Berlin, Munich, Amesterdam, Roterdam, Bruxels, Bratislava, Warsow & Prague
TOTAL		**24 cities accross 4 regions**

Annex B: Survey Questions and Answers

Number	Question	Answers
1)	**Age group?**	**129**
	Under 18	2
	18-24	24
	25-34	88
	35-44	4
	45+	11
2)	**Gender**	**129**
	Male	78
	Female	51
	Non-binary/prefer not to say	0
3)	**How often do you visit bars/restaurants per month?**	**129**
	Less than once	13
	1-3 times	54
	4-6 times	43
	More than 6 times	19
4)	**Do you usually look for discounts or promotions when choosing a bar/restaurant?**	**129**
	Yes, always	19
	Somestimes, if it's easy to find	71
	No, I choose based on other factors	39

5)	**Do you already use any platform that influences your choices ?**	**129**
	Yes (the Fork, Triptadvisor, other)	94
	No	35
6)	**Do you already use any platform that influences your choices ?**	**129**
	Yes, that sounds fair and interesting	75
	Maybe, depends on the discountpercentage	46
	No, Im not moved by promotions	8
7)	**If there was an app that provided bigger and bigger discounts as your table speding raises. Would this motivate you to spend more?**	**129**
	Yes, I'd consider ordering more to reacha higher discount overall	42
	Maybe, but only if the spendingthreshold is reasonable	65
	No, I would order the same thingsregardless	22
8)	**If the discount system worked like this, would you use it?** €0-10 per user → 5% discount €10-20 per user → 10% discount €20+ per user → 20% discount € - The money already spend per user in the table % - The discount percentage for the next order	**129**
	Yes, I would be interested	76
	Maybe, if it's easy to redeem them	40
	No, the discount percentages aren't high enough to influence me	13
9)	**Would having access to those discounts influence your choice of venue over some venues that don´t ?**	**129**
	1 » no influence at all	3
	2 » minor influence	19
	3 » some influence	40
	4 » high influence	51
	5 » very high influence	16
10)	**If this app rewards repeat visits to the same venue with gifts. Does this system sound engaging?**	**129**
	Yes	78
	Maybe, I'd need to see how easy it is touse	43
	No, Im not moved by that factor	8
11)	**If the reward system worked like this, would you use it?** 1st visit: Free beer, coffe of or 50% discount on an appetizer / spiritual drink 5th visit: 50% off: coffe, beer, appetizer or spiritual drink 10th visit: random rewards (1 free item) 15th visit: Free soft drink or 3€ discount on a cocktail	**129**
	Yes, that sounds fair and interesting	83
	Maybe, if it's easy to redeem them	31
	No, the rewards aren't high enough toinfluence me	15
12)	**Would the previous rewards be enough to make you choose a place where you could collect them instead of one where you couldn't ?**	**129**
	1 » no influence at all	9
	2 » minor influence	18
	3 » some influence	35
	4 » high influence	53
	5 » very high influence	14
13)	**This app features "side quests" - small challenges that let you earn random rewards (e.g., "pay a shot to someone next table to get a random reward"). Would this make the app more engaging for you?**	**129**
	Yes, I love challenges and extra ways toearn rewards	54
	Maybe, if the challenges are easy tocomplete	55
	No	20

14)	**Do you see yourself regularly participating in these gamified challenges, or would you only do them occasionally?**	**129**
	Regularly – I'd actively try to completequest	25
	Occasionally – Only if I happen to be aeasy one	81
	Rarely – I wouldn't pay attention to them	23
15)	**Would leaderboards (e.g., rankings on how the classification on your table is currently going. Ex: who took more drinks) make the experience more engaging for you?**	**129**
	Yes	76
	No	53
16)	**What is the likelihood of trying it?**	**129**
17)	1 » never	6
	2 » rarelly	6
	3 » ocasionally	27
	4 » probably	54
	5 » absolutly	36
	If the customer journey of the app was smooth, what is the likelihood of recomend it to friends and family ?	**129**
	1 » never	1
	2 » rarelly	5
	3 » ocasionally	24
	4 » probably	52
	5 » absolutly	47
	Non mandatory open-ended question:	
18)	**What is this concept wouuld raise you more interest ?**	**59**
	Discounts and rewards	37
	Side quests and leader boards and conneting to new people	9
	Exclusive offers and deals	1
	The pool of venues available	5
	Pop-up notifications for limited time rewards	1
	The exposition to new places	2
	User friendlyness and how easy is to navigate and reedem the prizes	4
19)	**What concerns, if any, might prevent you from using this app?**	**24**
	Not having access to venues near my location	5
	Being interrupted with notifications, when looking for a quiet experience	1
	Collecting to much unncessary data	4
	Paid subscription	1
	The inflence on my spending, can make me spend more	7
	Influence me to order something I dont actually want to get the reward	3
	Not getting the promissed disounts or rewards	2
	The dynamic is infantile	1