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Searching for Events through Social Media: An Exploratory Study.

A Consulta de Eventos através do Social Media: Um Estudo Exploratório.

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of the Internet has been a big driver of the revolution that assists in the communication world, a new society of communication mediated by the latest information technology with tools that allow a direct connection between the elements of social communities. The *online* media, especially social media, are of particular importance both for the wider audience they reach, but also on the ease of use and the limited financial resources they need. Social media and social networks are no longer seen as the future, but as the actual present and should be considered by stakeholders in a strategic and useful way for their goals are achieved form. In this study we sought to understand whether currently the main way to search for events is through social media and if event consumers have difficulties in query and suggest solutions to improve the search experience of the event. Framed on the assumption of the use of technology, we studied the Technology Acceptance Model, and one of its adaptations proposed by Gefen (2003) incorporating the habit variable, which served as the inspiration and guide for the development of this work. The fieldwork was carried out by conducting a survey answered by 250 people with results confirming that the social media is the primary means of dissemination. It was also concluded that people recommend improvements in how events are currently seeking, preferring to have a centralized way to aggregate and event information disclosed by the major social networks. This study intends to contribute to a better understanding of the consultation and disclosure of events through social media and also leaves some clues for future investigations.

Keywords: Social Networks, Social Media, Digital Media, Disclosure of Events.

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RESUMO

A evolução da Internet foi a grande impulsionadora da revolução que se assiste no mundo da comunicação, uma nova sociedade de comunicação mediada pelas recentes tecnologias de informação com ferramentas que permitem uma ligação direta entre os elementos das comunidades sociais. Os meios *online*, especialmente as redes sociais, assumem particular importância quer pelo abrangente público que atingem, mas também na facilidade de utilização e pelos poucos recursos financeiros que necessitam. O social media e as redes sociais já não são encaradas como o futuro, mas sim como o presente e devem ser considerados pelos vários stakeholders de forma estratégica e útil para que os seus objetivos sejam atingidos. Neste trabalho procurou-se perceber se atualmente a principal forma de consulta de eventos é através do social media e se os consumidores de eventos tem dificuldades na consulta e se apontam soluções para melhorar a experiencia da pesquisa de eventos. Enquadrado no pressuposto da utilização de tecnologia, estudou-se o Modelo de Aceitação Tecnológica, e uma das suas adaptações, a proposta por Gefen (2013) que incorpora a variável Hábito, que serviu de inspiração e guia para o desenvolvimento deste trabalho. O trabalho de campo foi realizado através da realização de um inquérito respondido por 250 pessoas com resultados que confirmam que o social media é o principal meio de divulgação. Concluiu-se também que as pessoas preconizam melhorias na forma como atualmente procuram eventos, preferindo ter de forma agregada e centralizada a informação dos eventos divulgados pelas principais redes sociais. Com este estudo pretende-se dar um contributo para uma melhor compreensão sobre a consulta e divulgação de eventos através do social media, deixando também pistas para investigações futuras.

Palavras-Chave: Redes Sociais, Social Media, Meios Digitais, Divulgação de Eventos.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern times have been marked by a constant technological evolution and the development of the technologies supporting the Web 2.0 had a profound impact with multiple repercussions in social and cultural dynamics, particularly in the ways and means of information broadcast and communication. We have recently seen the emergence of social media applications, and in particular the social networks that have revolutionized the way people are informed or become aware of what is happening, particularly in what regards to cultural events and shows. It is currently not possible to

think of disclosure of information without associating our minds immediately with technologies such as Internet, Web 2.0, digital media and social media. Web 2.0 refers to a new generation of applications or Web tools that enhance the ability of individuals to publish your opinion, share information and collaborate with others over the internet.

Youtube, Flickr, Facebook, Twitter and Google+ are just but a few examples that illustrate a new economy of collaborative production and sharing of information *online*, presently being Facebook the most used and more popular social network. These new tools have increased, facilitated and changed the way of communicating between individuals who meet *online*, forming large social networks. This network communication has increased exponentially.

According to the study "A Internet em Portugal, Sociedade em Rede 2014", the Obercom Communication Observatory concludes that 57.2% of homes in Portugal have access to the internet and 72.9% of the sample states that they use the Internet daily, and 13.2% said they make it 3 or 4 times a week. It is this growing and continued use of social networks that motivated this study.

In the available literature, there are several published studies, but they are still relatively scarce for the importance that the topic deserves and very focused almost exclusively on the social network Facebook.

In their empirical analysis, will be investigated through the results of the survey that was carried out, trying to better understand the phenomenon of outreach events through social media, in order to have a more comprehensive view on the various means of dissemination that are used, seeking to notice; where query or search the events and activities, which are the difficulties and which are the solutions that improve the experience for events. After great thought and several attempts, we selected a model that will guide and provide guidance for the analysis and investigation of variables that contribute to the achievement of the proposed research and formulate the hypotheses that are to be tested.

The Quantitative analysis was performed using questionnaire survey applied to a digital environment in order to realize the research questions.

This study is intended to contribute to a better understanding of the consultation and

outreach events through social media, also leaving clues for future investigations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Having this study the purpose to analyze from the event consumers perspective the impact of social media in the promotion and dissemination events, this section presents the theoretical framework for this research area. In this sense, we begin by addressing in detail the concepts involved in this work and some of the most relevant studies and contribute more effectively to this work.

2.1 Social Media

In recent years there has been a revolution in communication and the Internet proved to be a strong catalyst for change in society, and has dramatically changed the way consumers communicate, communicates with whom, and where and when communicating. The emergence of the Internet offered to consumers new ways to create their content, share their views, preferences and experiences with other consumers (Trusov et al., 2009). For companies, this fact offered the possibility to build and maintain relationships between their brands and their followers (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). With an increasing number of users in the digital platforms, there is an increasingly significant departure from consumers of traditional media and advertising such as radio, magazines, newspapers and television, to the detriment of a new technological universe where social media are becoming increasingly important (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). In Portugal, according to the study "A Internet em Portugal – Sociedade em Rede", Obercom (2014) concludes that practically all internet Portuguese social networking users have created a profile in social networks, especially Facebook that will be discussed later in this document in more detail. The social media or social networks are platforms or instruments including platforms like Hi5, Orkut, Facebook, V Kontakte, QQ, Zing, Mixi and many other (Cardoso, 2011). Based on the importance of social networks, a study conducted in 2013 by the Pew Research Center for Arts Organizations funded by the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) in the US it was found that 97% are present in at least one of the 30 networks social indicated in responses and 56% is present in 4-9 social networks.

2.1.1   Social Media Classification

In the literature there are several approaches suggested to the classification of social

media, which is not unconnected with the fact that in recent years have appeared new types of social media. The different social media applications have then been grouped into several categories according to their specificities. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classify social media in six different categories: collaborative projects, blogs, content communities (e.g. Youtube); social networking websites (e.g. Facebook), virtual worlds and games virtual social worlds.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) highlight the social networking Web sites, content communities such as YouTube and Flickr, blog users and blogs / websites of companies, collaborative websites such as Wikipedia, virtual worlds; trading communities; professional social networking websites; among others.

2.1.2   Facebook

Because of the importance that Facebook currently takes in society and in the outreach events, let's take a deeper look into the analysis of this particular social network. Facebook is currently the largest social network and a phenomenon of popularity worldwide. The proof for this statement lies in the statistics that point to more than 1350 million active users in September 2014 and an average of 864 million daily users. (Facebook, 2014). Portugal is no exception to the trend where Facebook is the social network with more users, where 98.0% internet portuguese of social network users have created profile in Facebook network (Obercom, 2014).

2.2 Events

An event is defined as a celebration that involves a special event, since, in relation to a landmark purposeful, planned and organized (Duarte, 2009).

Cultural events have a distinct feature: the relationship with some of the arts. In this case it is understood by "art" such examples as music, painting, sculpture, film, representation, where you can still include the plays, festivals, concerts and music shows, art fairs, among others (Duarte, 2009).

The most popular features among users of social networks in Portugal are for direct communication, such as the Event Disclosure that in the 2014 Obercom's study comes up with almost 36%.

2.2.1   Events Disclosure

The social media, specifically Facebook, has a positive relationship on the behavior and attitudes, (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee's 2008) and between reading the received invitations to cultural events and the acceptance and participation in them, and that the rate of participation in events is higher in those who read the invitations. (Rebelo and Alturas, 2011).

In addition to Vicente (2012) there is a strong relationship between the acceptance of invitations and participation in events disclosed through Facebook that is, even if the trend that those who read the invitations is to participate more in events cultural, this does not happen with most users. According to the study by the Pew Research Center conducted in the US in August 2011, the percentage of people who attended the events in the previous 12 months increased significantly in the case of people following on social networks artists, groups, galleries or local ones. "With regard to the factors that determine participation in an event sponsored by Facebook, more than half of the users identified the interest in the event and the interest by the artist as the factors that most influence the decision to participate in an event" (Vicente 2012). Digital media events publicity have a much higher efficiency compared to traditional media such as posters and newspapers (Ferreira, 2013). In the study by the Pew Research Center made with Arts organizations and published in January 2013 when asked to give specific examples of positive results of social media use, organizations provided many positive examples related to increased participation in events and more ticket sales. A major reason for the use of social media is keeping up to date as for events (Zammit, 2012).

2.3 Previous Studies

Despite being a relatively new topic, there are already some studies on the role of social media in the promotion and dissemination of events, although the analysis performed, most existing studies relate mainly on Facebook and also some on the creation and development platforms for the promotion and dissemination of events. Facebook is currently the social network with more users worldwide, which is why most studies focuses on this social network.

Of the various studies consulted, we present below those that we considered most relevant to the subject under discussion in this research.

2.3.1 Study I

The study conducted by Vicente (2012) at Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (ISCTE) about *Online* and Cultural Consumption Social Networks: Facebook, a case study, is this social network as a cultural agenda of the consumer's point of view, analyzing the type cultural events circulating this *online* social network to see if the people they even go to the event and asking whether its consumers spot this culture and which are their social profiles. The sample is very young, with an average age of 25 years, with 66% aged between 18 and 25 years. 65.71% of the respondents are female and 34.29% male. With regard to qualifications, according to the author, "if we consider the fact that this sample comprises a total of 303 responses, it is clear that we have a sample with a high educational level" for more than 60 % have higher education, with 40% of graduates and 21.8% with graduate / master. The study also evaluates the use of Facebook to the frequency of use, verifying that more than half of respondents (263) revealed that they access his Facebook page every day, corresponding to 77.1% of the sample of 341 users of that system social and 63.5% has the session connected all day, or go at least 2 times a day to Facebook. Those other interesting questions for the study that we perform in this paper are those related to participation in cultural events for which they have received invitation by Facebook. The study analyzes the participation in the events through the reply to the invitation, verifying that indeed those who choose to "adhere" to the calls involved, on average, more than most of the time (3.36), measuring scale - (1) never or almost never (5) always or almost always.

Another interesting question is related to the factors that influence participation in events, and according to the responses, which have a closer mean of 8 (fully influence) is the interest in the event (7.25) and interest in the artist/artistic group (7.19), so play a more decisive role in the cultural practices of platform users. The conclusions of the study by Vicente (2012), regarding to the factors that determine participation in an event sponsored by Facebook, contrary to what was thought, "friends reviews about the events" and "the company of friends" do not influence (according to the opinion of respondents) the decision used when what is at stake is the participation in an event. Conducted through the questionnaire collected a set of variables to better understand the platform's potential in outreach events and found that the majority of respondents agree and strongly agree that they began to receive more cultural information through

Facebook than any other means information (55%) and about 80% of users agree that Facebook is a good way of promoting events. It is this last statement that will seek to frame the research to be undertaken. This study also reveals a growing trend towards the sharing of information through ICT, empirical evidence as regards to the researcher, "will serve as a wake-up call with the actors involved in the cultural field and its promotion, in order to rethink the traditional means of promoting content". This conclusion will contribute to the general framework of the study to be achieved.

2.3.2 Study II

The Arantes (2014) Master's dissertation, "A Importância da Comunicação Online na Gestão de Eventos: o Caso do Barcelona Festival of Song", focuses on the importance of *online* communication regarding event management, especially in the communication process of the Barcelona Festival of Song. This is a case study on that festival, which is held an audit of the communication process. To this end, the author sought to answer the question "What is the importance of online communication for the promotion / marketing of the events?" testing 3 Hypothesis:

- H1 - The *online* media effectively enhances the communication of events;
- H2 - The *online* communication is a benefit for the reporting of events;
- H3 - The *online* communication gives more visibility to events.

The author proved the hypothesis, using as a basis the results of the audit to BFOS. For the H1, *online* media effectively enhances the communication of events as an average of 25 people answered "*I will*" or "*maybe*" to invitations for festival events held through Facebook. There are also the people who attended the event, and that despite not having responded to the invitation on Facebook said they knew about them through *online* means. Hypothesis 2, the researcher believes that was confirmed with the theoretical framework and the fonts used, reflecting the growing importance of *online* media and the growing investment in them by enterprises and institutions, which in the case of BFOS is proved by using almost exclusive of these means. Finally the H3 was established with the assistance of the events BFOS, an average of 120 people in each event, and the number of 6 participants in summer school.

In conclusion, this study showed that *online* media are really important and increasingly indispensable in communication processes of all kinds of events and especially the

musical events. It is this conclusion, in a more general context of events, which we will seek to confirm in the scope of the study here developed.

2.3.3   Study III

Rebelo and Alturas (2011) presented in the Academy of Marketing Annual Conference at the University of Liverpool Management School, the paper "Social Networking as a Marketing Tool: Study of Participation in Cultural Events Promoted by Facebook". This paper addresses the topic of social networks focusing on participation in cultural events disseminated through social networks, especially by Facebook. The main question of this study which attracted interest is: What are the main factors that lead to the acceptance of invitations and participation in cultural events promoted through Facebook? To answer this question four hypotheses were considered for this study that the authors relied to develop a conceptual model that identifies the factors influencing Facebook users to accept invitations sent through this social network and participate in the events. Based on analysis of 396 Facebook users who answered the *online* survey, the responses the authors identified the top 5 reasons were "to be close to friends" (40.4%), "share ideas" (26.5%), "for fun" (25.5%), "belonging to a social network "(20.5%) and "learning new things" (19.9%). Despite not having been indicated by the respondents as one of the top 5 reasons, it is significant that 42.9% have indicated that "receive invitations to cultural events" is one of the reasons to use Facebook, although only 2% is indicated in that page. Regarding the degree of agreement of Facebook users about the spread of cultural events through this social network, 68.9% of respondents agree that "Facebook is a good way to promote cultural events". Regarding the fact that most cultural organizations promote their events on social networks, 55.6% of respondents agree with this statement. About 66.2% of respondents also agree that the entities must promote its cultural events through Facebook, stating that traders should also promote the events through this social network (69.7%). Another important issue relates to the percentage of 53.8 of respondents believe that if they receive more invitations, they will participate in more events. In the universe of 396 Facebook users responding to the survey, 24% stated that they receive more invitations to cultural events by means other than Facebook, while 19.4% believe that they receive more invitations to cultural events through Facebook than other means of dissemination.

Rebelo and Alturas (2011) conclude that the social network Facebook is a good way to

promote cultural events. As part of the social media and because it is the main social network, that finding is precisely what we will seek to reaffirm through the work that we developed and present in this paper.

2.3.4 Study IV

Silva (2013) concluded a Master's Thesis in Information Systems and Technologies for organizations, Platform Event Disclosure, which focused on creating a Web platform that aims to fill a need. Iit was initially a personal need, but that after addressing others, there it was found that this requirement is shared by a large number of individuals and entities. The main objective of the platform that is proposed to develop was to become a point of reference for the dissemination and consultation events for several areas, thus providing the entities who wish the opportunity to publicize their events, and another perspective provide information on the events that will occur on a given day and location for those wishing to be informed. In the course of the project, there were analyzes of the various services that already exist in this area in order to get to realize their strengths and weaknesses, which helped to improve the platform in development. For the author this is the first platform of its kind, because the existing ones in the area of event propagation cannot be considered as reference points, nevertheless were analyzed those with similar functions, or approaches such as the ones desired for this project. To achieve the main goal of developing a platform for events dissemination, was conducted a survey to find what people and institutions want in a service of this kind, focusing on the satisfaction of the future customers platform, contributing ideas, corrections and improvements to the development of the project in order to make it closer to its users. Research to understand if people and institutions use or have knowledge of any platform that allows them to query or disclosure of events was drawn up; and, if they use, to verify if they were satisfied with their user experience, and respective platform. According to the answers to the reporting institutions, it can be said that most needs and intend to publicize its events, although some already do using the internet, but without a specific location for this purpose. For questionnaires made to individuals, it was when asked whether they are aware of any internet platform for outreach events, 83% of respondents answered negatively, although of respondents know, 55% indicated Facebook. Respondents expressed great interest in an event disclosure platform, as confirmed by 70% of respondents who chose the values 4 and 5,

on a scale of values in the highest, 5, is very important and the value 1, is unimportant. Respondents were also asked about the importance of integration with the different social networks and responded to both individuals and institutions that they find this an added value functionality to the platform.

We conclude that although there is a great interest on the part of people to use the internet to event query, reporting there do not know or do not yet have a platform in Portugal to serve as a point of reference for this purpose.

This study reveals clues as to solutions to improve the experience of people in the event of consultation process through social media, which we will try to demonstrate in the work we present here.

2.3.5 Study V

The work carried out by Lee and Paris (2013) proposes a Social Technology Acceptance Model (STAM), as an extension of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), to examine the influence of trust, the strength of relations and perceived satisfaction in the formation of attitudes of consumers from Facebook and the intention in participating in events. The objective of this study is to investigate how the confidence and the strength of social relationships among users of Facebook impacts subsequent intentions and future conduct in relation to the events. This goal leads to two important questions:

1. How do the Trust and the Strength of Relationships among Facebook users enhance their attitude toward the acceptance of Facebook event pages?
2. How does this acceptance of Facebook event pages impact users' intentions to attend the event?

To address these issues, this study proposes a model of Social Technology Acceptance (STAM), which is an extension of the Technology Acceptance Model (Technology Acceptance Model - TAM) incorporating the factors of knowledge sharing. This theoretical framework provides the basis to explore the role that relationships play in the use of Facebook pages as a marketing tool.

Figure 1 - Proposed hypothetical STAM
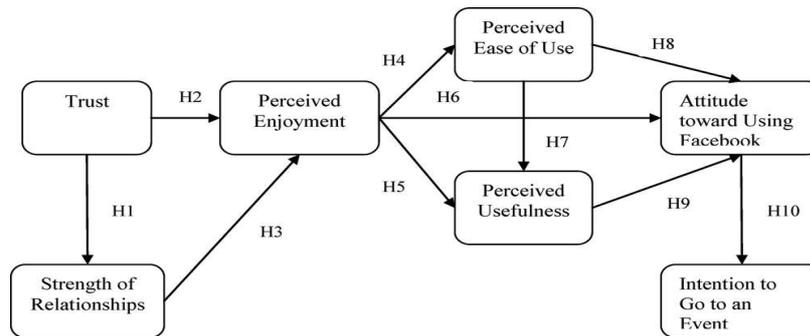
The proposed STAM model is an extension of TAM and incorporates the factors of knowledge sharing, including trust, relationships strength, and perceived pleasure and test the extension of the TAM model within the context of Facebook users of intent to participate in special events for who were invited by "events" of Facebook pages.

This study concludes that, after empirically tested the STAM model, the previous factors influencing the adoption of Facebook, suggest that factors of knowledge sharing (confidence, strength of relationships and hedonic motivations) have a significant effect on users. Other findings are in line with previous studies, particularly with regard to the fact that trust can increase the social interactions of users and that can affect the perceived pleasure and more interestingly, the strength of social ties on Facebook had a more significant effect on the pleasure perceived that trust the information provided by Facebook. The pleasure and perceived ease of use are perceived as stronger predictors than the use of perceived usefulness in the context of hedonic systems, such as social networking sites. This study contributed significantly to the identification of the model that will provide support for the research to be achieved as well as the fact that it can prove the strong impact of the attitude to use Facebook has about the intention to attend an event.

3. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Definition of the problem

Currently we witness a spread of information over the Web, which also includes the dissemination and promotion of events. The shift from traditional media to digital media has been a reality in recent times and this has contributed to the exponential increase in the use of social networks. In addition, although to a lesser extent, the traditional means

of dissemination are still being used so that, in many cases, there is a duplication of resources and efforts on the part of those who want to promote events. In the business context this issue impacts the marketing and communication strategy, so it is appropriate to make a careful review of the current status and understand how this change is being regarded by consumers and users of social networks. The problem that arises in this study is to understand whether the social media is currently the primary means of consultation events and whether this is the future trend. To try to answer this problem we will ask the event consumers what is the impact that social media has on event search and what are their difficulties and ask them to suggest solutions that can improve their own experience of using social networks in searching for events.

3.2 Data Collection

Because we had some difficulties in setting up a probabilistic sample, this research has relied on a non-probabilistic convenience sample, using the snowball method. Given the proposed objectives for this research, it was understood that the sample would analyze the research questions and therefore did not justify the requirement of a representative sample of the population. This study uses a sample of 250 individuals who voluntarily responded to an *online* survey of 11 questions for rapid response, available in Google Docs for 3 weeks, from 25/9 to 20/10, 2014. To carry out this questionnaire, there was made available an *online* survey disseminated through our Facebook profile for 255 friends and 530 connections of the author's Linkedin profile, as well as by sending by email to another 20 contacts. It was also requested the disclosure in their own groups of contacts, so despite not being able to quantify the universe, it is surely superior to 805 individuals. Individuals are both of male and female gender, of various nationalities, but mostly Portuguese, aged over 13 years and with internet access.

3.3 Variables to be used in the model and hypothesis

This step proved to be a continuous challenge, because the initial idea as to the model to be used was being questioned when advancing in the definition of the problem and consequently the hypothesis that we wished to raise.

The TAM model presupposes the existence of external variables that influence the behavioral intention. As the TAM model was adapted to incorporate the variable habit proposed by Gefen (2003), we also considered this variable to the study. The external

variable Habit refers to individuals who in the six months prior to the survey for this study, attended events and who responded that they used social media to search for vents. The dependent variables considered in this research are the Perceived Ease of Use and Intent to Use Technology, which were evaluated based on the options that were presented to respondents for each one of them:

Perceived Ease of Use:

- Normally I do not find easily in my geographical area things I want to see or do;
- The information is spread over several sites;
- Information and schedules are outdated and have to be searched in several places;
- The websites I read daily I can hardly find, quickly, the "agenda of the day";
- I have no difficulty finding what I'm looking to see, hear or do.

Intent to Use Technology:

- I am well served with the means I usually use;
- A map with all that is going on at this time or in the future;
- An application or platform which provides me with recommendations based on my tastes and activities of friends / family;
- A directory / guide with the spaces, places or more active promoters;
- A mobile app (mobile application) with a map;
- A schedule showing me in 2 steps everything there is to see and do according to my tastes or localization.

The general objective of this study is to understand, in the context of searching and consultation, or browsing through lists of events, which means of dissemination and events searching currently most used by event consumers. Taking into account the current trends and that, as verified throughout this research, the increasing use of digital media and especially the social media, for this we will investigate the following hypothesis
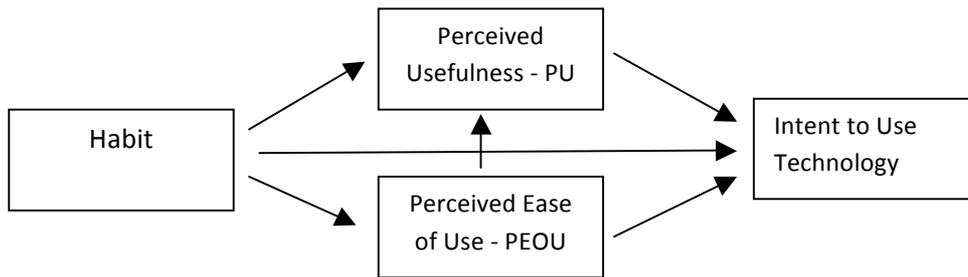
Hypothesis
Social media is the primary means of browsing and searching for events

3.4 Models

As this study is based on the use of technology along the performed research it was possible to identify several theories that attempt to predict the impact of technology on human behavior. In this research, the model that is we found was best understood to fit into the scope of the study is the model proposed by Venkatesh and Davis (1996), called "Acceptance Theory of Technology" (TAM - Technology Acceptance Model). This model states that to exist a behavioral response it is necessary to have an intention, the intention resulting from cognitive responses and beliefs, and these in turn depend on external stimuli. In this case, Venkatesh and Davis (1996) define that the external stimuli are external variables, cognitive responses are "perceived usefulness" and "perceived ease of use", behavioral intention is the consumption of events, while the behavioral response is defined as the use of current resources. The technology acceptance model assumes that the current and actual use of a system is always preceded by a behavioral intention. The effects of external variables in the behavioral intention in this context are mediated by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Thus, the perceived utility and ease of use, affect behavioral intention of an individual in the use of a system and hence the actual use of the system. (Venkatesh and Davis, 1996 and 2000). However, Gefen (2003) suggests that studies of TAM model do not evaluate aspects related to the habit for power users with the use of technology, focusing primarily on new users. For this is that Gefen proposes that the fact habit is considered, as it is important construct to explain the attitude and intention to use technology, especially when those involved gain experience. In his view, the habits complement the TAM model, and vice versa, especially in the application of the constructs Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use.

The justification of the impact of habits in behavior is the fact that, once automatic or without a conscious decision, are practically incorporated with ease, in their day-to-day actions. (Bento et. al, 2007). Thus the habit is incorporated into the TAM model, as an independent variable that influences the primary dependent variable, intended use, and the other two independent variables, perceived usefulness and ease of use.

Figure 2 - Adaptation of Intent Model Use of Technology (Gefen, 2003)

For the present work, the TAM model with the incorporation of the proposed variable by Gefen will be used as guidance and inspiration for the analysis and research of the suggested hypothesis. The general objective of this study is to investigate whether currently the primary means of consultation or browsing and searching for events is social media. In order to reach a valid response, following the literature review and relying on the background provided by TAM Model, we will also analyze the trends and the other lines of evolution in the context of searching for events through social media.

3.5 Methods

This section presents the methodology used in the empirical phase as well as the entire questionnaire construction process, sample definition, collection and processing of data. As there are few studies that link the consumption of events through its research using social media, this paper is an exploratory study that laid its structure initially in the literature review, which led us to the identification of the TAM Technology Acceptance Model. Since this is based upon technology and its use, it was considered as useful to the development of this study to use the Model TAM as a reference guide, which highlights the impact of external variables in the constructs Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use and Intent Use of Technology, however for this study we will focus only in the last two. The external variable considered was the Habit, as proposed by Gefen (2003), in that it is an important construct to explain the Attitude and Intention to Use the Technology, and that in his opinion, habits complement the TAM model.

The framework through model considered these constructs, so we proceeded to performing a questionnaire of 11 questions, where in addition to the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample, we tried to understand the following research questions: 1-

where do you search for events and activities, 2 - which are the difficulties that you find, and 3 – which solutions do you propose that may improve yout experience in searching for events.

For the variable habit, it was considered mainly accepted the set of disclosure means in order to be able to take a wide range but at the same time not too long, but still covering the most common means. As to the construct Perceived Ease of Use, not assessing it in concrete we however tried to fit them, as well as on the Intent to Use, so at the level of the questionnaire were made available response options that link alternatives regarding the difficulties experienced and what solutions can be identified to improve the experience of use.

In order to search for an answer and test our hypothesis, we used the subset of individuals who attended the events in the 6 months before taking the survey.

After collecting the results of data for the survey on the variables under study, followed the necessary treatment carried out using the SPSS program that allowed the characterization of the sample, preparing the data for the empirical study. We obtained 250 responses, all of which were considered valid, in an *online* survey of 11 questions for rapid response, available in Google Docs for 3 weeks, from 25/9 to 20/10, 2014 and disseminated through social media - Facebook, Linkedin, Google+ and Email.

With the data from the treatment performed in SPSS, we proceeded to the analysis and interpretation of results in order to evaluate the hypothesis placed and within the framework of the general purpose of our study, pointing out trends and guidelines for future developments.

4   RESULTS

The sociodemographic sample data show that 72% of those who responded to the survey are male and 28% female gender, as shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1 - Distribution of respondents by Gender
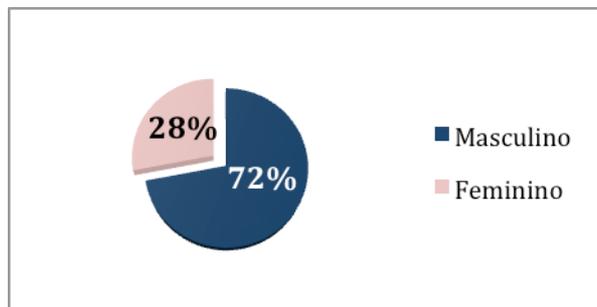
Concerning the age range it appears that the majority of respondents have between 30 and 40 years representing 62.4% of the sample, followed by the age group of 45-54 years, with 25.2%. Bands with lower percentages of answers are on the fringes, those older than 65 and those under 18, representing 1.2% of each answer. The remaining 10% are distributed throughout the range of 18 to 24 with 6% and the age group of 55 to 64 with 4%.

Table 1 - Age Distribution

	Frequency	Percent (%)
13-17	3	1,2
18-29	15	6,0
30-44	156	62,4
45-54	63	25,2
55-64	10	4,0
+65	3	1,2
Total	250	100,0

Regarding the level of education, as shown in Table 2, it appears that most respondents have academic qualifications at the level of Bachelor with 45.6% and 41.2% with Masters. There are 2.4% of respondents who have PhD qualifications and 10.4% at the

level of High School education. There is only 1 respondent with Basic Education.

Table 2 - Level Education Distribution

|	Frequency	Percent (%)
Basic Education	1	0,4
Secondary Education	26	10,4
Bachelors	114	45,6
Masters	103	41,2
PhD	6	2,4
Total	250	100,0

In Table 3 it can be seen that for the responses about the situation regarding employment, 66.8% are workers for others, followed by Business / Employer with 13.2%. The Independent Workers are 9.6% of respondents, while there is 5.2% unemployment. It is found that 3.2% are students and one student worker. A total of 1.6% of respondents there retirees.

Table 3 - Professional Occupation distribution

|	Frequency	Percent (%)
Unemployed	13	5,2
Retired	4	1,6
Student	8	3,2
Student worker	1	0,4
Worker for others	167	66,8
Independent Workers	24	9,6
Business/Employer	33	13,2
Total	250	100,0

On the number of events watched the last 6 months, we can verify that 50% of the respondents attended 1 to 3 events, 22.4% watched more than 6 events and 19.6% attended between 4 and 6 events. Only 8% of those who answered the survey did not attend any event in the last six months, as can be seen in Graph 2.

Graph 2 - Distribution by number of attended events
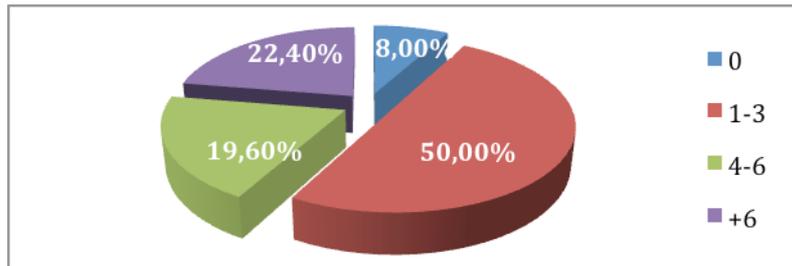
Regarding the question asked on social networks follows or is a fan of any artist, location or institution, 66.8% responded by stating "yes", while 33.2% of respondents answered "no", as shown in Graph 3.

Graph 3 - Respondents who are fans or follow social networking pages
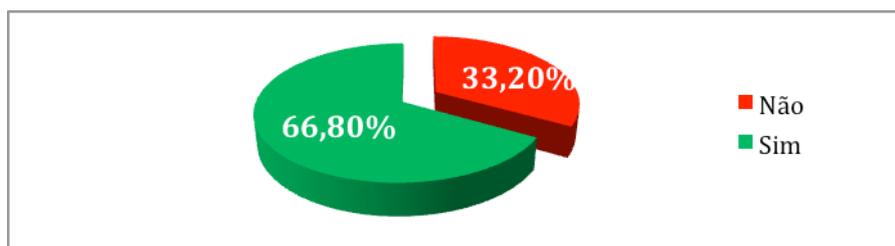
When asked about where to search for events and activities, most respondents stated that they use traditional media and digital media / social media with 70.8%, while those who only consult the traditional media are just 4.4%. Those using only the digital /

social media are 24.8%, as shown in Graph 4.

Graph 4 - Distribution of media used for query or event search
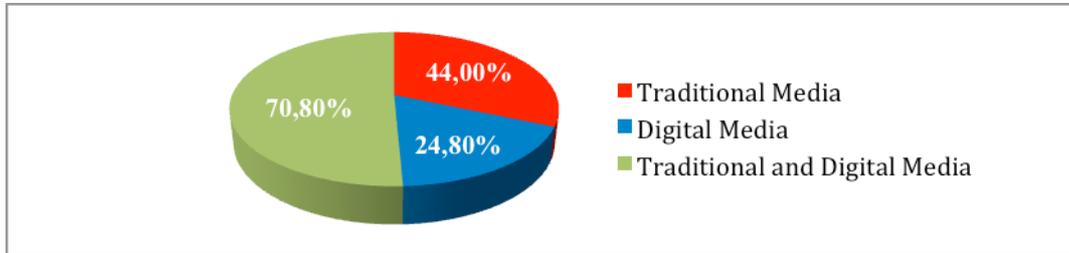

As shown in Table 4, 66.5% of the 230 people who consume events have difficulties in their search, and of these, only 2.2% use as only traditional media to searching for events.

Table 4 - Where consult events vs difficulties in finding events.

Where consult or search events		Difficulties in finding events.		
		without difficulty	with difficulties	Total
Traditional Media	Count	4	5	9
	%	44,4%	55,6%	100,0%
	% of Total	1,7%	2,2%	3,9%
Social Media	Count	17	37	54
	%	31,5%	68,5%	100,0%
	% of Total	7,4%	16,1%	23,5%
Traditional and Social Media	Count	56	111	167
	%	33,5%	66,5%	100,0%
	% of Total	24,3%	48,3%	72,6%
Total	Count	77	153	230
	%	33,5%	66,5%	100,0%
	% of Total	33,5%	66,5%	100,0%

The question about the difficulties in the query or search for events, 66.8% indicated that they encounter difficulties, while the other 33.2% have no difficulties in the query or search for events.

Graph 5 - Difficulties in the query or search for events
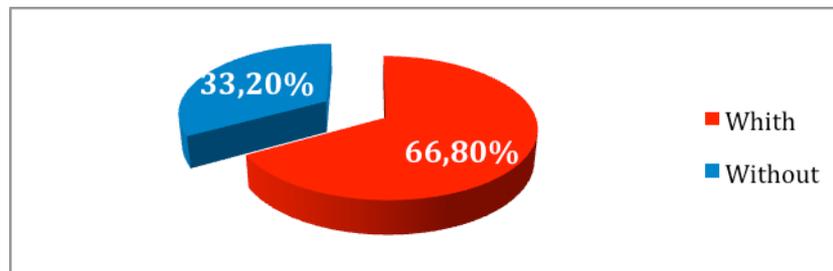
It is clear that the large majority of events consumers is not well served with the means at hand to the searching for events regardless of the medium used to search for those events. From the solutions presented, the one who is chosen by most respondents, is an application or platform for event search.

Table 5 - Where consult events vs solutions to improve the experience

Where search or looking for events and activities		Which of the solutions that he thought would improve his experience in looking for cultural activities, training or leisure?				
		I am well served with the means to use	App or web platform	A mobile app	A mobile app and web platform or app	Total
Traditional Media	Count	2	5	2	0	9
	%	22,2%	55,6%	22,2%	0,0%	100,0%
	% of Total	0,9%	2,2%	0,9%	0,0%	3,9%
Social Media	Count	14	19	6	15	54
	%	25,9%	35,2%	11,1%	27,8%	100,0%
	% of Total	6,1%	8,3%	2,6%	6,5%	23,5%
Traditional and Social Media	Count	18	80	16	53	167
	%	10,8%	47,9%	9,6%	31,7%	100,0%
	% of Total	7,8%	34,8%	7,0%	23,0%	72,6%
Total	Count	34	104	24	68	230
	%	14,8%	45,2%	10,4%	29,6%	100,0%
	% of Total	14,8%	45,2%	10,4%	29,6%	100,0%

5. CONCLUSIONS

The general objective of this study is to understand, in the context of searching and consultation, or browsing through lists of events, which means of dissemination and events searching currently most used by event consumers.

Taking into account the current trends and that, as verified throughout this research, the increasing use of digital media and especially the social media, for this we will investigate the following hypothesis

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Hypothesis

Social media is the primary means of browsing and searching for events

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Through the analysis it was found that the overwhelming majority of people use social media to search for events, and is used exclusively by 24.8% of respondents and used in conjunction with traditional media by 70.8%. Only 4.4% of respondents exclusively use traditional media to search for events.

We can thus conclude that the hypothesis was confirmed.

These results also confirm the observed trend of abandonment of traditional media of communication at the expense of a new technological universe where social media is becoming increasingly important. The social media is currently the primary media of consultation or browsing and event search and consequently disclosure, thus corroborating the findings of studies by John Arantes and Cristiana Vicente. However, it is clear that traditional media continue to be an important area and should be given the attention of economic agents, thus reinforcing the conclusion of Vicente Cristiana study that those involved in the cultural field should rethink traditional ways of promotion events. Although it was proven that social media is the main and most through search and consultation or browsing for events, it appears that there is still a huge potential for growth because:

1. The survey clearly shows that people, 66.5% of respondents who consume events, feel many difficulties in searching for events. This percentage is even

higher, 68.5% for those who exclusively use social media / digital media to search for events. Mitigating the causes, there will be improvements in the consultation or browsing process and thus contribute to the increased use of social media.

2. The survey results show that only 25.9% of people who exclusively use social media to refer to events considered to be well served with the means they use. This figure falls to 14.8% when assessed total responses, so this is an important indicator and that also presents significant potential for improvement on the means that are available and used for event search.

3. From our study we also point out out the following ways to improve the experience of use, as can be drawn from the responses to the survey, where people who use social media for event search, whether exclusively or in conjunction with traditional media, such as point solution Application or use of a platform (43.1%), while 9.6% suggests the use of a Mobile APP (Mobile Application) 29.5% and an Application Platform or in conjunction with a Mobile APP.

5.1 Limitations and Future Research

The present study is not free from limitations, however it is understood that their contribution is in line with the objectives proposed for their achievement. Studies and future research can help to address the following:

a) There are few studies in the Portuguese context, which conditions the lifting of the state of the art on the subject in the particular Portuguese context.

b) The sample used was not probabilistic, which prevents us to be able to generalize the results to the general population, so the main suggestion for future research is the completion of the questionnaire given to a representative sample of the population.

c) Another limitation is related to the design of the questionnaire, as it is recommended the application of scales on responses from consumers and business performance already developed and applied to measure behavior.

d) The reduced time the survey was available *online* to be answered clearly limited the number of responses. It is recommended making up available to answer for

more time thus allowing a greater number of responses, which provides greater consistency to the sample.

Finally, considering the high investment that currently organizations, especially the organizers and promoters do in their disclosure, it justifies to continue to investigate and monitor their real contribution to this, so for future research we suggest the following:

e) At the model level, we intend to apply the TAM or one of its adaptations referred to in this study, to investigate the individual acceptance of information technology in the context of the use of social media for consultation or browsing and searching for events and to effectively evaluate the constructs inherent in the model, including Perceived Facility of use, Perceived Usefulness and Intent to Use Technology.

f) Conduct a study to assess the perspective of promoters and event organizers.

g) Another of the lines of inquiry that will follow is to make a more detailed evaluation by type of events consumed.

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