

## **The Wedding at the Hotel: Venue Choice, Servicescape and Customer Experience as Shared on TripAdvisor**

Beatriz Sanches Cartas <sup>1</sup>

Manuela Guerreiro  <sup>2</sup>

Ana Paula Barreira  <sup>3</sup>

1. Faculty of Economics, Universidade do Algarve, Faro, Portugal

2. Faculty of Economics and Research Centre for Tourism, Sustainability and Well-being (CinTurs), University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal

3. Faculty of Economics and Centre for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics (CEFAGE), University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal

### **ABSTRACT**

A wedding is always a special event. The wedding experience, carved under the influence of environmental stimuli – servicescape or wedding-scape – and an antecedent of behavioural outcomes, as shared in online platforms, increasingly influences the decision-making of other couples. Adopting an experiential Marketing perspective of the wedding as a staged experience and framed by the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm, this study aims to investigate venue choice criteria, servicescape/wedding-scape attributes, experience, and behavioural outcomes related to wedding ceremonies performed at the hotel venue as shared in social media. A thematic content analysis was performed on the 173 comments gathered from TripAdvisor. These reviews were shared by the bride and groom and their guests who had their wedding at a five-star Hotel Resort located in the Algarve, south of Portugal. The study reveals positive perceptions of venue conditions, location, staff, and cleanliness, alongside negative evaluations of price and styling, shaping guests' cognitive and affective responses, ultimately fostering memorable wedding experiences and high recommendation intentions at Tivoli Resort.

### **KEYWORDS**

Customer Experience, Wedding-Scape, Wedding Venue, Servicescape, E-Wom.

### **ARTICLE HISTORY**

Received 29 August 2024 Accepted 15 May 2025

## 1. Introduction

A wedding is undoubtedly a special event in someone's life, and it is recognised as a product of solid implication and involvement (Major, McLeay & Waine, 2010). In Western societies, marriages are declining, but weddings abroad are becoming more popular (Ritter, Boger & Draper, 2020; Rydzik, Agapito & Lenton, 2021). Furthermore, wedding tourism arises as a concept related to the flow of tourists who travel away from home to celebrate with the couple (Daniels & Wosicki, 2021) in the scope of family obligations (Obrador, 2012). Wedding destinations are described as popular places to celebrate a marriage outside the home (Etemaddar, Thyne & Insch, 2018).

Once in the geographical area, the venue choice is critical (Chen et al., 2017). A trend to elect luxurious resorts to hold a wedding is noted in the literature (Rydzik et al., 2021). Influenced by context-based factors - atmospherics (Kotler, 1973), physical surroundings (Belk, 1975), physical evidence (Booms & Bitner, 1981) or tangibles (Parasuraman et al., 1988) – consumer experience draws the behavioural outcomes. Built on the intangible nature of service contexts, the *experiencescape* concept in the Marketing and tourism literature, Bertella (2015) coined the term *wedding-scape* to include the dimensions of *servicescape*. Literature reports little research on the topic and mainly focuses on the wedding guests at the bride's expense and the groom's perspectives (Schumann & Amado, 2010; Del Chiapa & Fortezza, 2016).

The search for information to support the choice of a location for a wedding tends to be intense. It is more and more frequent to use online platforms and social media to know the other customers' feedback before deciding (Douglas, 2016). The content sharing in the digital sphere, known as electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), proves to be critical in supporting decision-making, as it is recognised as credible and independent, thus, with the capacity to influence the purchase decision by other customers.

Following an experiential Marketing and *servicescape* approach and guided by the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), this research analyses the information shared by customers of a hotel resort located in the Algarve regarding their wedding experiences on the online platform TripAdvisor. TripAdvisor is an online multiple-year archive that reviews various destinations and organisations, so it is common to use this platform for study purposes (Berezan et al., 2015; Molinillo et al., 2016; Wong & Qi, 2017). In addition, although several empirical studies prove the existence of a relationship between the phenomenon of e-WOM and the consumers' purchase decision (Carusona et al., 2017; Zanibellato et al., 2018), the category of high-involvement products, or products considered once-in-a-lifetime, as holding a wedding, has generally been neglected in the literature (Mowzer, 2016).

To date, wedding tourism remains an under-researched topic (Ritter et al., 2020), especially in the social media context (Boden, 2003). As Etemaddar et al. (2018) recognised, little research has been devoted to wedding parties and guests. Built on these gaps, this study aims to investigate venue choice criteria, *servicescape/wedding-scape* attributes, experience, and behavioural outcomes related to wedding ceremonies performed at the hotel venue as shared in TripAdvisor. In line with Bertella (2015), this study adopts an experiential Marketing perspective of the wedding as a staged experience. As far as authors know, no other study addresses *servicescape/wedding-scape*, customer experience and behavioural outcomes in the context of a wedding ceremony.

In order to make this analysis more comprehensive and to enhance the clarity and relevance of its implications for the management of the product and the venue, on the one hand, the reviews written on TripAdvisor by couples and their wedding guests were analysed. An exploratory qualitative study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) with a deductive and inductive approach (Bardin, 1977) was performed. Thematic analysis of categorical content was adopted (Bardin, 1977).

This paper is organised as follows. The next section is dedicated to the literature review, which frames the research herein. In the third section, the methodological approach is introduced. The fourth section presents and discusses the results of the empirical study. The final section presents the main conclusions.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Stimulus-organism-response Paradigm

This study adopts the S-O-R model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) as a comprehensive framework to examine how environmental stimuli influence individuals' internal cognitions and perceptions, ultimately shaping their attitudinal and behavioural responses. Building on its original focus on emotional responses to environments, later developments incorporated cognitive, physiological, and psychological dynamics over time (Bitner, 1992; Jacoby, 2002), extending its applicability in tourism and hospitality contexts (Kim et al., 2020). The model provides a systematic approach for understanding the influence of wedding ceremony and weddingscape on wedding experience while also capturing the role of emotional states and cognitive cues in shaping audience responses (Cheng et al., 2020). Its flexibility offers a robust theoretical foundation for exploring emotional and behavioural outcomes by integrating internal and external stimuli, experiential processes, and attitudinal and behavioural responses (Sultan et al., 2021).

### 2.2 From the Wedding Destination to the Servicescape of the Venue

One of the most critical decisions in hosting a wedding is choosing where it will be held (Bowdin et al., 2006). Starting from the bridal appearance (Broekhuizen & Evans, 2016) to the wedding location and venue, every piece in the performance is aligned towards an imaginary stereotype that can be described as "romantic and paradise-like settings" (Rydzik et al., 2021, p. 3). When the choice of the location for the wedding falls on a venue outside the country of residence of the couple (Schumann & Amado, 2010), tourist flows are at stake (Major et al., 2010; Del Chiappa & Fortezza, 2016) and it impacts on local economy (Schumann & Amado, 2010). In the tourism literature, wedding destinations tend to be perceived as exotic, romantic and unique places (Freeman, 2002) that offer an appreciated opportunity to escape the daily routine while considering family tradition surrounding this event (Schumann & Amado, 2010).

The organization of the wedding involves a diverse set of decisions, and the venue where the banquet will take place is one of the most notable (Chen et al., 2017). Couples increasingly choose venues like luxurious resorts to hold their wedding (Rydzik et al., 2021). Lau and Hui (2010), in their investigation on the choice of venue for the celebration, conclude that availability, installation, the whole logistics of the place - the size of the space, the audio equipment, the bridal room and accommodation and the gastronomy are key elements in choosing a venue for the wedding. Location is another element and includes both the beauty of the place and its convenience in terms of accessibility and parking (Callan & Hoyes, 2000). The price is an element that includes the space rental, food and drinks, equipment and setup, which impacts decision making (Lockyer, 2005). All in one, the venue - or the place where consumption occurs - and related scenography, especially in the services domain due to its intangible nature (Reimer & Kuehn, 2005), are critical since it corresponds to the stage where the experience will be lived (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

The atmosphere of the place, or venue, that is, "the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers" (Kotler, 1973, p. 50), also known as atmospherics (Lau & Hui, 2010), is a crucial element in the choice of a wedding location. The importance of the atmosphere is due to the recognition that the physical environment, its visual impact, the design and the decorative aspects produce effects on consumers as they influence behavioural outcomes (Kotler, 1973; Bitner, 1992; Walls, 2013; Pizam & Tasci, 2019; Bhatt et al., 2020). Atmosphere is formed by environmental conditions (temperature, air quality, noise, music, smell), space/ function (layout, colour, equipment, furniture) and signs, symbols and artefacts (signage, personal artefacts, decoration style). Bitner (1992) uses physical surroundings or atmospherics and proposes a framework with three categories: a) ambient conditions (sensory-based), b) spatial layout and functionality, and c) signs, symbols and artefacts. To Pizam and Tasci (2019), this is related to the cultural component of servicescape. Lau and Hui (2010) studied the impact of the atmosphere on the wedding ceremony and wedding reception. Findings revealed that these contribute to the "elegance and solemnity" (p. 269) and, consequently, to a cheerful consumer's experience.

Following this track, environmental psychology postulates that individuals experience the external environment in a holistic way, so the stimuli present in the surroundings must be managed in an integrated way (e.g., Bitner, 1992), ensuring a design that generates appealing consumption environments (Bhatt et

al., 2020). Fuelled by this argument, the concept of *experiencescape* is elaborated on the rationale that the influence of external factors (stimuli) affects the individual's engagement in the consumption experience (Mossberg, 2007; Walls, 2013; Pizam & Tasci, 2019; Bhatt et al., 2020). Built on this, other authors add the role of human or social elements (e.g., Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2003; Garmaroudi et al., 2021) to the purely physical dimension proposed by Bitner (1992). So, by expanding Bitner's (1992) *servicescape* framework, many scholars see social stimuli as an important part of the consumption environment (Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2003; Garmaroudi et al., 2021). Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003) design a new conceptual framework named '*social servicescape*', claiming that customers play a key role in others' emotions and feelings.

In fact, in the particular case of hospitality, where guests tend to stay at the property longer, their interaction with the hotel setting, servers and with other guests can shape emotional reactions and behavioural outcomes like satisfaction and loyalty, service quality, WoM and e-WoM intentions, among others (Lockwood & Pyun, 2019). The literature reports relationships between the *servicescape* and the nature of customer-server interaction and guest-with-other-guests' interactions (e.g. Line et al., 2018; Lockwood & Pyun, 2019; Garmaroudi et al., 2021). Collishaw et al. (2008) identified that customers' perceptions of the commitment of the staff are related to positive affect, which generates satisfaction and attitudinal loyalty.

The rationale is that the management of the *servicescape*, especially in contexts of experiential consumption, and particularly in hospitality and events, must be managed in order to offer memorable experiences. Kandampully, Bilgihan and Amer (2022) argue that *servicescape* and *experiencescape* are interrelated concepts, so they should be managed complementarily to produce customer engagement, satisfaction and positive emotions and behavioural intentions.

In line with the assumption that tourist activities are "theatre-like performances" and tourists are "actors who follow more or less disciplined scripts", to Bertella (2015, p. 398), a wedding celebrated abroad "can be conceptualised as a staged tourism experience". Its scenography is carefully prepared, including choosing the destination and venue for the bride's white wedding gown with its symbology (Broekhuizen & Evans, 2016). The venue, built on the concepts of *servicescape* (Bitner, 1992) and *experiencescape* (Mossberg, 2007), has been conceptualised as a "wedding-scape" which includes the physical scene, properly managed by the professionals, where the ceremony takes place (Bertella, 2015). Hoyer and Johnson (2016, p. 1) used the term "weddingscapes" as "liminal touristic experiences". The "scenography of the wedding-scape" refers to "the physical scene where the wedding experience, particularly the ceremony, takes place", whose choreography is directed by wedding planners in accordance with the family's cultural references (Bertela, 2015, p. 399).

The relationship between the couple and their guests with the staff, referred to as a social factor, is also a very important aspect of the *servicescape* to be considered in the wedding-scape. In this regard, the wedding planner plays a crucial role as "service provider, decision-maker, organizer, artistic designer, confidant, mediator and friend" (Daniels & Wosicki, 2021, p. 9). Working on the preparations for holding the wedding, managing timelines, checklists and itineraries, ensuring a perfect articulation between the participants in the event, thus avoiding stressful situations, the wedding planner provides also advice to the artistic part of the ceremony such as on floral décor, lighting. The wedding planner is still more relevant when couples choose a wedding abroad, as a deeper understanding of existing services in place and of the legal requirements necessary for the wedding itself is required (Bertella, 2015, 2017; Khodzhaeva, 2016). Their role in making the wedding event more sustainable is also acknowledged (Deale & Lee, 2024).

Prepared as a scenographic experience in which the script is carefully drawn (Bertella, 2015), the venue and the actors (grooms and their wedding guest, servants and, in the case of the hotel, other hotel guests), are active parts that influence the experience design (Broekhuizen & Evans, 2016; Carter & Duncan, 2017), the way it is lived and then shared on social networks.

### 2.3 The Wedding Ceremony as an Experiential Event

The classic approaches to consumer behaviour - the microeconomics perspective - see the decision process as purely rational and based on the perception of attributes such as price and utility. Subsequent research in the domain of motivation views the needs that drive the purchase decision as irrational or of limited rationality (Howard & Sheth, 1969). Advances in research in consumer behaviour consider other

essential aspects that also contribute to explaining consumption, such as recreational and leisure activities, sensory pleasures, aesthetic dimensions and emotional responses (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Assuming that consumers are simultaneously rational beings and emotional, the purchase decision, although it may be rational, is driven by emotions (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In line with this perspective, Experience Marketing assumes that the purchase/consumption decision process and the consumer journey (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016) are imbued with a mix of emotions, pleasure, self-satisfaction and fantasies. Since “Experiential marketing is everywhere” (Schmitt, 1999, p. 53), this approach has been adopted in a great diversity of industries and activity sectors, including in the wedding industry (Bertella, 2015).

While Pine and Gilmore (1998) introduce the concept of Experience Economy in an approach to managing experiences, Schmitt (1999) introduces a broader view of the consumer experience, according to which consumers’ desires and motivations are focused on consuming memorable and engaging experiences. The customer experience should be addressed by adopting a holistic perspective (Schmitt, 1999; Tsaour et al., 2007; Rather, 2020). In accordance, Schmitt (1999) defines the consumption experience as a multidimensional concept and establishes five dimensions, or experiential nodes, to be taken into account when designing a memorable experience: (1) sensory experiences (SENSE), (2) affective experiences (FEEL), (3) cognitive and creative experiences (THINK), (4) physical, behavioural and lifestyle experiences (ACT), and (5) social identity experiences that result from a relationship with one or more reference groups and/ or culture (RELATE). Ideally, companies should be able to provide consumers with sensory, affective, cognitive, physical, and relational experiences (Schmitt, 1999).

According to Schmitt (1999, p. 60), “Experiences are private events that occur in response to some stimulation (e.g., as provided by marketing efforts before and after purchase), and they often result from direct observation and/or participation in events – Whether they are real, dreamlike, or virtual.” In the case of a wedding, the idea of a unique experience (Getz, 1997; 2008) becomes even more noticeable. Boden (2003, p. 18) refers to it as a “once-in-a-lifetime” event and Rydzik et al. (2021, p. 2) as “a milestone event in one’s life”.

Even with recognised cultural roots in different landscapes (Carter & Duncan, 2017) and performing sociocultural rituals (Etemaddar et al., 2018), a wedding is a ceremony between two people to establish the marriage between both parties. It is a moment to “uniting relatives and friends to celebrate the birth of a new family” (Etemaddar et al., 2018, p. 422). Generally, these “supposedly unique and deeply personal events” (Carter & Duncan, 2017, p. 4) presume the presence of guests and the signing of a marriage contract (Lau & Hui, 2010). It is a socially constructed event that has been facing considerable changes over the years, both in legal, sociocultural and consumerism terms (Rydzik et al., 2021), where “weddings function as a globally marketed spectacle” (Broekhuizen & Evans, 2016, p. 335).

From a purely religious ceremony, the wedding day becomes a ritual wrapped by a modern cultural spectacle where the couple and their wedding guest – usually family and special friends with structural ties that are anchored on shared emotional bonds (Bertella, 2015) - seek to live a memorable experience (Boden, 2003; Carter & Duncan, 2017). As recognised by Winch and Webster (2012, p. 51), “with the decline of traditional wedding values, consumer-led culture has rushed to fill this gap to connect the pursuit of wedding perfection with the need to consume”. Couples and their families are engaging in preparing a memorable day that involves both the venue and the bridal appearance (Broekhuizen & Evans, 2016; Carter & Duncan, 2017), and where everything and everyone are managed like in a play (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

## 2.4 Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

Customer satisfaction is “the extent to which a product’s perceived performance matches a buyer’s expectations” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016, p. 35). However, if cognitive dissonance occurs and guests are unsatisfied with their experiences, dissatisfaction occurs (Wang et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction and loyalty have been extensively explored in the scope of marketing and consumer behaviour literature (Berezina et al., 2016). It is recognised that satisfaction leads to positive attitudes, and dissatisfaction may generate negative ones. Traditionally accessed with quantitative methods, the user-generated content offers accessible data for qualitative research on the topic (Berezina et al., 2015; Berezina et al., 2016). Although in tourism, positive reviews prevail over negative ones, the analysis of spontaneously generated



content allows suppliers to know their customers' expectations and whether they are met (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021). Sparks and Browning (2011) identified that positive information posted on the Internet, jointly with ratings, increases the consumers' willingness to book a hotel room and potentiates high levels of consumers' trust.

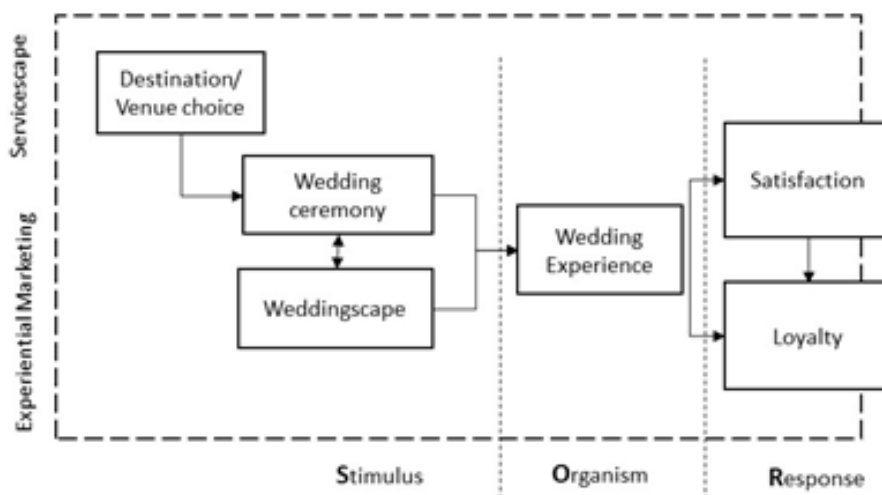
Electronic Word-of-Mouth (henceforward e-WoM) can be defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39). E-Wom is considered a powerful communication tool, significantly influencing purchase decisions (Carusona et al., 2017; Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021) and, at the same time, it is an important database for studying and monitoring consumer behaviour.

Satisfaction influences loyalty. Loyalty is often measured as the intent to return and willingness to recommend the product or service to others (Bowen & Chen, 2001). It is recognized that the cognitive psychology of consumers plays a central role in behavioural (revisit) and in attitudinal (commitment, recommendation) perceptions and that it commands guests' decisions to share comments about their experiences in social media (Berezina et al., 2016; Zemke et al., 2017). Hotel guests act as informal influencers with an impact on prospective guests' behavioural intentions and decision making (Berezina et al., 2016; Zemke et al., 2017) and on hotel brand reputation (Barreda & Bilgihan, 2013). Literature in marketing and tourism states that reviewers' satisfaction affects their online reviews (Han, 2021) and it impacts consumers' judgements (Hu et al., 2019). Alarcón et al. (2020) identified that the ranking position of a hotel, based on e-Wom reports of its guests, impacts the hotel's capacity to set higher prices. Han (2021) found that the reviewer's expertise can influence reviewers' satisfaction, and it is also affected by contextual factors like travel type (Ahn et al., 2017). The rating given by the customer is a sign of his level of satisfaction with the experience, which is described throughout positive and negative comments. Thus, e-Wom valence reveals customers' satisfaction with the experience (Zanibellato et al., 2018).

Like other customers, in this context, the way the bride and groom seek and choose service providers for this special day has changed. The online platforms allow the couple to see reviews from other customers, containing varied opinions, reports of their own experience and sometimes even photos of the place. The bride and groom do not need to leave their house to choose where to celebrate their wedding, and online reviews are influential sources (Douglas, 2016).

### 3. Methodology

Based on the literature review, Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that frames the analysis in this exploratory study. Starting from the choice of the destination and the venue in which the wedding ceremony would take place, the scenography and related choreographies are carefully designed and performed. The wedding-scape, described by Bertella (2015, p. 399) "as a space regulated" by the grooms and their families and generally orchestrated by wedding planners, is the stage where the wedding experience occurs. The wedding experience influences the satisfaction achieved by couples and their wedding guests, which, in turn, is reflected in behavioural outcomes, namely loyalty, online reviews (e-Wom), intention to return and/or to recommend. The stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) provides the theoretical foundation for the wedding ceremony at the hotel venue. From the lens of the S-O-R paradigm, the wedding-scape environmental stimuli generate a response from the organism which, in turn, influences consumers' behavioural outcomes.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework for the Wedding Ceremony at the Hotel Venue

Source: Own Elaboration

Based on the literature review, the main categories of analysis and respective subcategories that characterise the choice of the wedding venue, the servicescape/wedding-scape and the wedding experience are identified in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Dimensions of the Venue Choice, Customer Experience, Servicescape and Customer Loyalty

Category	Subcategory	Indicator
<b>Venue choice</b> (Lau & Hui, 2010)	Availability	The period during which the customer intends to have the wedding
	Location	Beauty and convenience of the place   accessibility and parking
	Venue installation/logistics	Size, audio equipment, bridal room and accommodation
	Gastronomy	Menu and quality of food
	Price	Space rental, food & beverage, equipment, and set up
<b>Servicescape/ wedding-scape</b> (Bitner, 1992; Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994; Bertella, 2015)	Ambient conditions	Temperature, air quality, noise, music, odour, lighting, etc.
	Spatial layout and functionality	Layout, equipment, furniture, floor covering, wall covering, shop windows, colour, cleanliness, ceilings, changing rooms and corridors
	Signs, symbols and artefacts	Signage, personal artefacts, decoration style, etc.
	Social factors	Other people, including staff and other customers
<b>Wedding experience</b> (Schmitt, 1999)	Sense	Sensory experiences (Vision, Hearing, Taste, Smell and Touch)
	Feel	Affective experiences
	Think	Creative-cognitive experiences
	Act	Physical experiences, behaviours and lifestyles
	Relate	Experiences of social identity that result from the relationship with a group reference or culture
<b>Customer loyalty</b> (Bowen & Chen, 2001)	Intention to return	Willingness of a customer to revisit or repurchase the experience in the future, based on their prior experience, satisfaction, and perceived value
	Intention to recommend	Willingness of a customer to suggest the experience to others based on their own experience

Source: Own Elaboration

### 3.1 Setting

Portugal is an attractive destination to host weddings from abroad, mainly because of the beauty of the landscape and heritage features, the gastronomy, the mild climate, the cultural richness and the quality-price relationship (Khodzhaeva, 2016). Despite the weddings abroad representing a niche for the Portuguese wedding industry (around 4%), it is a niche in exponential growth (Vidal, 2021). The foreign weddings in Portugal increased from 856 in 2014 to 1409 in 2019 - a change of 65.6% (Vidal, 2021). Pereira et al. (2022) conducted a study to analyse how destination weddings have contributed to the growth of event tourism in Portugal. They distributed a survey via email to a sample of couples, based on the 6,401 weddings in 2019 that involved at least one foreign spouse. The authors found that 65% of the forty foreign couples surveyed—more than one-third of whom were from the United Kingdom—had chosen Portugal as their first-choice wedding destination. Economically, weddings abroad show to be an advantageous niche for the industry as couples from abroad spend more money than national couples on the celebration and bring on average 87 guests that stay for a week. It is estimated that the organisation of weddings abroad provided the industry with 70.5 million euros in 2019 (Mendonça, 2020).

If the weight of wedding tourism in Portugal is not high, the same cannot be said for the different parts of the country, especially for the southern region, the Algarve, in which weddings with couples from abroad represented approximately 32% of all celebrated weddings (Vidal, 2021). The Algarve is an important tourist destination in Europe, being recognised as a pleasant place with beautiful beaches and a milder climate, but also for its historical past and culture. Furthermore, compared to other competing destinations, Portugal has high-frequency flights at a lower cost (Khodzhaeva, 2016). Although there is no official data on the number of establishments that offer the wedding venue product in Algarve, searching TripAdvisor for the expression “Algarve Wedding Resorts”, 20 resorts/hotels were found, of which fifteen are 5 stars and four are 4 stars.

Tivoli Carvoeiro hotel is one of the five-star resorts that offers a wide range of venues, with sea views and indoor spaces designed for weddings, private parties, birthdays, cocktail parties, or other social events. When it comes to private events, Tivoli Weddings is a top-rated product at the resort. With over 25 years of experience, the hotel underwent a major refurbishment in 2017, which included reducing the number of rooms from 293 to 248 to create more spacious accommodations with panoramic balconies. The renovation also introduced three restaurants with distinct gastronomic concepts, the establishment of the Tivoli Spa, and the addition of a conference centre featuring seven meeting rooms (Tivoli Carvoeiro Algarve Resort, 2020).

### 3.2 Data and Methods

Positioned within the interpretivist paradigm, according to which the world is an emergent social process created through shared meaning (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), this work is an exploratory study with a qualitative and deductive approach to the data. The researcher assumed the task of interpreting user-generated content in TripAdvisor to identify the most relevant elements in venue choice, servicescape/wedding-scape, customer experience and loyalty outcomes. The data was collected from TripAdvisor, one of the most recognised online review platforms in tourism and hospitality (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021). This platform was used because it is globally known and has more than 859 million reviews shared by travellers worldwide (TripAdvisor, 2020). Consequently, the platform is widely used as a database for academic research (Zanibellato et al., 2018). The analysis of such a platform was considered appropriate given the goal of this investigation, as the Internet was found to be the main means of spreading Portugal as a wedding destination (Peste, 2016). Within the scope of this study, a total of 4496 reviews of the Tivoli Carvoeiro hotel were collected. In order to gather only the comments regarding weddings in the hotel, in Portuguese, the word “casamento” was used as the search word, and in English, the word “wedding”. The data were collected without any time filter, giving 95 comments between 2006 and 2020 in the exact moment before the COVID-19 lockdown. Although the collected data comprises comments posted between 2006 and 2020, they refer to weddings that occurred between 2005 and 2019.

To extract the comments, Scrape Storm software, version 3.5.3, was used. This tool helps compile the data collected from each comment, creating a document with the variables selected for the extraction.



From each comment was retrieved the following information: the reviewer's username, the date when he/she shared the comment (month and year), the date in which he/she stayed in the hotel (month and year), his/her country of origin, his/her number of contributions/comments made on the TripAdvisor – reviewer's status, his/her rating (from 1 to 5) given to the resort, the title of the comment, the comment itself and its link. Each reviewer is identified by the initials of his/her name and by the review year. This type of identification is used throughout the analysis when text extracted from the reviews is presented.

Adopting an approach such as Zanibellato et al. (2018), the NVivo 12 Plus software was used to analyse and encode the data. Some of the 95 collected comments addressed multiple categories listed in Table 1. As a result, these comments were divided into separate, self-contained cases to ensure that each segment of text could be analysed according to the specific issue it addressed. One hundred seventy-three cases were created, corresponding each case to a distinct review. The most frequent words (attributes) described in the comments were identified, and these terms were categorized according to each of the dimensions/elements described in the literature review. The similar or synonyms words identified by the software were added, removed and merged so that it was possible to create cohesive nodes and exclude from the analysis cases that revealed zero or one or two occurrences in the reviews. After that, all comments were read to confirm the encoding assigned by NVivo. Therefore, 27 nodes were identified, each corresponding to an attribute.

Regarding the analysis of review valence, each node was divided into two sub-nodes: a positive and a negative one. The positive sub-node was associated with parts of the comments that refer to positive experiences related to that attribute (for example, to the attribute "pool": "(...) pool areas are simply stunning." (KR, 2016). The same procedure was adopted in the analysis of the negative sub-nodes: "(...) only minor complaint was the pool was freezing, but this is typical in Algarve." (T, 2019). In order to analyse the number of positive and negative comments by the reviewer's country, month and year of his/her stay, and his/her review rating, the "matrix coding" function was used. This functionality allows verifying how many English reviewers had a negative experience with the attribute pool, i.e., how the two variables intersect.

Finally, to determine customer loyalty, comments were identified in which couples and their wedding guests expressed their intention to return and/or recommend the hotel. "Intention to return" and "intention to recommend" nodes are still divided into two sub-nodes corresponding to the comment "yes" or "no".

### 3.3 The Reviewers' Profile

The 95 reviews shared by the couples and their wedding guests correspond to individuals who were accommodated at Tivoli Carvoeiro hotel, and from those indicating the year of staying, mainly, are for the period before the hotel's refurbishment (35,9%) – see Table 2. Most of the customers are from the United Kingdom (69.5%), followed by Irish customers (7.4%). Vidal (2021) has also identified that the UK was the primary origin of couples having their weddings in the Algarve. As expected, more comments were made to events taking place in peak season, i.e., between June and September (43,1%). The majority of the reviews from couples and their wedding guests are new reviewers on TripAdvisor.

**Table 2.** Profile of Couples and their Wedding Guests

Variables		Categories	Reviews of the couple and their wedding guests	
			No.	(%)
Stay Date	Years	Before Hotel Refurbishment (2005 – 2016)	34	35,9
		During Hotel Refurbishment (2017)	9	9,5
		After Hotel Refurbishment (2018 – 2019)	12	12,6
		Not specified	40	42,1
	Months	Mar-May	10	10,6
		Jun-Aug	29	30,5
		Sep-Nov	16	16,9
		Not specified	40	42,1
Country		United Kingdom	66	69,5
		Other European Countries	17	18,1
		Other Continents	2	2,1
		Not specified	10	10,5

Source: Adapted from Zanibellato et al. (2018).

## 4. Results

Regarding the venue choice criteria, *rooms* (37 reviews - 38.9%) and *location* (34 reviews - 35.8%) were positively assessed (Table 3). Paradoxically, in the analysis of the reasons for choosing the place, the *rooms* also received negative reviews (12 - 12.6%) with the argument that: *"The rooms are a bit old fashioned"* (A, 2010); *"The hotel rooms were a bit tired, but the hotel is about to get a major refurbishment."* (P, 2016). The *price* is also classified with a negative valence (11 - 11.6%).

Data also shows that the attribute that stands out most positively concerning the servicescape/wedding-scape is the *staff* belonging to the "social factors" (67 reviews - 70.5%). *"This is a traditional Portuguese hotel where the staff are excellent and genuine, which is hard to find"*. (MR, 2013); *"The staff were very friendly and helpful .... always on hand to help and make everything as good as it could possibly be."* (A, 2014). The following positively assessed attributes are *cleanliness* (with 34 positive reviews - 35.8%). Within the servicescape/wedding-scape, the *styling* is the attribute that gets more negative reviews (9 reviews - 9.5%).

The results show that the attributes of customer experience, which are more positively reviewed, propel positive e-Wom: the *landscape* and the *feelings*. The attribute that is mentioned more often in a positive way as the wedding experience by the couples and their wedding guests is the *landscape*, which belongs to the dimension "sense" (59 reviews - 62,1%): *"The views from this hotel are amazing. Nothing comes close to this."* (JP, 2018); *"The views genuinely match the promotional photos of the hotel. Could sit watching the world go by for hours."* (T, 2020). The following attribute positively reviewed is *feelings* that is part of the dimension "feel" (19 reviews - 20%): *"(...) our wedding was so special (...) We really want to thank you all with all of our heart for what you have done for us."* (E, 2018); *"Her attention to detail and willingness to ensure everything was to our preference, did not go unnoticed by ourselves and we are incredibly grateful."* (A, 2015). There is no evidence that there are attributes with a significative negative impact on the wedding experience. The attribute that has the highest number of negative reviews in the dimension "act" is the *pool*, but it has only four negative reviews out of a total of 95, which represents 4.2% of those reviews.

**Table 3.** Attributes of Venue Choice, Wedding Experience and Servicescape/Wedding-Scape and their Valence

Category	Subcategory	Attributes	Reviews No. (N= 95)	
			+	-
Venue choice	Location	Location	34 (35,8%)	0
		Accessibility	6 (6,3%)	0
		Stay	30 (31,6%)	0
	Venue installation/logistics	Facilities	6 (6,3%)	1 (1,1%)
		Rooms	37 (38,9%)	12 (12,6%)
		Food	26 (27,4%)	3 (3,2%)
	Gastronomy	Drinks	5 (5,3%)	0
		Price	5 (5,3%)	11 (11,6%)
Servicescape/wedding-scape	Ambient conditions	Air	3 (3,2%)	3 (3,2%)
		Weather	3 (3,2%)	0
		Noise	2 (2,1%)	2 (2,1%)
		Lighting	2 (2,1%)	1 (1,1%)
		Cleanliness	34 (35,8%)	1 (1,1%)
	Spatial layout and functionality	Layout/ Set Up	14 (14,7%)	0
		Styling	7 (7,4%)	9 (9,5%)
		Decoration	2 (2,1%)	1 (1,1%)
	Social factors	Staff	67 (70,5%)	5 (5,3%)
		Sense	Landscape	59 (62,1%)
Taste	3 (3,2%)		0	
Comfort	12 (12,6%)		0	
Wedding experience	Feel	Feelings	19 (20%)	1 (1,1%)
		Memory	3 (3,2%)	0
	Think	Expectations	4 (4,2%)	1 (1,1%)
		Pool	17 (17,9%)	4 (4,2%)
	Act	Walks	9 (9,5%)	0
		Wedding Planning	10 (10,5%)	0
	Relate	Service	11 (11,6%)	2 (2,1%)

Source: Own Elaboration

Although 27% of reviews were made by *New reviewers*, 34% of them were authored by *Senior or Top contributors*. The rating given by customers reveals high levels of satisfaction with the experience since around 93% gave a rate of *Very good* (4 stars – 30,5%) or *Excellent* (5 stars – 62,1%). Table 4 presents these results.

**Table 4.** Reviewers' Status in TripAdvisor and Hotel Rating

<b>Reviewers' status in TripAdvisor</b>	New reviewers (1–2)	26	27,4
	Reviewers (3–5)	8	8,4
	Senior reviewers (6–10)	6	6,3
	Contributors (11–20)	14	14,7
	Senior contributors (21–50)	15	15,8
	Top contributors (> 50)	17	17,9
	Not specified	9	9,5
<b>Rating</b>	Terrible (1 star)	0	0
	Poor (2 stars)	0	0
	Average (3 stars)	7	7,4
	Very good (4 stars)	29	30,5
	Excellent (5 stars)	59	62,1

Source: Own Elaboration

Couples and their wedding guests' intention to return and to recommend the hotel were analysed. From the total of 95 comments, 29.5% of the reviewers (28 reviews) revealed an intention to return to the resort. Regarding the intention to recommend, 20 positive comments represented 21,1% of the total reviews (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Number of Comments regarding the Intentions to Return and to Recommend the Resort Posted by Couples and their Wedding Guests

<b>Category</b>	<b>Reviews no.</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Intention to return	28 (29,5%)	1 (1,1%)
Intention to recommend	20 (21,1%)	0

Source: Own Elaboration

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Reviews on Venue Choice

Couples getting married at the Tivoli Carvoeiro hotel are mainly from the UK. This result is aligned with the predominant origin of couples choosing to have their wedding in the Algarve (Vidal, 2021). Bertella (2015) has also identified that couples from the UK were the most represented in selecting Tuscany, Italy, to have their wedding abroad.

The most relevant attributes regarding the wedding venue are the *room* and the *location*. These results are not entirely aligned with Lau and Hui (2010), who identified elegance, the size of the space and the accommodation as the most significant elements in choosing the wedding venue. However, the results are in accordance with Boden's (2003), who considers the *location* a critical element in the choice of a wedding venue, jointly with style, scale and ambience of the place. The dimension *location* only received positive reviews, which complies with Callan and Hoyes's (2000) statement on the beauty of the place. Regarding the attribute *room accommodation*, Peste (2016) also identified *accommodation* as one of the top push attributes of Portugal as a wedding destination.

*Price* was one of the attributes that gathered more negative references on TripAdvisor. This result is aligned with the findings of Mendonça (2020) and Pereira et al. (2022) that reported price reduction as the

most relevant aspect to be improved to increase the attractiveness of Portugal as a wedding destination. This is an aspect that deserves attention from the industry by taking into consideration the competitors in this product niche, since *price* is the determining element in the decision-making (Lockyer, 2005; Khodzhaeva, 2016).

## 5.2 Reviews on Servicescape/Wedding-scape

The attributes *staff* and *cleanliness* received a significantly higher number of positive mentions, underscoring the importance of both spatial layout and social factors within the servicescape—consistent with the frameworks proposed by Bitner (1992) and Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003). Of the 67 positive reviews related to *staff*, 49 (73%) were from customers from the United Kingdom, emphasizing the significance of this attribute for the hotel's primary market segment. *Cleanliness* was among the attributes that showed the most marked improvement following the hotel's renovation. The number of annual positive comments on cleanliness rose from an average of 1.3 prior to renovation, to 2.0 during the renovation phase, and to 2.5 after completion. These findings indicate that enhancements in these dimensions positively influenced electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) regarding the venue's suitability for wedding ceremonies, as perceived by both the bride and groom and their guests.

While the *styling* attribute received some negative feedback, all such comments were related to the period before the refurbishment, suggesting that the renovation effectively addressed previous concerns. Overall, the findings for the wedding-scape align with the observations of Line et al. (2018), Lockwood and Pyun (2019), and Garmaroudi et al. (2021), who emphasized the role of social interaction with both the physical setting and service personnel in shaping customers' emotional responses.

## 5.3 Reviews on the Wedding Experience

For the couple and their wedding guests, the critical attributes that characterise their wedding experience as shared in TripAdvisor are the landscape, attributes associated with the *Relate* dimension and positive *feelings*. As previously stated by Schmitt (1999), Tsaur et al. (2007) and Rather (2020), the dimension "sense", which includes the *landscape* attribute, can be used to differentiate brands, products or companies, making, in this way, recognizable the brand to the consumers, adding value to it. Furthermore, the *landscape* is related to a romantic idea about the event (Boden, 2003), which is associated with the venue choice for the wedding (Freeman, 2002; Rydzik et al., 2021). The ocean view is the key point of this hotel, being fairly recognised by customers and working staff as a differentiating point of the resort and the customers' experience, thus ensuring a romantic, forever memory. The relevance of *landscape* for the wedding experience is consistent with the findings for Portugal as a wedding destination. Mendonça (2020) and Pereira et al. (2022) identified, for Portugal, that the attractiveness of the *landscape* was the second factor influencing the wedding abroad, only preceded by the factor of *good weather*. The dimension "relate" ranks in the second position concerning positive reviews (21), which means that the venue provided a wedding experience that promoted social identity between participants. These attributes offer positive stimulus to this segment of clients. These results are aligned with the literature (Schmitt, 1999; Tsaur et al., 2007; Rather, 2020). In the dimension "feel", the attribute *feelings* creates a link between positive feelings and the venue brand since customers use words like "*special*" or "*grateful*" to express their feelings.

## 5.4 Reviews on Customer Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions

Following literature on satisfaction and loyalty on user-generated content in social media, our results conclude that positive reviews prevail over negative ones (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021), which is a sign of satisfaction with the experience (Zanibellato et al., 2018; Han, 2021). The positive appreciation of the attributes experienced by the bride and groom and their wedding guests allows us to conclude that they had a memorable experience. Positive reviews are prevailing over negative ones, which shows that the couples and their wedding guests' expectations were met (Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021). This finding is of great value since hotel guests act as informal influencers impacting hotel choice and tourists' decision-making (Berezina et al., 2016; Zemke et al., 2017). Online positive reviews accompanied by high ratings improve the confidence of prospective customers that the hotel delivers what is promised, which increases the



likelihood of purchase choice (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Although 27% of reviews were made by *New reviewers*, 34% were authored by *Senior* or *Top contributors* whose status is set as an expert, which can influence reviewers' satisfaction (Han, 2021). All in all, the rating given by customers reveals high levels of satisfaction with the experience since around 93% gave a rating of Very good (4 stars – 30,5%) or Excellent (5 stars – 62,1%). Satisfaction influences loyalty, and the analysis of the behavioural intentions expressed by the couples and their wedding guests reflects a pleasant global experience.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Main Findings

Following an experiential Marketing and servicescape approaches and informed by the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) paradigm, this research analyses the user generated content shared by clients of a hotel resort located at the Algarve in the context of a wedding ceremony, namely venue choice criteria, servicescape/wedding-scape attributes, experience and behavioural outcomes related to wedding ceremonies. Among the results of a qualitative thematic analysis on customers' reviews on the online platform TripAdvisor, a few highlights arise. Regarding the Stimuli factors, critical criteria in the appreciation of the wedding venue *room conditions* and venue *location*, attributes ranked with the most positive valence. On the other hand, reviews on *price* accounted for the most negative valence. For couples and their guests, the attributes of servicescape/wedding-scape with more positive valence are *staff* and *cleanliness*. The *styling* is the attribute that gets more negative reviews. Organism in S-O-R results from interactions with stimulus, and it refers to psychological processes (Sultan et al., 2021), like cognitive and affective responses (Pizam & Tasci, 2019). In this regard, findings highlight the role of sense, feeling and related dimensions in the design of memorable experiences in the context of a wedding ceremony. In the scope of attitudinal and behavioural learning (Response in S-O-R paradigm), the experience at Tivoli Resort generated mostly positive reviews, high ratings done by *Senior* or *Top contributors* and high levels of intentions to recommend, thus a sign of memorable experiences.

### 6.2 Implications for Theory

Since literature reports little research on the topic, this study sheds light on this kind of high-involvement product, classified as once-in-a-lifetime. Following the S-O-R paradigm, authors extend knowledge on venue choice and wedding-scape, wedding experience and attitudinal and behavioural outcomes from the perspective of wedding couples and their guests using content shared in TripAdvisor. Additionally, this work proposes a conceptual framework for *the Wedding Ceremony at the Hotel Venue*, which may lead to more integrated management approaches.

### 6.3 Implications for Management

Departing from the reviews of couples and their wedding guests that had their weddings in a hotel resort in the Algarve, south of Portugal, this study has interesting practical implications that can impact the experiences offered to customers in the hotel industry, namely in the “weddings” segment. The findings show that couples married at the hotel resort and their wedding guests had a memorable experience, in which the attributes valued for the venue choice interconnected positively with the provided servicescape. Positive reviews were quite superior to negative ones. The visibility of the memorable experiences from the wedding abroad reported on online platforms needs to be amplified, something that the industry still needs to explore.

Despite the predominance of positive reviews, some aspects need to be carefully addressed, namely the hotel's *layout* and the charged *price*. The *layout*, an attribute of the servicescape, collected some negative reviews. This implies that resorts/hotels hosting weddings should pay attention to international trends regarding the design and the decorative aspects of such spaces, as they influence behavioural outcomes. *Price* had the highest number of negative reviews. Thus, having in mind that the *price* is re-

garded as critical at the moment of purchase choice, the industry should compare its offer with that of competitors.

## 6.4 Future Research Avenues

Despite this, the exploratory study identifies positive and negative aspects associated with a wedding ceremony at a hotel resort, but it provides only a partial picture of this reality as it relies on only one hosting hotel. For the sake of confirmation/refusal of the current findings, this kind of analysis should be extended to other hosting places in the Algarve. Desirably, the extended analysis should cover other social networks beyond TripAdvisor, which is a limitation of the current work. The innovative character of the topic and the exploratory nature of this work justify, in the future, a quantitative study using a questionnaire survey applied to couples and their wedding guests. This kind of analysis would allow for the identification of patterns in the assessment of the attributes of the hosting places by sociodemographic characteristics of the customers, thus extending the knowledge on wedding tourism.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is financed by National Funds provided by FCT- Foundation for Science and Technology through Research Centre for Tourism, Sustainability and Well-being - CinTurs (UID/04020/2020) and Centre for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics - CEFAGE (UID/04007/2020).

## REFERENCES

- Ahn, D., Park, H., & Yoo, B. (2017). Which group do you want to travel with? A study of rating differences among groups in online travel reviews. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 25, 105–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.ELERAP.2017.09.001>
- Alarcón, J., Palacín, B., & Maspera, J. (2020). Hotels competition based on online ranking position. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 26, Article 2609. <https://ejtr.vumk.eu/index.php/about/article/view/1940>
- Baker, J., Grewal, D., & Parasuraman, A. (1994). The influence of store environment on quality inferences and store image. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(4), 328–339. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070394224002>
- Bardin, L. (1977). *The Content Analysis*. Paris, PUF.
- Barreda, A., & Bilgihan, A. (2013). An analysis of user-generated content for hotel experiences. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 4(3), 263–280. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-01-2013-0001>
- Belk, R. W. (1975). Situational variables and consumer behavior. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 2(3), 157–164. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208627>
- Berezan, O., Raab, C., Tanford, S., & Kim, Y.-S. (2015). Evaluating loyalty constructs among hotel reward program members using eWom. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 39(2), 198–224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348012471384>
- Berezina, K., Bilgihan, A., Cobanoglu, C., & Okumus, F. (2016). Understanding satisfied and dissatisfied hotel customers: Text mining of online hotel reviews. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 25(1), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2015.983631>
- Bertella, G. (2015). Celebrating the family abroad: the wedding tourism experience. *Annals of Leisure Research*, 18, 397–413. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2015.1064774>
- Bertella, G. (2017). The emergence of Tuscany as a wedding destination: The role of local wedding planners. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 14(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2015.1133446>
- Bhatt, G., Sarkar, A. & Sarkar, J. G. (2020). Attractive and facilitating store atmospheric stimuli. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 48(4), 363–379. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-07-2018-0142>
- Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299205600205>
- Boden, S. (2003). *Consumerism, Romance and the Wedding Experience*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Booms, B. H., & Bitner, M. J. (1981). Marketing strategies and organisation structures for service firms. In Donnelly, J. & George, W. R. (Eds.). *Marketing of Services*. American Marketing Association.
- Bowdin, G., Allen, J., O'Toole, W., Harris, R., & McDonnell, I. (2006). *Events Management*. Taylor & Francis.
- Bowen, J. T., & Chen, S. L. (2001). The relationship between customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(5), 213–207. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596110110395893>

- Broekhuizen, F., & Evans, A. (2016). Pain, pleasure and bridal beauty: mapping postfeminist bridal perfection. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 25(3), 335–348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2014.959478>
- Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological Paradigms and organisational analysis: Elements of the sociology of corporate life*. Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Callan, R. J., & Hoyes, M. K. (2000). A preliminary assessment of the function and conference service product at a UK stately home. *Tourism Management*, 21(6), 571–581. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(00\)00003-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(00)00003-0)
- Carter, J., & Duncan, S. (2017). Wedding paradoxes: individualised conformity and the 'perfect day'. *The Sociological Review*, 65(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-954X.12366>
- Carusona, B. P., Chernaik, T., DePolo, S., Deutch, E., Dudukovich, J., & Wilburn, J. (2017). *The Womma Guide to Influencer Marketing*. Word of Mouth Marketing Association.
- Chen, C. T., Chang, Y. Y., Cheng, C. C., & Liu, K. H. (2017). A study on constructing a tool to assess the wedding banquet service quality. *Journal of Accounting and Finance Development*, 10(1), 19–44. [https://doi.org/10.6735/JAFD.201703\\_10\(1\).0002](https://doi.org/10.6735/JAFD.201703_10(1).0002)
- Collishaw, M. A., Dyer, L., & Boies, K. (2008). The authenticity of positive emotional displays: client responses to leisure service employees. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 40(1), 23–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2008.11950131>
- Daniels, M., & Wisicki, C. (2021). *Wedding planning and management: Consultancy for diverse clients*. Abingdon; Routledge (3rd edition).
- Deale, C. S., & Lee, S. H. (2024). Saying "I Do" to a sustainable wedding: a case about making a wedding sustainable. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Cases*, 12(3), 113–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21649987241241942>
- Del Chiappa, G., & Fortezza, F. (2016). Motivations for wedding tourism: A demand-side perspective. In M. Kozak & N. Kozak (Eds.), *Tourist Behaviour: An International Perspective* (pp.56–63). CABI.
- Douglas, M. (2016). Part 1: The Past, Present and Future of the Wedding Industry. *HuffPost*. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/matt-douglas/part-1-the-past-present-f\\_b\\_9294420.html?ncid=engmodushpimg00000006](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/matt-douglas/part-1-the-past-present-f_b_9294420.html?ncid=engmodushpimg00000006) (accessed on 15-05-2020).
- Etemaddar, M., Thyne, M., & Insch, A. (2018). A taste of home - choosing a destination wedding. *Anatolia*, 29(3), 422–432. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2018.1433698>
- Freeman, E. (2002). *The wedding complex: Forms of belonging in modern American culture*. Duke University Press.
- Garmaroudi, S. A., King, C., & Lu, L. (2021). Social servicescape's impact on customer perceptions of the hospitality brand – The role of branded social cues. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 93, Article 102774. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102774>
- Getz, D. (1997). *Event Management & Event Tourism*. Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Getz, D. (2008). Event tourism: Definition, evolution, and research. *Tourism Management*, 29(3), 403–428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.07.017>
- Han, M. (2021) Examining the effect of reviewer expertise and personality on reviewer satisfaction: An empirical study of TripAdvisor. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 114, Article 106567. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106567>
- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K. P., Walsh, G., & Gremler, D. D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet? *Journal of Interactive Market*, 18(1), 38–52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10073>
- Holbrook, M. B., & Hirschman, E. C. (1982). The experiential aspects of consumption: consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(2), 132–140. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208906>
- Hoye, E., & Johnson, P. C. (2016). Capturing the hunter valley feeling in wedding tourism photography. In *CAUTHE 2016: The Changing Landscape of Tourism and Hospitality: The Impact of Emerging Markets and Emerging Destinations*. <https://search.informit.org/doi/epdf/10.3316/informit.913056987544386>
- Howard, J. A., & Sheth, J. N. (1969). *The Theory of Buyer Behavior*. John Wiley.
- Hu, N., Zhang, T., Gao, B., & Bose, I. (2019). What do hotel customers complain about? Text analysis using structural topic model. *Tourism Management*, 72, 417–426. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.01.002>
- Kandampully, J., Bilgihan, A., & Amer, S. M. (2022). Linking servicescape and experiencescape: creating a collective focus for the service industry. *Journal of Service Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-08-2021-0301>
- Khodzhaeva, V. (2016). *Wedding tourism in Portugal*. Masters Internship Report in Tourism and Communication, Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies.
- Kotler, P. (1973). Atmospherics as a marketing tool. *Journal of Retailing*, 49(4), 48–64.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2016). *Principles of Marketing* (16th Issue). Pearson.
- Lau, C. K. H., & Hui, S. H. (2010). Selection attributes of wedding banquet venues: An exploratory study of Hong Kong prospective wedding couples. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29, 268–276. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2009.10.008>
- Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 69–96. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0420>

- Lockwood, A., & Pyun, K. (2019). How do customers respond to the hotel servicescape? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 82, 231–241. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2019.04.016>
- Lockyer, T. (2005). The perceived importance of price as one hotel selection dimension. *Tourism Management*, 26(4), 529–537. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2004.03.009>
- Major, B., McLeay, F., & Waine, D. (2010). Perfect weddings abroad. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 16(3), 249–262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766710372242>
- Mehrabian, A., & Russell, J. A. (1974). *An Approach to Environmental Psychology*. The MIT Press.
- Mendonça, S. A. (2020). *Contribution of the destination weddings for the arise of events tourism: The case of Portugal*. Master Thesis, ISCTE Business School.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide do Design and Implementation* (4th edition). Jossey-Bass.
- Mirzaalian, F., & Halpenny, E. (2021). Exploring destination loyalty: Application of social media analytics in a nature-based tourism setting. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 20, Article 100598. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2021.100598>
- Molinillo, S., Ximénez-de-Sandoval, J. L., Fernández-Morales, A., & Coca-Stefaniak, A. (2016) Hotel Assessment through social media: the case of TripAdvisor. *Tourism & Management Studies*, 12(1), 15–24.
- Mossberg, L. (2007). A marketing approach to the tourist experience. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 7, 59–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1502250701231915>
- Mowzer, Z. (2016). *The impact of electronic word-of-mouth in social networking sites on a high-involvement purchase: an empirical study of South African brides' intention to purchase the "once-in-a-lifetime" wedding dress*. University of Cape Town. [https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11427/20534/thesis\\_com\\_2016\\_mowzer\\_zeenat\\_.pdf?sequence=1&is-Allowed=y](https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11427/20534/thesis_com_2016_mowzer_zeenat_.pdf?sequence=1&is-Allowed=y) (accessed on 18-06-2020).
- Obrador, P. (2012). The place of the family in tourism research: Domesticity and thick sociality by the pool. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 401–420. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.07.006>
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). Servqual: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.
- Pereira, L., Mendonça, S., Dias, A., Costa, R. L., & Gonçalves, R. (2022). Impact of destination weddings in the tourism economy. *International Journal of Economics and Business Research*, 23(4), 500–526. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJEBR.2022.10037060>
- Peste, M. (2016). *Destination weddings: Motivação e escolha por Portugal*. Master Thesis in Tourism, Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril.
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). *Welcome to the experience economy*. Harvard Business Review.
- Pizam, A., & Tasci, A. D. A. (2019). Experienscape: Expanding the concept of servicescape with a multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary approach (invited paper for 'luminaries special issue of international journal of hospitality management'). *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 76(Part B), 25–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.06.010>
- Rather, R. A. (2020). Customer experience and engagement in tourism destinations: the experiential marketing perspective. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37(1), 15–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2019.1686101>
- Reimer, A., & Kuehn, R. (2005). The impact of servicescape on quality perception. *European Journal of Marketing*, 39(7/8), 785–808.
- Ritter, M., Boger, C. A., & Draper, J. (2020). The effects of time living away from home and family support on intention to host a destination wedding. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 17, Article 100461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100461>
- Rydzik, A., Agapito, D., & Lenton, C. (2021). Visibility, power and exclusion: The (un)shifting constructions of normativity in wedding tourism brochures. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 86, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.103090>
- Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(1-3), 53–67. <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725799784870496>
- Schumann, F. R., & Amado, C. (2010). Japanese overseas weddings in Guam: A case study of Guam's first hotel wedding chapel. *South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage*, 3(1), 173–181.
- Sparks, B. A., & Browning, V. (2011). The impact of online reviews on hotel booking intentions and perception of trust. *Tourism Management*, 32(6), 1310–1323. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.12.011>
- Sultan, P., Wong, H. Y., & Azam, M. S. (2021). How perceived communication source and food value stimulate purchase intention of organic food: an examination of the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 312, Article 127807.
- Tivoli Carvoeiro Algarve Resort (2020). [www.tivolihotels.com/en/tivoli-carvoeiro](http://www.tivolihotels.com/en/tivoli-carvoeiro) (accessed on 01-02-2020).
- Tombs, A., & McColl-Kennedy, J. R. (2003). Social-servicescape conceptual model. *Marketing Theory*, 3(4), 447–475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593103040785>
- TripAdvisor (2020). [www.tripadvisor.com/](http://www.tripadvisor.com/) (accessed on 02-06-2020).

- Tsaur, S. H., Chiu, I. T., & Wanget, C. H. (2007). The Visitors Behavioral Consequences of Experiential Marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 21(1), 47–64. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v21n01\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J073v21n01_04)
- Vidal, M. P. (2021). *Positioning Portugal as a wedding destination: Targeting the American market*. Master Thesis in Management, Nova School of Business and Economics.
- Walls, A. R. (2013). A cross-sectional examination of hotel consumer experience and relative effects on consumer values. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 32, 179–192. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.04.009>
- Wang, L., Wang, X.-K., Peng, J.-J., & Wang, J.-Q. (2020). The differences in hotel selection among various types of travellers: A comparative analysis with a useful bounded rationality behavioural decision support model. *Tourism Management*, 76, Article 103961. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.103961>
- Winch, A., & Webster, A. (2012). Here comes the brand: Wedding media and the management of transformation. *Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 26(1), 51–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2012.630143>
- Wong, C. U. I., & Qi, S. (2017). Tracking the evolution of a destination's image by text-mining onlinereviews - the case of Macau. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 23, 19–29. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2017.03.009>
- Zanibellato, F., Rosin, U., & Casarin, F. (2018). How the attributes of a museum experience influence electronic word-of-mouth valence: An analysis of online museum reviews. *International Journal of Arts Management*, 21(1), 76–90.
- Zemke, D. M. V., Chen, Y.-S., Raab, C., & Zhong, Y. (2017). Hotel design, guest satisfaction, and behavioural intentions. *Anatolia*, 28(3), 338–350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2017.1319868>

## ORCID

Beatriz Sanches Cartas

Manuela Guerreiro  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6398-9712>

Ana Paula Barreira  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5816-3361>

## Notes on contributors

**Beatriz Sanches Cartas** holds a master's degree in Marketing Management and a BA in Management from the Faculty of Economics, University of Algarve, Portugal. She is social Media Manager and introduced herself as a Digital Content Specialist. Her research interests include Digital marketing, Social media marketing and content marketing.

**Manuela Guerreiro** holds a PhD in Economic and Business Sciences, specialising in Marketing. She is Assistant Professor with Habilitation at the Faculty of Economics, University of Algarve (Ualg). She combines her research interests in marketing, arts/culture, and tourism, in a multidisciplinary approach to better understand tourists' behaviour and the hedonic and experiential dimension of consumption, notably in branding and image of tourism destinations. She acts as leader or team member in national and international funded research projects, program leader in the Master of Marketing Management, and member of the Direction Board of PhD in Tourism. She is an integrated member and Co-Coordinator of Research Centre for Tourism, Sustainability and well-being (CinTurs).

**Ana Paula Barreira** holds a PhD in Economics and she is Associate Professor (with the Habilitation) at the Faculty of Economics, University of Algarve. She is an integrated member of Centre for Advanced Studies in Management and Economics (CEFAGE). She published several articles in Web of Science core collection journals (h-index =9) and book chapters. She participates as researcher in several funded project(s) being in one of them the team leader. Her research interests include Local Finance, shrinking cities, Quality of Life, Policy and planning strategies, Environmental management, Residents' preferences, Pull and push factors, and Tourism.