

## FROM INHABITANT TO ATTENDEE IN THE EVENTFUL CITY OF CLUJ-NAPOCA: AN EXPLORATORY AND DESCRIPTIVE APPROACH

MARIUS BOTA<sup>1</sup>, LAVINIA LAMUREAN<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT.** Worldwide the events industry is a developing one. It can be pointed out that it is directly connected to the development of communities in each destination. Events are well-known as an ageless concept, as being a part and of high importance in our footprint as humans. Cluj-Napoca, known as events destination, became a qualitative source of entertainment with options ranging from cultural festivals, gastronomic fairs, business meetings, self-development seminars, community gatherings to sports and athletic demonstrations.

It displays a top-class portfolio of events, a range of all sizes and content, from the local traditional fairs, emblematic festivals such as TIFF Festival and Electric Castle, to a major entertainment source that is Untold Festival. Moreover, every event has its own authenticity and content, making it almost impossible for its participants to not find one in Cluj-Napoca with options ranging from all kinds of events.

The purpose of our study was to identify and analyze the motivating and inhibiting factors for the residents, in attending events from Cluj-Napoca market, as well as the development of a profile of them as consumers. A secondary data analysis was used to explore the field of events. In 2020 for two months, a survey was conducted for data collection. A short questionnaire was implemented through a correspondence interview. The retained sample was 258 residents from Cluj-Napoca. Only a part of the collected data was used in the present study.

**Keywords:** events, destination, events industry, profile of the event attendee

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<sup>1</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr., Department of Hospitality Services, Faculty of Business, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, marius.bota@ubbcluj.ro

<sup>2</sup> Graduated student from Faculty of Business, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, lavlamurean@gmail.com

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## **Introduction and brief review of literature**

The industry of events is one of the most representative and symbolic industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century having a worldwide importance among people, by offering them the greatest ways of spending their leisure time and, a possibility to create constant interaction and a point of active social gatherings between personas. How can one understand such prominent industry that is rapidly growing and expanding at a global level? By looking upon its core as a real phenomenon recognized worldwide for its status as a service used and integrated by all cultures and societies. Events are powered by their attendees to satisfy the needs of other participants.

The industry of events includes the interested parts, the ever-growing number of participants, from one event to another, rewarding this area of interest as a lead employer (Kose et al, 2011, mentioned in Cerruti & Piva, 2015). Theocharis (2008) is the author placing an emphasis upon this industry as one of the most renowned industrial branches hiring on a global level. The follow of this path will “major the economic sector due to its positive impacts” (Theocharis, 2008, mentioned in Cerutti & Piva, 2015). When events were launched a thousand years ago, their roots as an industry, began with the first ancient civilizations. Page & Connell are the events industry specialists known for placing human-events bond in Routledge Handbook of Events; events are known from the very beginning for their importance in the development of every society (Page & Connell, 2012). Having shown a great and permanent significance in the development of the human nature, events have created a mutual relationship that in our study has been described by these authors; from the very beginning, humans were determined to fulfill their need of social contextualization and entertainment, while searching for a liberating feeling that was missing from their daily lives

and later found it through participating in events. The mutual relationship started when people felt the need to belong in such gatherings, later called events, as a way of getting apart from the daily activities, while events, in exchange, wouldn't have been powered unless the present energy of their participants for a proper and complete development. Moreover, the need of leisure and that of entertainment has been confirmed by every culture, from past and until the present day; time spent away for a couple of moments, in a brand-new location, where there is shared creativity and the possibility to understand the solemn process (Turner, 1982, mentioned in Quinn, 2009).

One of the most familiar specialists with the industry of events is Donald Getz and as a way of defining this culture, the author recalls the entertaining manifestations as everlasting and immortal. As an event expert, Getz (2011) believes that the most common way of defining manifestations is by looking at their place of happening and their temporality (Getz, 2011, mentioned by Cerutti & Piva, 2015). However, the emphasis expands with authors such as Bladen et al. (2012) having named events in their book entitled *Events Management* for the conscious participation offered by the participating personas; events are seen as a meeting that does not last long enough but brings together conscious groups of individuals (Bladen et al., 2012).

An extra point of view that focuses on the action of participating in events, has been stated by Carter (2007): "the starting point of action for the industry is the energy of its participants, with events becoming a location open to anyone who might be attracted to a universal characteristic that makes them to stand out" (Carter, 2007, mentioned in Cerutti & Piva, 2015). In contrast to the previous descriptions, there were others whom we have found important in their way of thinking about events, especially after how these sources of entertainment take place, what makes them stand out from the crowd and their cause of birth; a destination of togetherness for the desired audience and a path to a single appeal "for ourselves and for our nature, events are the pulp of action" (Bowdin et al., 2012). Furthermore, Getz (2005) recalls the mutual relationship between us as participants and events, for the uniqueness that is present in a mosaic of themes, diversity of symbols and characteristics from one event to another "Each event is not like any other and that is

because of the way it is planned, its location and ultimately, for its audience” (Getz, 2005, as mentioned in Bowdin et al., 2012).

Best known for its position among the most searched Transylvanian destinations, Cluj-Napoca is a city popular for its settlement on the map and for the achievements received as a hub incorporating the arts of all time. Viewed nationally, the city of Cluj-Napoca is highly rewarded for its artistic activity and superior qualifications (Voicu & Dragomir, 2017, mentioned in Zbranca, 2017). With a constant expansion, the market of events in Cluj-Napoca gains popularity through the organization of manifestations that are nationally and internationally rewarding for its host, for their level and composure.

The city has received the EYC (European Youth Capital) distinction for its past activity in 2015, in comparison to other cities in the competition, and has managed to win, step-by-step, the name of the Romanian entertainment capital and of the most memorable destination for events organized on the Romanian territory. Moreover, the destination of Cluj receives a distinction that is of vital importance for its popularity worldwide; ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> place in competition of the European Youth Capital (Cosma et al., 2016). Later leading to the city of Cluj-Napoca entering the competition for the European Capital of Culture in the year of 2021 (Tomiuc, 2016); the events industry demonstrating and accentuating the whole cultural and festive process for the city of Cluj-Napoca. Zbranca (2017) nominates and matches the sector of events as following: the one placing events under the distinction of capital of arts, in music and cinematographic shows (Zbranca, 2017). The city of Cluj-Napoca is the synonym of change and growth, searching the novelty factor in every present element as a way of appliance for the needs and demands of the consumer of events in Cluj-Napoca.

Its potential to easily adapt has managed to offer Cluj-Napoca, throughout its development, the chance of becoming a pliable and highly flexible location, being classified as a city of opportunities and possibilities. Therefore, the events of Cluj-Napoca are not only seen for their novelty factor on the Romanian market, but for the ability to provide memorable experiences, unmatched feelings, or elements with every passing edition. The way events of Cluj-Napoca are adapting every year has been possible through the development that is encouraged in this destination, being

transformed into a result of ever-going metamorphosis; the evaluation has been pointed out due to the availability of industrial buildings and for the manufacturing activity in its past, to its exchange into an appealing destination for academic prosperity, for the growth of the business branch, and for cultural services (Popescu et al., 2018).

Other specialty authors have declared their perspective towards the launching position of the destination of Cluj-Napoca, as a transit location that has moved until its conversion as an economic district for the entrepreneurship environment (Cosma & Negrusa, 2008). A backup, secondary proof demonstrating the following statement has been offered by the academic history of the city, where the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca and the adherence of students eager to start their undergraduate and postgraduate studies in this destination, has determined the city of Cluj-Napoca to offer an expanding portfolio of multicultural experiences (Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, 2020). This academic movement has also been accentuated by Tomiuc (2016); the undergraduate and postgraduate segment enrolled in the city of Cluj-Napoca represent 20% of the entertaining energy required by the location to create a dynamic in terms of search, engagement, and active participation for these events (Tomiuc, 2016).

Some of the events organized in Cluj-Napoca have managed to conquer the spotlight, either for their dimension, in relation to the events industry measurement scale, either for their unique and creative content or as awarded events. Therefore, the four artistic Cluj-Napoca events that have turned into industry symbols and masterpieces are: Untold Festival; Electric Castle Festival; TIFF (Transylvania International Film Festival); Jazz in the Park.

The need that has been recognized from the starting point of events in the course of human history, began with exclusive purposes. Participants and their needs were viewed from a general perspective, that of their belonging community. As reunions they served as a location where each member of the community was participating to share and reach a familiar, universal goal "Events are dated in history since the very beginning, when the civilizations were gathering due to a single focus, that of common interests and a shared purpose" (Cucu, 2017). The specific needs and aspirations, as for each individual person, have determined the change from a specific level into a common good, offering

an ordinary open-access path to all the members of the community. Donald Getz (2012) is the one naming the previous needs with the help of the term organic that symbolizes a universal nature “the organic needs are the ones rivered by wants and aspirations of the whole community, informal in their nature, with every member being requested upon for help for the sole purpose, as it was requested and expected from them” (Getz, 2012, in Page & Connell, 2012).

An observation that was hard to pass is that of certain historical periods, where civilizations were not encouraged to manage and behave on their own, to adopt decisions for their personal goodwill. Such argument has been observed and supported by proof coming from the research of experts; the needs of the people to connect with each other, to socialize, have always been a constant, persistent ever-going demand and no matter the change that has been bought to the industry of events, the interpersonal connection has remained the same. Situated in the middle of the pyramid of needs, a concept developed and initiated by its author, Abraham Maslow, is that of the demand for social aspects, the craving for connection towards groups of friends and towards family (Abraham Maslow, 1943, as adapted by Bladen et al., 2012). Every single branch and industry are all having their breaking point powered by the creativity of the human beings. Events, as named by Bowdin et al. (2012) are “core references” for a man’s life (Bowdin et al., 2012).

The current availability at a global level is given by a portfolio of events that is continuously developing and diversifying. The appearance of certain factors, of some causes and most likely, of the occurring effects, has led to the creation and initialization of a proper system specific to the industry of events, under two major criteria: dimension and content. The emphasis of these factors can be also directed towards the demand: among the factors determining the demand are, as mentioned by the specialists of the industry, the need of interaction on a social basis and that of leisure expenditure (Prentice and Andersen, 2003, as mentioned by Quinn, 2009). However, other experts bind this request to that of consumption of a full experiential package (Getz, 2008, as mentioned by Quinn, 2009). The impact of the local events is felt especially by the residents, the local consumers of experiences, of the demanded services as a veritable source of tangible and intangible benefits. Ultimately, the locals are the decisive factors when questioning the organization of an

event; the individuals will eventually create a bond; a binding emotion towards the event; marking the place of action with a personal impression or feeling; creating self-esteem for the community; creating a sense of involvement and reciprocity; the locals become the area's economy supporters, involving the community in every sport and cultural manifestation; the constant search to adapt to the factors such as inclusion and diversity (Bowdin et al.,2012).

The locals are the one preserving the cultural authenticity, while the events are creating the request of active interaction between the host community and a way of understanding the local traditions and customs. From the knowledge about the local history, to visually scanning the contact of the cultural area, traditions, and the rite of ceremonial, to what is defined in terms of fundraising events that are held by charity organizations (Mackeller, 2017). With a profound success and an emphasis on regional celebration, the local councils and institutions are supporting the integration of events in their plans as densely as possible. Van Niekerk (2017) is the one highlighting the immense potential of a small dimension event, mentioning that it will cover the impact of those organized in large scale; this being the exact reason for skipping the recognition that comes from the benefits of a smaller manifestation (Van Niekerk, 2017).

Many of the experts in events have managed to describe their view towards the profile of participating consumer. Some offered vital fragments of data that are essential in constructing the demographic avatar for these participants. Primarily, when they start participating in events they create their own personal statement, later understood by the specialists, as the access to a dominant and universal gathering of personas. When we want to know who our consumers are, we must also get familiar with characteristics that describe their demographic and social background, and respectively their exterior persona. Moreover, the focus should also be placed upon the location of the consumers (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Tiele, 2011, mentioned in Lee and Kyle, 2014). Already declared as the starting point for every event, participants are the power needed by every manifestation to function properly and adequately on the market (Getz, 2007, in Mackeller, 2017). When constructing the avatar of certain consumers, the emphasis must not only be placed upon variables on visual aspects describing the exterior

of the attendees or their current geography, familiar to any of the viewers (Dolničar, 2004; Moscardo, Philip & Morrison, 2001 in Lee & Kyle, 2014). The extensive research must come from the selection of data describing the thoughts and feelings of the participants as well and on how they behave (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Tiele, 2011, in Lee & Kyle, 2014). Both the psychology of action and the external data add-up and allow the complete construction of the energy describing the avatar for the consumer of events (Mackeller, 2017).

DiMaggio et al. (1978) describes the active pass as a patron in the events industry as an ever-going cycle of entertainment; once showing a strong interest in the performance of arts, the individual will develop a codependency towards all possibilities of expression (DiMaggio et al., 1978, as seen in Oakes, 2010). The active participation is placed, under psychological understanding, in the research of Lee & Kyle (2014); reaching a commitment state towards an event market, will result in attendance out of loyalty, in favor of other host destinations, while the gain of an optimistic experience plays as a catalyst between the parts, the consumer becoming synonym to the event and its host (Lee and Kyle, 2014). The chemistry formula of an active participation is described in the studies as a force of energy combined with the involvement of assets, time, money, interest, and comprehension (Iso-Ahola, 1983; Stebbins, 2001; Getz, 2007 in Mackeller, 2017) a mixture composing the social profile of the active consumer in events. What divides the two parts is that one enhances its profile based on opportunities, while the other is restricted to little or no interaction (Mackeller, 2017).

Viewed on the map that represents the experiential economy, a concept launched and supported by its authors Pine and Gilmore, later found in Berridge's *Events Design and Experience*, the event consumer is one that emerges in different typologies of the industry based on their frequency and on their level of engagement. Therefore, one can found itself in a completely new dimension from one event or category of event to another. In providing the map of experience, the authors of the concept have offered precise and concrete instructions to be followed by further researchers. Considered the host of all possible interactive dimensions, the map provides a two-sided perspective towards how one can be integrated in the experience of an event (Pine and Gilmore, 1999, as mentioned by Berridge, 2011). Thus, in the perspective of our



Cluj-Napoca segment of consumers, the map applies integrally on both axis; on the horizontal line, the authors are describing the status of participation, as seen as well in our study, either for active or passive personas. However, our study focused on the history and the frequency, while the experiential economy is reflecting aspects such as the degree of interaction based on the typology of the event. Therefore, one can be passive when attending a museum event, that provides a visual and audio experience for the consumer or active if participating in a baseball match as one of the main players. On the other hand, viewing the map on its vertical availability, we have found that the participant is nurturing a cognitive and emotional relationship to the event background and area, and that the engagement is in fact the creation of one's match to the event environment (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, as mentioned by Berridge, 2011). The customer of Cluj-Napoca, for example, is a participant interactive on every degree and level of experience towards the industry's events; an experience can be an act of absorption, where we place our thoughts and feelings to the rhythm offered by a jazz festival or the possibility to be immersive in the game, where we are often attracted by attending a tennis tournament.

Ultimately, the map is not complete if for the 4 Es of the research and are provided by authors Pine and Gilmore as "areas of interest that are highly transmissible to the events consumer, representing a harmonious integration of authentic individual happenings" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, stated by Berridge, 2011). The 4Es are the educational background; the environment sector; the visual of the aesthetics; the escapist experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, stated by Berridge, 2011). To top it all off, it has been demonstrated by years of research that the context of experience manifests differently not only from one person to another but based on the category of the manifestation and on the level of emotional and thoughtful involvement.

## **Material and method**

The purpose of our study was to identify and analyze the motivating and inhibiting factors for the residents, in attending events from Cluj-Napoca market, to describe their image, and more exactly their profile as events consumers living in this area of interest. The focus has also been placed on the development of a profile as consumers

through individual characteristics. For this paper it has conducted an exploratory and descriptive research, where the secondary data analysis was used to explore the field of events.

To identify and analyze the motivating and inhibiting factors for the residents, in attending events from the Cluj-Napoca market, as well as the development of a profile as branch consumers, a quantitative research was chosen. As stated by Robson, the following method is a frequent recommendation for when undertaking a research plan in the industry of tourism, and recently noticed as a top choice for the organizing industry of events as well (Robson, 2008, mentioned in Page & Connell, 2012). The depth of the research is that of quantitative data, understood from a descriptive point of view, followed by the decode of the information with the use of the investigation method and through the correspondence technique interview as choices used to completely build and contrast the profile of the Cluj-Napoca event consumer. Recurring methodological choices have allowed this research, to completely identify the resemblances and oppositions coming from the consumers' preferential actions, as well as the idea that the consumer of events is participating in contrast with its current lifestyle.

Moreover, in a short period of time the research has allowed the collection of all the required data, the use of flexible choices from the respondents and the management of a representative sample of consumers from the targeted market. Therefore, in the completion of the research, the integrated tool was the questionnaire, shared and completed by the residents of Cluj-Napoca as an online form found on social platforms, specifically on Facebook and on groups of events for the destination such as "Evenimente Cluj", "Cluj Events" and "Where in Cluj Events". The questionnaire has also been shared on a more individual level, straightforward to the residents of the destination participating in the events taking place. The platform that has allowed us to create the survey is Google Forms, while the completion period was throughout an interval of three weeks from 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020 until 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

## **Results and Discussions**

In the last decade, the segment of events participation rate from our country has been profoundly highlighted, especially in the city of Cluj-Napoca, where the destination has turned into the host of the most

important events on the Romanian market. Therefore, starting from this principle, the need for knowledge in regards of the consumption behavior has placed our research in this nucleus of interest, where events are kept up to date and most likely to be searched by their participants. In Cluj-Napoca and in the surrounding area, the industry of events is the one attracting, from one passing year to another, an intensive categorization that keeps on expanding; precisely, the reason for what determines the researchers to discover the reveal of such phenomenon.

Our first result is the statement of participation to events taking place in Cluj-Napoca, as approved by more than half of the attendees in the research. The usability of the question was that of breaking the ice between the researchers and the participants in the study, while allowing the pin down of the base characteristics of the attending crowd. The results point out that our participant owns an active frequency from the very beginning of the research.

**Table 1.** The percentage of active and passive users of events in Cluj-Napoca and, precisely their score frequency.

Participation in the events of Cluj-Napoca	Score frequency
Active	76%
Passive	24%
Total	100%

**Source:** Authors' calculations.

A positive outcome is shown from the start of the study (Table 1), where we have 196 results representing 76% of the respondents from the total residents that present an active frequency in events organized in the destination of Cluj-Napoca. The opposite comes from 24% of the data, where 61 display a status of non-participants, for their passive, selective frequency. Our concern when applying the question was to understand how the participating frequency in the past will determine their foreseeable behavior towards events, respectively how long does it take to be considered active in participation in the destination of Cluj-Napoca.

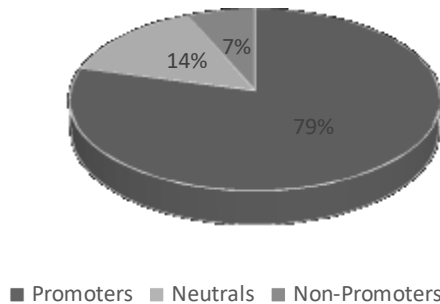
As seen in Table 2, most of the respondents (91%) have a good or a very good degree of satisfaction from participating in events in this destination. Not every participant has a definite opinion towards events, therefore, maintains a neutral position; in this case were 18 of the participants (7%).

**Table 2.** The degree of satisfaction of past events in the city of Cluj-Napoca.

Answer preference	Frequency of answer	Relative frequency
Very good	132	51%
Good	104	40%
Neutral	18	7%
Dissatisfied	4	2%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0%
<b>Total answers</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Authors' calculations

When asked about negative outcomes 4 of the residents declared using their statements that they had a dissatisfied experience towards events taking place in this destination.



**Figure 1.** The percentage of users demonstrating the act of promotion as well as passives and non-promoters of events from the market of Cluj-Napoca.

Source: Authors' calculations.

By adding a NPS (Net Promoter Score) question in the following research led to a much easier way of comprehension regarding the degree of satisfaction obtained by the consumers of events in Cluj-Napoca, through the perspective of the probability needed to recommend an event in this destination to other persons. To identify the rate of recommendation for this segment of consumers, the rating bar includes a scale from 1 to 10, with the corresponding answers divided in the different categories: the promoters; neutrals and the non-promoters. The first category is related to the highest scores, 9 and 10, a case where 204 of the participants in the study were registered. According to Figure 1, the second category is represented by the neutrals, where 37 of the respondents were found (14%) due to their score of 7 and 8.

The lowest percentage is held by the category of non-promoters, for 17 of the attendees in the study (7%) as they graded their rate of recommendation in between a score of 1 to 6.

Therefore, as specified by the NPS equation, we have the percentage ratio describing the difference between the promoters and the non-promoters, since the score of the neutrals is null in this report:

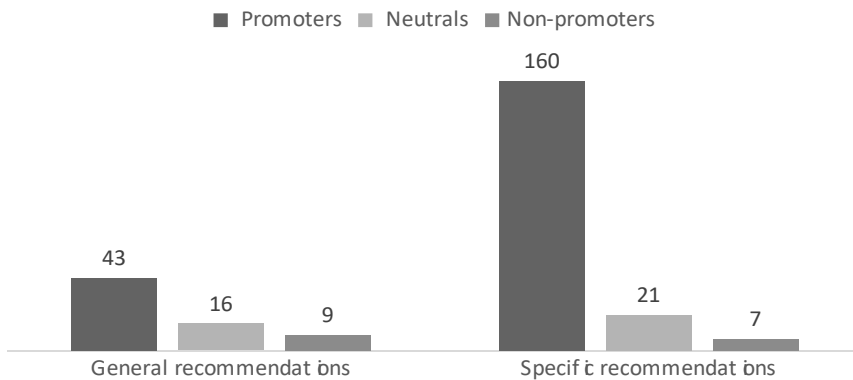
$$NPS = \left( \frac{204 - 17}{258} \right) * 100 = 72,48\%; \text{ where:}$$

- 204-the number of promoters with a score of 9 and 10.
- 17- the number of non-promoters grading their probability of recommendation between a score of 1 to 6.
- 258-the total of respondents in the study.

**Source:** Author's calculations as adapted from the NPS equation.

Thus, the pure rate of recommendation, respectively the net score has indicated a favorable outcome for the studied segment.

As we have obtained a positive outcome, it can be declared that the consumer of events in the city of Cluj-Napoca is promoting this category of entertainment in proportion of 72.48%.



**Figure 2.** The distribution of answers as understood according to the three levels of recommendation, as well as by the side in which they belong (active-neutral or passive consumer).

**Source:** Authors' calculations.

To better understand the resume in terms of recommendations coming from the consumer of events in Cluj-Napoca, it has been opted for an unstructured, open-ended question, better allowing the respondents to name and match an event held in this destination to the chosen score. Hence, we have decided to keep the three categories as seen in the previous question, the only add-in is a filter that divides according to their choice of action, respectively the side they have picked, either for a general perspective or for a more personal specific choice of event. Two invalid questions were found in this part of the research, from a total of 258 answers. The three categories we are referring to are the promoters, the neutrals and ultimately, the non-promoters (Figure 2).

First, the promoters where are to fit most of the representative suggestions made by our segment of consumers, a context that demonstrates the score of recommendation previously discussed and analyzed, of 72,48%. The consumer of events in Cluj-Napoca is a promoter, being classified due to the peak levels in the score bar of 9 and 10, where 160 of the suggestions were specific, on a more personal level, while 43 were a general impression. Depending on their specific preferences, the events most likely to be promoted are Untold Festival, Jazz in the Park, TIFF, Street Food Festival and Electric Castle; the emphasis is placed upon the organizing process that these events have, of the participating public, the content and thematic, as well as on the spectacle and on the creative display. Among the 160 specific recommendations, the respondents opt for promoting events that do not display a similar degree of notoriety, but whom are sharing the same weight of importance in the portfolio of events taking place in Cluj-Napoca: TedX; the feminine leadership conference The Woman; FedCup; Discoteca 80. Among the 43 of the general recommendations, we have observed a favorable pattern of choice in regards of the infrastructure of the Cluj-Napoca events, with one of the answers demonstrating the exact argument demonstrated above: Even the events that did not display an extraordinary description, have turned out to be memorable and veritable experiences. Therefore, are valued the most illustrative characteristics for the destination of Cluj-Napoca: exceptional organization; superior quality services; diversity and authentic experiences hosted by the local and international guides.

The passive category captures a somewhat neutrality towards the process of recommendations, dividing the process in two different perspectives of the respondents. Specific to score levels 7 and 8, among the recommendations made by our segment, we learn that events are seen as a praised opportunity and that the frequency of participation is satisfactory; the respondents are influenced by positive or negative factors, deciding upon their participating status, respectively to provide or not a recommendation. The resume of the 16 general perspectives has shown our study the depth offered by one of the answers: The events taking place in Cluj-Napoca have the tendency to be more qualitative than quantitative. Therefore, by this level of recommendation, the views upon events are more and more subjective, meaning that only some of these manifestations will be promoted and therefore, described for their positive qualities.

The non-promoters are composed of 16 recommendations, which constitute the motivation to decline the participation and furthermore, to not promote an event taking place in Cluj-Napoca. Specific to the scores situated between 1-6. Out of 7 specific answers, it was declared that by acknowledging past experiences in a negative matter while participating in an event, one unleashes a subjective context upon the event. Also, the 9 results that are general refer to the lack of recommendation, where the respondents declare that by having a low frequency in the events taking place, they will not recommend it to others.

**Table 3.** The category of the public found in events of Cluj-Napoca and the frequency in which the consumer of Cluj matches the most.

<b>The category of the public</b>	<b>The frequency of every public</b>	<b>Relative frequency</b>
Crowd of people	92	36%
Searching for new experiences	86	33%
Local attendees	57	22%
Random attendees	18	7%
Media personas (TV; radio; online)	5	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Author's calculations.

Our next question has fulfilled the role of emphasizing the hypotheses in which the consumer of events in Cluj-Napoca is found, precisely the required level to process the experience provided by such entertainment category.

According to our data, the consumer of events from Cluj-Napoca prefers the experience coming from a social hub spread by crowds of participants as a choice made by 92 of the respondents in the study (36%). Table 3 shows another perspective of our targeted segment of consumers, as searchers of new experiences, where the points of novelty and diversity are becoming the key factors for 86 of the participants in the study (33%). A third point of view comes from matching our segment of consumers with the local crowd; this category is profoundly bounded to our consumers due to the level of community integration in the city of Cluj-Napoca; stated by 57 of the residents (22%).

The least frequented categories are that of random participants (7%) where we have 18 of our research attendees and indirect attendees (2%) with a low rate of participation. Hence, this question had the purpose to highlight the level of participation as declared by the consumer of events in Cluj-Napoca. The consumer of Cluj-Napoca places an importance upon becoming part of the crowd of people and through the gathering of novelty through various experiences; it characterizes other data such as the age gap from 21 to 30 years old, as stated based on the research questionnaire.

**Table 4.** Events typologies as seen in the portfolio of Cluj-Napoca and precisely, the frequency of each of the preference.

<b>The event typology</b>	<b>The frequency of each preference</b>
Arts and entertainment	207
Cultural	183
Educational	96
Local	87
Sports Events	83
Business	68
Gastronomic	7
Political	6
Musicals	3
Religious	2
Personal	1
Social	1

**Source:** Author’s calculations.



Including this question has allowed us to become familiar with the choices our segment of consumer makes when participating in the events of Cluj-Napoca, while opting for the most common typologies of events found in the destination's portfolio as described in Table 4. The top choice for the residents is confirmed by 207 answers (80.2%) for arts or entertainment type of events. The cultural branch obtains 183 residents (70.9%) of Cluj-Napoca declaring their statement for the given preference. Thirdly, 96 residents (37.2%) of Cluj-Napoca prefer educational gatherings as they offer a chance to improve and growth for careers and personal achievements. As the segment of consumers is known for its bond with the local community, so are events organized in this manner (33.7%) for 87 of the respondents. While, on the same page are also sports events, sharing the same attention and importance from 83 of the participants in the study (32.2%).

The business sector of events shared by the acronym MICE display their own space in the market of events, tends to be acknowledged as of the principal choices for Cluj-Napoca, as stated by 68 attendees (26.4%). A not so frequented typology is given by charity manifestations, where we have 48 residents and a weight of 18.6% in the total score. The last typology to be frequented is that of gastronomic events, as freshly arrived events on the market; only 7 of the participants were attracted by the existence of such events (3.2%).

**Table 5.** The frequency of action made by the respondents towards informational channels for the industry of events in Cluj-Napoca.

<b>Informational channel</b>	<b>Frequency of the answer</b>
Social Media	236
Word-of-mouth	187
Online Press	147
Brochures and Posters	99
Website of the event	95
TV screenings	56
Radio	51
Press Release	43
Publications	31
Gossip Magazines	16
Telephone contact	1

**Source:** Author's calculations.

A profile for the consumer is not complete if we have not included where the participants of Cluj-Napoca look for their data regarding the industry. Knowing what sources are the most appealing for the latest buzz, what channels are suitable given the characteristics, our profile is seen in a more profound explanation that ties the exterior image to that of behavioral choices. Table 5 declares the first path of promotion that is appealing through the existence of social media apps; 91,5% opt for social media channels for new entries about events. When we gather around friends and family, we have the tendency to further recommend; this being a successful promotion tool for our consumers as declared in 72.5% of the answers and 187 attendees. Another preference is dictated by the presence of the online news that are pointed out to 57% of the participants in the study; a choice that will offer events an extended promotion. What is visible in the city and on the streets of Cluj-Napoca, such as posters and brochures, are an intriguing way of promotion for 99 of the participants (38.4%). The online presence is not only divided by social media and the news branch, but by the existence and proper presentation of the website of the events, where we have 36.8% answers in this manner.

In contrast with the peak choices, 56 participants (21.7%) find TV ads appealing, while no more than 19.8% still pay attention the promotion while listening to the radio. Paper-based newspaper does not register a good score either, frequented by only 43 participants in the research. Ultimately, our respondents search for data about events in academic sources and publications, but only 12% from the total answers and, believe that gossip magazines can source useful information about upcoming events (6.2%). Integrating this question offered us the possibility to declare the energy of the young segment obtained in the data, while seeing their choices about where they search for events organized in Cluj-Napoca. By understanding the reasons for participation in events and by evaluating the importance provided by these manifestations, has led us to understand the role and the essential criteria, repeatedly frequented for a start and completion of a behavioral participating process for the events of Cluj-Napoca. Including a total of 14 general criteria (Table 6), objective in their nature, upon which the consumption behavior regarding events can be perceived.

**Table 6.** The weighted average representative of each criterion evaluated by the Cluj consumer of events.

Criteria	Very Important	Important	Indifference	Not important	Least important	Weighted average
1. Knowledge and personal development	131	94	28	5	0	1.360
2. The build of social networks	103	89	55	7	4	1.085
3. Entertainment	176	69	9	4	0	1.616
4. New experiences	193	53	10	2	0	1.694
5. Curiosity	140	97	19	2	0	1.453
6. Novelty	152	81	20	4	1	1.469
7. Professional obligation	60	34	80	49	35	0.136
8. Past experiences	108	103	37	9	1	1.194
9. Location of the event	131	75	39	9	4	1.240
10. Program and Line-up	156	83	12	5	2	1.496
11. Cost of participation	121	101	22	9	5	1.256
12. Season	109	66	59	13	11	0.965
13. Time	118	92	35	8	5	1.202
14. Distance	109	85	45	13	6	1.078

**Source:** Author's Calculations.

The previous table hosts the most important criterion rated by our segment of participants, all playing a role in the decision-making process for future events in Cluj-Napoca. By having the possibility to select the importance of each answer and criteria, not only that they conferred us an insight regarding the difficulty of their decision and behavioral process, but towards real factors that played as a magnet or served as a decline in their participating decision. First, we have the new experiences of the location; the criterion is decisive for the residents as they search for superior quality and brand-new opportunities to step aside from their daily lives. This is where most of the positive answers

are, at the peak of the list, considered of vital importance, with 193 answers and of a great significance for 53 answers of the participants. Our list then continues with the entertaining content; due to the fact there are no two events alike on the market, the focus is placed upon diversity and innovativeness, on the creation of content that determines the event to stand out from the crowded portfolio of availability on the market. Here are 176 statements for very important, 69 residents that see this criterion as of great importance and, 9 answers for whom the content is an indifferent factor. The third factor is program and line-up; the events market of Cluj-Napoca is a platform for the launch of various sources of creativity and therefore, as a place where this industry can manifest in all shapes, sizes and with the most unique program and content. It can be of high importance for 156 answers, needed in their decision process for 83 respondents or as a neutral consideration for 12 participants.

We have seen the most decisive criteria for their process of participation, however there are others that share the same meaning or percentage that is balanced in the overall process. For example, novelty is the essential criterion for 152 residents, 81 meaningful considerations and no more than 20 participants who are indifferent to the presence of this factor. An interesting aspect is the presence of curiosity in events; when we determine the behavioral process for participation, we are searching for stimuli, one of them being the act of being curious. Our score for the criterion is declared as following: essential for 140 residents, important for 97 attendees in the study and neutral to 19 personas of the overall data. Where the event is held or what its cost of participation can be are two of the most decisive criteria looked upon before the participation. As attendees, we search not only for events that are near us or of free entrance, but for experiences that are far and wide in their geographical locations or that require the spending of a certain amount or fee to book our place at the event.

Moreover, when we search for events, we are looking for veritable and profitable sources for our personal growth and knowledge. Most of events nowadays focus not only on the creative process, but on the educational side of every potential manifestation; for example, events are gatherings of personas willing to open to new ideas, to share their emotions and cognitive perspectives to others and to that of the event, meaning that they will learn on their own as well as from the other

participants. Furthermore, when the event takes place is another essential presence on our priority list. Most of the events are held or started prior to the end of a working day; a great percentage of participants not only in our study, but as a general fact, come from such environment and might require the finish of their daily work shift before participation.

Ultimately, the decay in importance is later registered in factors such as distance and season, the two sharing the same level of vital importance for 109 respondents. Our study has captured the same two reasons when the respondents were asked to further describe events prior to their targeted scores and after the analysis of the data. For the distance factor, residents focused upon the infrastructure to and from the location of the event, on the lack of transportation to the site. If considered a must, others place a great importance on it; 85 residents have stated so, while there have been 45 indifferent statements and to sum up, 13 residents for whom distance is not relevant. For the seasonality, a non-controllable factor thoroughly analyzed in our study, most of the respondents are influenced by the weather and that of certain conditions specific to the changing seasons. Despite the weather predictions, they might not always match the forecast that was made and therefore, determine the fate of an event taking place.

Least but not last, as it is a new opportunity launched on the market prior to the business sector, events have been offering us a chance to interact and network to other peers and personalities from all industries. For this one, our study has built an important characteristic for the consumer, that is not only declared by Abraham Maslow in his pyramid, but in our data as well: the social focus and inclusion in the circles of familiars and friends. Moreover, while some of us are of active nature towards events, a part of the segmented data is passive and might participate on an exclusive level. Past experiences can not only show us the history and the frequency that we have as participants, as it was focused upon our study, but the two sides of actives and passives towards past manifestations; there are 108 very important statements, 103 important considerations, 37 neutral opinions in the data and no more than 91 answers declaring the lack of relevance for the factor. To top it all, the focus on the data analysis from this table has shown us that professional obeisance comes from the fact that most of the respondents won't participate in a leisure activity if sent by the working environment or will show indifference to this criterion.

Our segment of consumers has also had the chance to explain their vision towards events in this destination, in two separate open-ended questions that focused on positive and negative outcomes. The considerations of the respondents were then filtered using a qualitative method, resulting into seven main categories of positive aspects that will influence their participation. They are focusing on the planning of the event, on their ambiance, quality, safety, opportunities we receive through participation, diversity, and influence of the social groups. Here we had 7 invalid answers. Our starting point begins with the **diversity** component, where we can fit 54 answers. As they were so many explanations, one of them captures the whole meaning of this category, short and clear: There is an event out there for any type of person. The destination is abundant and has a complex portfolio for every preference and attendee, and the focus is placed upon traits such as thematic, novelty always present to that a rejuvenating edition of every event. One can manifest the real spirit of sport competitions or the act of good and kindness by participating in charity events.

The second category is the **opportunities** arising. Our consumer here perceives an event opportunity as an activity for self-learning; 44 of our consumers accept the benefits pursued through the participation opportunity offered by events in this destination as they sprout the goodwill of their personas and later, improve the quality of the Cluj-Napoca community. The third is the way we understand the **organizational** process of events. This is where the study captures interesting opinions, most of them referring to the quality demand being met accordingly. Suggestive in their nature, consumers offer their suggestions for the organizational process for an event, to complete such demand starting from the proper and societal needs. An event is acknowledged and appreciated even more if is considered the solution towards the personal and community needs and problems and, ultimately a source of development for the values stated by the two parts.

The events of Cluj-Napoca are a symbol of **quality**. According to our data, there have been 25 declarations stating the quality of Cluj-Napoca events as the reason for their attendance. The exchanged value is a perception of our consumer that is completed upon the presence of superior quality in events, in the organizational process and in their entertainment content. While some described the planning, what they

might learn, the content or the satisfaction they receive from one event, others placed their vision upon the **ambiance**. Ambiance despite its intangible nature, is still an important characteristic in an event; 15 of our answers describe the importance of the available mood for an event. The mood is powered by the presence of an event's attendees, through its location and content.

While some might participate on their own will, there are individuals highly dependent and **influenced** by their social dominants. The social circle of friends and family represent the most important motivation to participate in any of Cluj-Napoca's events, an argument that was sustained by 36 of the answers; fourteen of the respondents motivate the importance of leisure time spent as efficiently as possible, representing the much-needed break from daily chores and life. However, if one is pushed forward to participate by their social circle, others might be influenced by their professionals; three answers mentioned so in our research.

The last category events can benefit from are the **safety** measures. Three of our respondents offer suggestive modifications to be applied, regarding the age limit found in an event. While others might have contributed to the sustainability of this aspect, have declared a sufficient statement with their choices made above; twenty participants in our research have stated so.

A perception is not complete if for negative aspects as well. With the use of an open-ended question, our study has captured the most disturbing aspects for participating in the events of this destination. To eliminate the subtle subjectivity from the data, our statements were divided into controllable and non-modifying factors. Twenty-six of our answers were declared invalid. When we refer to what is **controllable**, we describe an event context that can receive a boost of development or a slight modification for their foreseeable editions. The overall data gave us an insight for 168 participating residents in the study, having described the following pain points:

**Planning** an event requires the existence of an overall cost, a program, a site for manifestation and that of logistics; they serve as main criteria for our analyzed resident from Cluj-Napoca. For some the age limit is not a problem, however there were residents opting towards this aspect; as a recommendation, some events might be better organized if

they select their age groups accordingly. There has also been the mention of limited ticketing and the level of audience that can enter an event; not a statement made by chance, but a declaration supported by 107 participants in the study, whom event organizers might risk losing if solutions towards the problems are not rapidly applied.

**Infrastructural** availability refers to the management of the site, on the road traffic, the existence of parking lots and ultimately to the arrangements of an event. As a cultural capital, the city and the surrounding areas might be found often congested by the stated aspects. The residents have also focused on the lack of possibility to travel back and forth to an event. One has described the situation as: The lack of available buses and transportation from other Cluj County settlements such as Sannicoara, Dezmir, Floresti and Apahida. And lastly, there were 27 perspectives that accentuate the lack of a road infrastructure adequate for the events taking place in Cluj-Napoca.

If not **transparent** enough, an event will lead to the deprivation of needs and wishes for the consumer, the way they should have been met. In addition, this is often the cause of events organized for commercial or material purposes; a statement supported by 16 of the total 258 answers. Along with the appraisal of needs and transparency, when an event is declared as one for **commercial** existence it means that in a certain period it has suffered from loss of authenticity; 18 attendees believe in an event becoming commercial in its festival's nature: theme, public, displayed content from one edition to another.

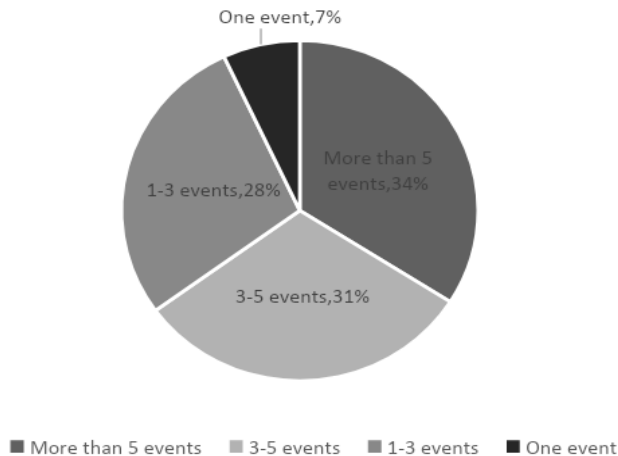
**Non-modifying** aspects, however, lack the possibility of direct management, transforming our consumer into passive or even exclusive participants. There were 64 threatened individuals by these factors available on the internal and external markets. The weather condition is foremost and commonly the principal factor, especially when events are held outdoors or open-air; 13 of the respondents deny any chance of participation if the weather conditions are not favorable or at least stable.

The second aspect is **health and safety**, a context that has risen due to the pandemic launched with the new Coronavirus Covid-19; 34 of the statements will result to the absolute absence on the verge of infection, or in the case of overcrowding that will eventually lead to the appearance of panic attacks, claustrophobia, or anxiety for the respondents. Withal, for 21 of the attendees in the study, the lack of safety measures



available pre-, during and after the ending of an event, can represent the sufficient motivation to decline the active frequency at an event in Cluj-Napoca.

A glance at the information coming from Figure 3 has shown us once again, that in order to become an active individual in events, one needs to display enough energy and enthusiasm, that in our case is specific to ages between 21-30 years old. Plus, the data offers insight about the constancy of different levels of participation. The apogee is held by a frequency of attending to more than 5 events per year; declared by 89 (34%) of our Cluj-Napoca citizens. However, active can also mean to be present in an interval of 3 to 5 events per year, in the opinion of 80 participants (31%).



**Figure 3.** The share of every level considered necessarily for an active entitlement for residents in the industry of events in Cluj-Napoca.

**Source:** Authors' calculations.

Nonetheless, an approximate answer to the first two is the neutral attending, for when the attendees' participation ranges from 1 to 3 events in a single year; 71 persons are to be situated inside this category, as a 28% from the total answers. Ultimately, residents of Cluj-Napoca are not all passive, but there have been registered some answers stating the presence of non-attendees to a single event per year; here we have 18 answers and a weight of 7% from the total responses.

**Table 7.** The amount spent per event on different budgeting levels as stated by the researched consumers.

<b>Budgeting per event</b>	<b>Frequency of answers</b>	<b>Relative Frequency</b>
€50-100	80	31%
€20-50	65	25%
<€20	52	20%
€100-150	30	12%
€150-200	20	8%
>€200	11	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Authors' calculations.

Knowing their preferences and how active they are seen in these manifestations required us to pursue another interesting aspect for the segment: the budget for a single participation, that will either encourage or discourage their attendance in the events held in Cluj-Napoca (Table 7). An event can be entry free and still manage to push its attendees to spend more on the location of the manifestation, on a variety of tangible and intangible goods or services for a certain amount; by spending money on extras inside the side, the attendee's entire perception towards the events can be modified. The first preponderant choice is that of a budget from €50-100 for 31% of the answers. Table hosts a second option for a usual participation budget of €20-50 as stated by 25% of the answers in the study. Individuals can, however, spend an insignificant amount for an event: below a budget of €20 per event, declared by 20% of the participants in the research. Since one can spend less for a single event, our respondents have also confirmed the opposite, where the budget goes beyond the precedent answers: 30 participants (12%) spend €100 to €150 per sole participation. The last choices are the most expensive budgets, where 8% of the Cluj-Napoca have a budget €150 to €200 per attending, respectively a budget that goes beyond €200 for a participation in the statement of 4% participants.

Therefore, in accordance with Table 8 our profile is composed of a majority of 70% females and 30% males. The young energy of the image is recognized through the following demographics. By the age gap, where most of the respondents are young persons between 21 to 30 years old (74.4%). High school students and university undergraduates under 20 years of age represent 10.1% from the overall results. Adults take up a segment of 9.7% as 31-40 years old, while an insignificant number of 10 participants (3.9%) have reached the age of 41-50 years old.

**Table 8.** Demographic characteristics of the respondents in our research.

Demographics characteristics of the respondents	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
Respondent's gender		
Female	181	70%
Male	77	30%
Respondent's age		
Under 20	26	10.1%
21 - 30	192	74.4%
31 - 40	25	9.7%
41 - 50	10	3.9%
51 - 65	4	1.6%
More than 65	1	0.4%
Respondents' income		
<€250	79	31%
€251 - 360	38	15%
€360 - 500	30	12%
€501 - 600	36	14%
€601 - 800	40	15%
>€800	35	13%
Respondent's level of education		
Basic studies	7	3%
High school	107	41%
Post-secondary	4	2%
University studies	103	40%
Post university studies	37	14%
Respondents' marital status		
Single	123	48%
In a relationship	104	40%
In a relationship/married without children	19	7%
In a relationship/ married having children	12	5%

**Source:** Adapted after Lamurean & Bota (2021)

Seniors are a small percentage in the overall participants, by providing an attendance of 1.6% for a 51–65-year gap and 0.4% for individuals exceeding the age of 65. On an educational level, the highest peak in studies demonstrates the young adult as dominating in the profile, having finished either high school studies (41%) as current undergraduates and students or by having a bachelor's degree (40%) and are in current employment or entrepreneurship. Moreover, 37 of the respondents provide

a further education by doing post-university studies (14%). The lowest level is reached by individuals having basic studies (3%) or a post-secondary education (2%).

By looking at their marital status, the consumer is based on mostly singles as provided by 123 results (48%) or is currently in a relationship (40%). Married individuals without children have provided a presence of 7%, while those participating with their kids represent a low percentage (5%). Ultimately, the most frequented income levels match the other demographics: students have a budget of under €250 (31%) if their single focus is on their further education. However, they can also represent students in current employment with a budget of €251-360 (15%) or are undergraduates taking a step ahead in their career, providing an income of €350-500 (12%) to that of €501-600 (14%). The highest levels of income might demonstrate an entrepreneurship initiative, of individuals participating in the events with an income of 601-800 (15%) or over €800 (13%).

## **Conclusions**

Economically, the cities that are highly developed are the ones with the most fertile soil for the growth of the market of events. Cluj-Napoca has been considered such an example. Their fertility as destinations comes from the ideation process in abundance, traditions, and customs representative of the local areas, having declared a certain behavioral pattern for social prospects and of a well routed tourism structure (Sava & Badulescu, 2018). Because Cluj-Napoca has managed to build its own portfolio of events, apart from the national catalog, events have offered the city a real essence, a goodwill among foreign destinations for entertainment.

At present times, the city of Cluj-Napoca is the host of one of the most frequented, in dimension and content, musical events of Romania, Untold Festival. The category of the festival is that of major events in size, representing both a symbol for the city, as well as an important decisive factor for foreign peers and local or national consumers of arts. Nonetheless, Cluj-Napoca is the home of other important festivals and events, many of them being distinctive through their awards and nominalizations in various categories.

In conclusion to our profile and of the researched traits found along the process, the avatar of the participant in events from this destination has been declared based on decoded information and on a petitioned research tool. At the end of the research, the profile has been described on the account of a persona of mostly women, aged in the interval of 21-30 years old. Because of their age, they have been providing enough evidence to state a certain amount of data about other characteristics as well, such as their level of studies and their current employment status. Statements that have not only shown the energy of their age in the decisive process, but of a segmented data of consumers that have the following occupations:

- they are either in current studies, work a job or display a living through entrepreneurship. Following the same pattern, our consumers define their avatar through a certain degree of studies, having finished: high school, for those in current studies; undergraduates and further, postgraduate levels, representative for participants working a job or making a living with their own entrepreneurial business.

The description than continues with the existence of the usual earnings of the participants, obtained through the lens of how educated they are and what job they are currently having. Most of the residents earn below 250 euro, a category fit for students; 600-800 euro or 251-360 for working residents or individual entrepreneurs. Since most of them are of young age their marital status is that of single participants, suitable for attendees in current development of their education and career potential. If the individuals won't fit in the first category, that is because they have a declared relationship with someone else, with the possibility of further commitment.

What makes them distinct is not only the repetitive basis upon which they participate, but because they declare themselves as a thrill-seekers of new experiences and due to their presence in the public crowd but are also an excellent advisors and promoters in terms of events in Cluj-Napoca, given the advantageous trait of promotion of 72,48%.

The criteria considered to be of high importance when participating in an event in Cluj-Napoca is that of knowledge and personal growth, the building of social networks, entertainment, curiosity, novelty and freshness, the site of the event, new experiences provided, past experiences, content of the event, cost per event participation, distance,

seasonality, and time. However, the participant status of the targeted group does not change in accordance with their professional liability. To sum up, when building the preferential portfolio, an individual participating in events opts for the most available types of the most popular events in Cluj-Napoca: starting with artistic and entertainment manifestations, followed closely by the cultural branch, gatherings with educational purposes, local meetings. Not all the data sources are appealing to them when finding out news about events, but the sources from the online environment, contemporary and in a continuous update, where we have social media platforms, recommendations through word-of-mouth and least but not last, online news, serve as a source of veritable data for events taking place in Cluj-Napoca.

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