"Social Events and AI usage in Greece"

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Abstract
This study investigates the event planning sector, with a particular focus on social events, identifying the various types within this category and the challenges professionals face. It further examines how artificial intelligence (AI) can be integrated into the planning process to improve efficiency, reduce human error, and enhance the overall attendee experience. Special attention is given to practical AI tools, their features, and how they can support different phases of event planning. The research focuses on the Greek event planning industry, with insights drawn from urban centers like Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as locations such as Mykonos and Arachova. A qualitative methodology was applied, involving twelve semi-structured interviews with event planners conducted over one week. The data was organized using traditional coding and NVivo software and analyzed through thematic, content, and narrative methods. Findings reveal that while basic AI tools are being adopted, such as chatbots for communication and platforms like Canva for visual content, more advanced applications remain underutilized. Event planners identified AI's benefits in improving organization, data analysis, and reducing time spent on repetitive tasks, however, expressed hesitation in relying on AI for core planning tasks, largely due to limited training opportunities, technical challenges, and concerns about losing the human element that is essential to successful events. In conclusion, while AI presents valuable opportunities to support and enhance various aspects of event planning, its full integration remains in the early stages, with the human factor still playing a central and irreplaceable role.

Number of pages and appendix pages
40 + 2

Key words
Event planning, Social Events, Artificial Intelligence, AI Tools

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1. Introduction

Event industry, represents a challenging and expanding field, combining creativity and strategic planning to shape memorable experiences, while fostering in community, engagement and economic growth. The field of special events is now so vast that it is impossible to provide a definition that includes all varieties and shade of events. (Bowdin 2001, 15–16). However, many authors tried to give a definition, that could express the most of the sections. According Getz (1999;2005) from the perspective of the attendee, Is an opportunity for leisure, social or cultural experience outside the normal range of choices or beyond everyday.
Organization, communicational skills, networking, adaptability, flexibility and time management are some of the basic components for implementing an event. (University Les Roches 2024). However, as it is temporary, attention to every detail is more than needed, as the event executor has no second chance to fix errors. This automatically, transforms the event execution, to a very demanding process as human factor cannot eliminate mistakes.

The global events industry market size was valued at $736.8 billion in 2021, and is projected to reach $2.5 trillion by 2035, growing at a CAGR of 6.8% from 2024 to 2035. (Allied Market Research,2024). The event industry has experienced a significant digital transformation, driven by advances in technology that are reshaping how events are planned, managed, and attended. Virtual platforms, AI-powered tools, and data analytics have become essential in modern event management, enabling organizers to simplify processes, enhance attendee experiences, and gather real-time feedback. The rise of live streaming and virtual events, particularly after the pandemic, has extended the reach of events to global audiences. Moreover, technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are being used to create more engaging and interactive environments, further enriching the attendee experience. These innovations are no longer passing trends but have become key factors driving the growth of the event industry. The purpose of this thesis is based on the desire of the author to expand personal knowledge to the social events field, as a key step to a new professional journey.
Following this, to deeply understand the events industry, the definitions, the challenges, and afterwards to analyze the AI tools, and how those can been effectively integrated in order the whole planning process of an event, to been improved. Last but not least, to review which steps can been replaced from AI tools.
There are multiple categories for events, the most common are the in-person, the virtual, the hybrid, the events by size such as the content events. In this Thesis, we will explore the social events. The goal of this thesis, is to be used as a clear guide, for individuals that seek to enter the event planning field, such as for companies that wish to improve their services by using AI

Tools, and in general for anyone that wishes to have a comprehensive – first idea of the event planning industry.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis, is to investigate how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be effectively integrated into the event planning, to improve efficiency, reduce errors and enhance attendee experience. This study seeks to provide a structured framework, for utilizing AI tools in social event planning, while addressing challenges in traditional methods.

Research question: “How Aritficial Intelligence (AI) can be effectively integrated into the event planning to improve efficiency, reduce errors, and enhance attendee experiences?"

To achieve this aim, the following objectives are outlined:

- To understand the event definition
- To identify the event planning process and its challenges
- To examine how AI can streamline the event planning process
- To investigate AI’s role in minimizing mistakes in event planning
- To explore how AI can contribute to better experiences for attendees

By studying and analyzing the above subjects, the author scopes to give a clear answer to the research question, such as to create a useful tool for other people interested in the topic, with realdata information, for developing their managing skills and adapt an idea for event planning industry.

1.2 Methodology in Brief

This study will use a qualitative approach to explore the application of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be effectively integrated into the event planning of social event planning to improve efficiency, reduce errors, and enhance attendee experiences. A combination of primary and secondary data collection methods will be used to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Primary data will be gathered through semi-structured interviews with industry professionals, including event planners, to gain insights into the practical challenges of event planning processes and the benefits of AI integration. Secondary data will be sourced from academic literature and industry reports, that provide context and document real-world applications of AI in event management. The data will be analyzed using thematic analysis, which will identify key patterns, trends, and opportunities for AI integration across various stages of event planning, such as scheduling, logistics, and attendee engagement. By mapping AI tools to specific stages of the planning

process, this study aims to uncover actionable strategies for minimizing errors, streamlining workflows, and enhancing creativity.
The scope of this research focuses primarily on social events, such as weddings, private parties, and community gatherings. While the study will not cover every AI tool available, it will emphasize those with high relevance to event planning, including tools for automation, predictive analytics, and content creation. This methodology supports the overarching goal of the thesis: to deliver practical recommendations and a clear framework that event planners can use to leverage AI effectively in their workflows.

1.3 Key topics

To explore how artificial intelligence (AI) can improve event planning, it is important to first define key concepts that shape this field. The event industry is complex, requiring careful coordination, creativity, and attention to detail. Social events, from private celebrations to large public gatherings, bring people together for meaningful experiences. Event planning involves a structured approach to organizing and executing these occasions, ensuring that every aspect runs smoothly.

With the rise of AI, new tools are reshaping how events are planned and managed, offering ways to increase efficiency and reduce human error. By understanding the planning process, helps highlight where AI can make a difference. At the same time, attendee experience remains a crucial factor in event success, as engagement and satisfaction influence how events are perceived and remembered. This section defines these key terms to provide a foundation for analyzing the role of AI in modern event management.

Specifically the key topics of this thesis are:
- Social events
- Event design
- Event planning process
- Artificial intelligence (AI)
- AI tools
- Attendee experience

1.4 Key definitions

In order to build a strong foundation for this research, we will first focus on some key definitions related to the key topics. By clearly defining these concepts, we can establish a framework for understanding how AI can be integrated into event planning. These definitions will serve as a reference point throughout the thesis, guiding the analysis and helping to explore the ways AI tools can streamline the event planning process while enhancing attendee experience.

- Social events:

Have indicated that the social aspect of the event experience is an important motive for visiting events (Dodd, Yuan, Adams, & Kolysnikova, 2006; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001). People go to events to socialize with friends and family (Chang & Yuan, 2011), to meet new people (e.g., Crompton & McKay, 1997), or to experience the positive atmosphere that is created when people gather together to have fun (Gelder & Robinson, 2009).

- Event design:

  According to Brown (cited in Getz, 2012) event design is “the creation, conceptual development and staging of an event using event design principles and techniques to capture and engage the audience with a positive and meaningful experience” (p. 222).

- Event planning process:

  Getz (2012) suggests four general categories that are the realm of the event designer: theme and program (scripted activities), setting (site, venue, atmosphere), services (service quality, staff/ volunteers), and consumables (gastronomy, gifts).

- AI in Event planning:

  AI possesses the exceptional ability to process vast amounts of data swiftly and efficiently. This data can encompass historical event data, attendee preferences, market trends, and plethora of other crucial information (Neuhofer, Magnus, & Celuch, 2021).

- AI in attendees’ experience:

  By analyzing attendee profiles, past session attendance, and stated interests, AI can suggest relevant sessions that align with each attendee's professional or personal objectives (Causin et.al,2021).

- Attendee experience:
  "For creating a memorable and satisfactory experience, should engage the attendees on an emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual level (Pine & Gilmore, 1998)."

- "Pine and Gilmore (1998) propose that experiences embody four realms (education, entertainment, escapism and esthetics) that manifest across two continuous dimensions. Also referred that the richest experiences are those encompassing aspects of all four realms, forming a "sweet spot" around the area where the spectra meet". (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

2. Overview of Events

The term “event” can encompass a wide variety of occurrences, ranging from social gatherings and formal ceremonies to unexpected incidents or broader societal developments. However, in the context of this thesis, the focus lies specifically on events as gatherings and memorable experiences.

The word “event” originates from the Latin term eventus, which refers to something that happens or a resulting outcome. This noun derives from the verb evenire, meaning “to happen” or “to come out.” As such, the original essence of the word conveys the idea of “something that comes out” or “something that happens as a result” (Etymonline, s.a.).

Numerous authors have attempted to define what constitutes an event, each offering varied interpretations. Among them, Down and Albert (2015) presents an approach that aims to capture the full scope of the concept. To do this, he divides the definition into three interconnected components.

The first component is the idea of the event as a gathering. Whether it is a small private occasion such as a wedding, baptism, or birthday party, or a large-scale public event like a concert, trade show, or festival where attendees may be strangers, it is still a coming together of people with a shared purpose.

The second component highlights the emotional aspect of events. Down argues that an event is often a memorable experience, as people tend to share stories that remain vivid in their memory. These memories may be tied to a striking venue, an unexpected moment, a particular emotion, or simply the atmosphere that the event created.

The final component is duration. Down emphasizes that an event is temporary in nature. While its length may vary, from a couple of hours to several days or even weeks, what sets an event apart is its ability to interrupt the everyday and create unique, often meaningful, experiences. Bringing all three elements together, Down and Albert (2015) define an event as “a temporary gathering with a purpose, memorable or special” (pp. 3–4).

Continuing on the concept of temporariness, other authors have expanded upon or responded to this perspective. Kim and Kaewnuch (2018) support the previously mentioned view, stating that “an event is a temporary gathering with a definitive beginning and end.” On the other hand, Draper et al. (2018) approach it from a slightly different angle, proposing that “an event creates a temporary community.”

Exploring the definition of events further, this time focusing on occurrence rather than terminology, Goldblatt (2005) offers a practical interpretation, asserting that “every event has the elements of planning, executing, and measuring success.” Similarly, Dolasinski et al. (2013) describe an event as “an occurrence that involves a time element, two or more participants, is planned, and offers a unique opportunity”.

Finally, two additional definitions explore the event as a memorable experience. Getz (2008) emphasizes the uniqueness of events, stating, “Much of the appeal of events is that they are never the same and you have to ‘be there’ to enjoy the unique experience fully; if you miss it, it’s a lost opportunity” (p. 404). More recently, Carvache-Franco et al. (2019) highlight the significance of participant experience, noting that attendee satisfaction is a critical element in events and must be considered in research.

Events can be categorized into four main types: professional, entertainment, social, and common cause. Professional events include meetings, conferences, and trade shows; entertainment events encompass exhibitions, festivals, sports, and concerts; social events cover weddings, birthdays, family celebrations, and cultural gatherings; and common cause events involve spiritual and religious occasions. (Dolasinski et al., 2013).This thesis will specifically explore social events, focusing on their various types and the characteristics that define them as key gatherings in personal and cultural contexts.

2.1 Overview of Social Events

Social events play a significant role in both personal and communal life. They serve as moments of celebration, bringing individuals together to recognize important milestones such as weddings, birthdays, and family achievements. These gatherings also offer a space for interaction and connection, helping to build new relationships and reinforce existing ones. Whether formal or informal, social events create shared experiences that contribute to a sense of belonging and often leave lasting impressions. Within this context, they are not only moments of festivity but also meaningful opportunities for social engagement. (Polymer Search s.a.)
A commonly used acronym in the events industry is SMERF, which refers to five distinct group meeting market segments: Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal. The social category includes events such as weddings, banquets, and ceremonies. Military events involve gatherings for people who are currently serving in the military or have served in the past. The educational segment includes meetings like school-related conferences, seminars, or academic workshops.

Religious events include local and national gatherings organized by churches or other faith-based groups. Lastly, fraternal groups—such as community or volunteer organizations—often hold meetings and events at both local and national levels. These types of events are usually smaller, more community-focused, and typically have lower budgets compared to large business or corporate events. (Tufel 2010, 4-5).

2.2 Types of Social Events

As suggested by Tufel (2010), the acronym **SMERF** categorizes five key event market segments, with the **social** category playing a central role in this analysis. This segment includes a wide range of personal and celebratory events, such as weddings, banquets, and ceremonies. Expanding on this, Smith (2015) further elaborates on the diversity within social events, identifying weddings, baptisms, birthdays, anniversaries, graduation parties, and corporate gatherings as key examples. Connel (2021) also explains the significance of baptism as a foundational event in Christian life. This thesis will specifically focus on analyzing the various facets of social events, examining their significance and unique characteristics.

1. **Weddings**

Weddings are celebrations that signify the union of two people. These events vary significantly in size and style, ranging from short ceremonies to grand gatherings. Most weddings are held in traditional venues like churches but they can also take place in unconventional locations like picturesque outdoor scenery. Each wedding ceremony reflects the couple's personalities, tastes and dreams making every celebration special.

2. **Baptisms**

Baptism is a key event in the Christian faith, symbolizing the beginning of a person's spiritual journey and their connection to the Church. It marks the start of a relationship with Christ and grants access to other sacraments. In Greece, the baptism ceremony can vary widely, reflecting personal preferences and cultural traditions, ensuring a unique and meaningful experience for each individual and their family.

3. **Birthday parties**

Birthday parties mark the celebration of an individual's birth and can range from small family gatherings to larger festivities. These events bring together friends and family to celebrate the person, creating meaningful and joyful memories on their special day.

4. **Anniversaries**

Anniversary celebrations mark important milestones in relationships, including marriages, partnerships, and business achievements. These events can range from intimate dinners to larger gatherings, where special moments are shared, and vows or commitments are renewed. Whether personal or professional, anniversaries offer a chance to celebrate progress, strengthen relationships, and reflect on the significance of the occasion.

5. **Graduation parties**

Graduation parties celebrate the completion of an academic journey and the transition to the next phase of life. These events bring together family and friends to recognize achievements, often featuring speeches, presentations, and reflections on the experiences and challenges overcome throughout the educational process.

6. **Company parties**

Company parties vary in size and purpose, ranging from casual gatherings to large-scale events celebrating achievements. These events offer employees the opportunity to interact and bond outside the formal work environment. Another key type of social event is team-building activities, aimed at improving collaboration and communication among colleagues. These events often include problem-solving tasks, challenges, or outdoor activities designed to strengthen team dynamics and foster a sense of unity within the group.

2.3 Challenges of Social Event planning

Events are complex experiences shaped by the people who attend, the place they happen, the purpose behind them, and how they're planned. Whether large or small, formal or casual, events are more than just simple gatherings, they combine both social and practical elements (Andrews & Leonpold, 2013). However, the event industry itself is not without its challenges. Nelson (2004) highlights that one of the primary issues faced by the industry is the relationship between service providers and their clients. Despite these challenges, Nelson (2004) notes that many event managers demonstrate a strong willingness to assist others and possess a deep passion for their work, which helps them navigate and overcome such obstacles.

Ike (2023) expands on these challenges by identifying two key areas of concern. The first is **venue selection and logistics**, which involves the complex task of finding the ideal venue and organizing all the event's requirements. Factors like availability, capacity, stakeholder needs, communication, and vendor coordination, as well as the need for additional hires depending on the event's size, all require careful consideration and planning. The second challenge Ike (2023) identifies is **budget management**. Balancing the budget while aiming to deliver an exceptional and memorable event can be difficult. On top of that, handling vendor agreements and developing practical, creative ways to stretch the budget, while still following the rules and standards set by the organization, adds another layer of difficulty for event planners.

Socialboothly (2024) agrees with these challenges and introduces additional concerns. One significant issue is **timeline management**, which requires event planners to manage multiple deadlines and schedules, something that demands strong organizational skills. Another challenge involves is **technology integration**. As event planning increasingly relies on digital tools, adapting to new technologies can be challenging, especially when some team members struggle with learning and effectively using the software.

Lastly, Nelson (2004) also observes challenges faced not only in the planning process but by the professionals working in the industry. He points out that event professionals often face career-related difficulties, such as **long working hours** and **limited employee benefits.** These issues, while significant, are only a few of the considerations that come with pursuing a career in the event industry.

2.4 Overview of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence is composed of two words. One is “artificial” which refers to something that is made by humans, and the second is “ntelligence”, which refers to “the ability to learn or having opinions based on reasons” (Cambridge Dictionary, s.a.). The result of combining these two terms brings us to the definition that AI is “a thinking power created by humans” (Limna et al., 2021).

Since both robots and computers are products of human invention, Wang (2020) supports this idea by stating that “AI is a simulation of human intelligence, operating by computers and particularly computer systems.”

Undoubtedly, AI has become one of the most talked-about developments in recent years, as it continues to expand into more industries and aspects of daily life. According to Mikalef (2021), three major capabilities of AI have been identified: machine learning, natural language processing, and predictive analytics.

From another angle, Ergen (2021) emphasizes the key strength of AI as being automation. He explains that automating routine and time-consuming tasks results in the liberation of Human Resources from ordinary tasks, and allow them to focus, on more creative and strategic aspects. This highlights how AI can free up human potential, letting professionals concentrate on more meaningful contributions rather than repetitive duties.

However, while AI has the potential to enhance workflows and outcomes, fully benefiting from its capabilities requires a shift in skills. As Ivanov (2019) note, employees must adapt by developing a combination of technical knowledge, emotional intelligence, and creativity to keep pace with AI’s growing influence in the workplace.

Despite these advantages, concerns have been raised about depending too heavily on artificial intelligence. Critics, including Saini (2022), argue that “by automating tasks such as attendee engagement, he personal touch that event planners provide may be weakened.” They caution that as a result, “these events are becoming mechanistic and transactional experiences, eroding the authentic and emotional aspects that make very event truly memorable.” This concern carries weight, as elements like personal connection, empathy, and human interaction remain central to crafting meaningful and lasting event experiences.

2.5 Artificial Intelligence in event planning

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in event planning is reshaping how events are designed, managed, and experienced. AI supports planners in making informed decisions by analyzing

previous event data, understanding attendee behaviors, and predicting future trends. This data-driven approach offers event professionals deeper insights into what audiences expect and how to meet those expectations more effectively. (Halim, Zamzuri, & Ghazali, 2023).

Data-Driven Decision-Making

AI equips planners with tools that allow them to make strategic choices based on past performance, audience demographics, and industry developments. As Haleem et al. (2022) explain, “by examining this data, AI can identify patterns, trends, and correlations that might not be apparent to human planners.” This ability to uncover hidden insights enhances decision-making at every stage of the planning process. Furthermore, AI can anticipate event needs through predictive analytics, helping planners estimate attendance numbers, manage resources, and prepare for logistical challenges in advance. (Halim et al., 2023).

Personalized Attendee Experience

AI also plays a vital role in shaping unique experiences for each participant. By using recommendation systems powered by advanced algorithms, AI can align event offerings, such as sessions, workshops, or networking opportunities, with each attendee's individual interests. (Causin & Scamacca, 2021).

Mehmood, Moser, & Ronald (2020) highlight that “AI systems can recommend sessions, networking opportunities, and exhibitors tailored to each attendee’s interests,” which helps boost overall engagement. Networking is another area where AI shows its strength, “AI can help bridge this gap by identifying potential networking matches based on attendees' profiles, backgrounds, and objectives” (Biaett & Richards, 2020).

Chatbots and Virtual Assistants

Chatbots and AI-powered virtual assistants are widely used in various industries, and events are no exception. These tools are instrumental in streamlining communication with attendees before, during, and after events. As Wang, Li, Fu, & Jin (2023) note, chatbots can assist from the very beginning, by handling registrations, providing event details, and answering common queries, during the event with giving real time support and post-event, chatbots can continue supporting by collecting feedback and sharing information about upcoming events. They also reduce the workload of event staff by handling repetitive tasks, allowing employees to focus on more critical responsibilities. (Halim et al., 2023).

Event Content Curation

Another essential application of AI lies in content development. With access to real-time data from sources like social media and industry publications, AI can detect trending topics and help planners align content with attendee interests (Halim et al., 2023). As Martín, Sánchez, Lanza, & Sotres (2023) explain, AI tools are capable of identifying emerging themes and preferences, which makes it easier to plan relevant sessions. Neuhofer et al. (2021) add that AI can even determine the most suitable formats for specific topics, whether that be a panel, a workshop, or a keynote presentation.

Marketing and Promotions

When it comes to outreach, AI enhances how planners connect with and attract their target audience. Enables to transform the way event organizers identify, reach, and engage with their target audience by leveraging data analysis, optimizing marketing strategies, and ultimately improving the conversion rate of potential attendees. Mehmood et al. (2020) note that AI systems can analyze large amounts of information from social media, website behavior, and other platforms to build detailed profiles of prospective attendees. This leads to more accurate audience segmentation and enables personalized marketing campaigns. Additionally, AI can automate repetitive marketing tasks like email scheduling and social media posting, freeing up time for creative strategy (Halim et al., 2023).

Resource Optimization

AI also improves operational efficiency in areas like venue selection, staffing, and equipment logistics. For example, in terms of venue selection, AI uses past event performance and accessibility data to suggest locations that match both the event's goals and budget.(Domhnall, McLoughlin, & Maguire, 2023). With staff scheduling, AI systems consider availability, workload, and skills to create fair and optimized schedules (Zirar, Imran, & Islam, 2023). Equipment management benefits too, AI can track inventory, forecast needs, and adjust plans in real time to avoid both shortages and unnecessary expenses. (Ergen, 2021). These efficiencies ensure smoother planning and allow teams to redirect resources to more strategic areas. (Halim et al., 2023).

2.6 AI Tools and Technologies in Event Process

In recent years, a wide range of artificial intelligence (AI) tools has emerged, offering new possibilities across many industries. Due to the large number of available options, this study focuses on seven selected AI tools that are considered especially relevant to the field of event

planning. These tools were chosen based on their ability to support and align with key areas where AI can bring value to event planning. The tools analyzed in this thesis are: Synthesia, Chatbots, ClickUp, Zenus, Grip, Cvent, and Canva.

- Synthesia

  Synthesia is an AI tool that allows event planners to transform ideas, presentations and PDFs into engaging videos. It enables team collaboration by providing a shared space where members can work together on projects, track progress, and store materials. The tool also offers translation capabilities in over 140 languages, making it accessible to a global audience. Additionally, Synthesia provides valuable insights by analyzing viewer engagement, helping planners understand which content resonates most with their audience. This tool is particularly useful for improving communication with clients, as it allows event providers to present ideas and recommendations in a visual format, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings and minimizing costs. (Synthesia s.a.).

- Chatbots

  Chatbots and virtual assistants offer event planners the ability to customize responses based on different client needs and situations. This flexibility ensures that each interaction is relevant, whether it's addressing specific inquiries or providing personalized information. By tailoring responses, event planners can improve communication efficiency, reduce time spent on repetitive tasks, and enhance the overall customer experience. Additionally, chatbots can handle high volumes of requests, allowing planners to focus on more complex tasks while maintaining a smooth workflow. (Chatbot Powered by text s.a.).

- Click-up

  ClickUp is another valuable tool for event planning. As a project management platform, it helps optimize resources by allowing teams to collaborate more effectively, set tasks, establish milestones, and track priorities. It also automates tasks like sending emails and providing customer updates, streamlining processes and ensuring clients stay well-informed. Additionally, ClickUp enables the creation of project timelines and the analysis of customer data, further enhancing the efficiency and organization of the event planning process. (ClickUp s.a.).

- Zenus

  Zenus is another valuable tool, with its primary feature being facial analysis. It helps assess the feasibility of an event and improve services by gathering real-time data from attendees, including their expressions. The tool also collects demographic information, tracks attendee engagement, and provides insights into the time spent at the event and the number of attendees reached. These insights are crucial for improving future events and making more informed decisions. (Zenus s.a.).

- Grip

  Grip is an AI tool designed primarily for matchmaking and networking, making it especially useful for large-scale events, conferences, and even social events with large range of attendees. It helps participants expand their network by connecting with new people, scheduling meetings, and sharing relevant information. For event planners, Grip provides valuable insights into attendee engagement and the topics discussed, allowing for personalized experiences based on shared interests. Additionally, it aids in content curation by identifying the right topics, sessions, and materials that align with attendee expectations for future events. (Grip s.a.).

- Cvent

  Another incredible feature of cvent, is that can create 3D mock-ups, for visualization of the final result of the event, that customers and vendors can have a virtual walkthrough of the event space. Fact, that enhances a lot the attendees engagement, such as ensures that everything will work smoothly with the organization of te space with the vendors. Continuing this, enables also the planners to manage seating information and guest lists. The third very important feature is that gives the opportunity to the planners, to source venue vendors. The platform offers around 340 millions of venues, that the planner can explore and based on the filters and preferences to find the appropriate one. Can also check the rates, See photorealistic venue floor plans, communicate with vendors, learn the rates and compare them according to your benefits and your budget. (Cvent s.a.).

- Canva

  Canva is a user-friendly design tool that greatly supports event planners in marketing and promotions. It allows planners to create a wide variety of content, from social media posts and website graphics to presentations and invitations. With millions of templates available, Canva provides flexible options for any aspect of event planning, including branding and promotional materials. (Canva s.a.).

Table 1. Key Theories in Event Planning and Aritificial Intelligence (AI). (Paiteri 2025)

Author(s)	**Year**	**Theory / Cncepts**
Nelson	2004	One of the primary issues faced by the industry is the relationship between service providers and their clients.
Dolasinski	2013	Events can be categorized into four main types: professional, entertainment, social, and common cause.
Dolasinski	2013	An event is an occurrence that involves a time element, two or more participants, is planned, and offers a unique opportunity.
Down & Albert	2015	Event is a temporary gathering with a purpose, memorable or special.
Carvache-Franco	2019	Highlights the significance of participant experience, noting that attendee satisfaction is a critical element in events and must be considered in research.
Ergen	2021	AI automates routine tasks, freeing up human resources for creative work.
Saini	2022	By automating tasks such as attendee engagement, the personal touch may be weakened.

Domhnall, McLoughlin & Maguire	2023	AI uses past event performance and accessibility data to suggest locations that match both the event's goals and budget.

3. Research methods

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted for the present study, detailing each step undertaken in the research process. It begins by presenting the overall research design, followed by a thorough explanation of the development and execution of the interview process. The chapter then describes the data collection methods and tools utilized to gather rich and relevant insights. Finally, it discusses the analytical approaches applied to examine the collected data, ensuring a systematic and careful interpretation aligned with the research objectives. Through this structure, the chapter aims to provide clarity, coherence, and justification for the chosen methods.

3.1 Qualitative approach and justification

Quantitative research is a methodical approach used to collect and examine numerical data. It helps researchers identify trends and patterns based on specific objectives within a chosen population or sample. This approach focuses on objective measurements and typically uses tools such as surveys, questionnaires, or experiments to gather data. Often, responses are structured in closed formats, like multiple-choice questions, to ensure precise and relevant insights. Quantitative research usually involves large sample sizes to improve the accuracy of the results and to reflect broader population views, rather than those of a specific group. The collected data is then analyzed using statistical methods, which allow researchers to generalize findings and make informed conclusions or predictions. This process also supports transparency and enables other researchers to verify or question the results. (Dehalwar & Sharma 2023 , 8-10).

On the other hand, the qualitative approach is exploratory in nature and aims to deeply understand human experiences, behaviors, and social dynamics. It focuses on capturing insights from the perspective of participants, helping researchers gain a more meaningful understanding of the topic. Data in qualitative research is typically gathered through methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations, which allow for rich and detailed information. This approach usually involves smaller sample sizes, making it possible to examine cases more thoroughly and explore

complex issues in depth. Analysis in qualitative research can involve techniques like coding, identifying themes, and comparing patterns across responses. Open-ended conversations are often used to encourage participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and beliefs freely. Furthermore, this method allows researchers to reflect on their own views and potential biases, which contributes to the clarity and trustworthiness of the study. (Dehalwar & Sharma 2023 , 9-12).

Each research method brings its own strengths, depending on the goals of the study. Quantitative research focuses on measurable data and is particularly useful for statistical analysis and testing theories across larger populations. In contrast, qualitative research allows for deeper exploration of individual experiences and social contexts that numbers alone may not capture. While quantitative methods help identify patterns on a broad scale, qualitative methods provide rich and detailed insights into specific situations.

For the purposes of this research, the author selected a qualitative approach, aiming to explore the topic in depth. Event planning is considered an evolving field, and it was believed that a qualitative method would be the most suitable way to gather meaningful and detailed insights. This approach allowed the author to better understand the participants' experiences, perspectives, and motivations. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with twelve event planners based in various regions of Greece. A flexible format was followed, encouraging open dialogue and reflection, while a set of guiding questions helped ensure that all key research objectives were addressed. This process provided rich and valuable data that may not have emerged through a quantitative method. For the analysis, the author applied thematic, content, and narrative analysis techniques. The findings from this process are presented in the following subchapters.

3.2 Research Design

The aim of the author was to respond to the research question and address the objectives set at the beginning of the study. To explore these areas in depth, the semi-structured interview method was chosen as the most appropriate. A questionnaire was created by the author based on the research objectives, designed to guide the interview in an open but focused way.

Twelve event planners were selected as interviewees, and in order to provide a well-rounded view of the field in Greece, participants were chosen from various geographical regions. Seven were based in Athens and worked for event planning companies, while two were from Thessaloniki, also employed in similar companies. Two others were based in Mykonos and worked in concierge and event planning services. The final participant was from Arachova, a small town outside of Athens, and owned a family-run venue that regularly hosts events.

Most interviews were conducted in-person in Athens, while some took place over the phone, while the rest of the interviews conducted online. Each conversation lasted from 30 minutes to one hour. The interview guide began with a short introduction, during which the interviewer explained the purpose of the study and the importance of the interview, followed by their consent in terms of confidentiality and permissions for recording the interviews. After that, followed some warm-up questions about the participants' background in the field, including years of experience, qualifications, team size, and the types of events they usually organize. The main part of the interview explored planning processes such as budgeting, feasibility checks, feedback mechanisms, and other key aspects aligned with the research goals. The final section focused on AI and the use of digital tools in event planning. At the end of each interview, the interviewer thanked the participant, ensured again confidentiality, and informed them that all data would be securely deleted upon completion of the thesis (Appendix 1).

Throughout the interviews, the interviewer maintained a neutral stance and took careful notes in order to proceed with a meaningful analysis of the data collected.

3.3 Data collection methods

For the data collection in this research, the author chose to use semi-structured interviews, as this method was considered the most appropriate for exploring the topic in depth. This approach allowed for open-ended conversations guided by a set of prepared questions, ensuring that all key themes were covered while still giving space for participants to express their views freely. As Magaldi and Berler (2020) note, semi-structured interviews are built around a flexible guide that supports both structure and spontaneity, helping researchers gather meaningful insights.

The process began by setting clear research objectives, developing relevant questions, and identifying the right target group. Since the study focuses on the integration of Artificial Intelligence in event planning, it was essential to speak with experienced event planners who manage a wide range of events across different parts of Greece. Their insights were key to understanding current practices and the potential role of AI in their workflows.

To ensure accuracy in data collection, the author initially planned to record all interviews. However, not all participants agreed to be recorded. In the end, five planners gave their consent, three during face-to-face meetings and two through online interviews. These were recorded and later transcribed using the Descript app, a tool that supports accurate transcription and helps preserve the details of each conversation. For those who preferred not to be recorded, the author took detailed notes. Although this method was more time-consuming, it still yielded valuable insights.

3.4 Data analysis methods

For the analysis of the collected data, the author began by applying traditional coding techniques to the notes from interviews, aiming to capture the main points and recurring themes. To further organize and structure the information, NVivo software was used. NVivo is a useful tool for qualitative data analysis, allowing researchers to code, categorize, and interpret data effectively, while also supporting the visualization of key findings.

After organizing the data, a thematic analysis was carried out, as this is a widely used method in qualitative research. As Dehalwar and Sharma (2023) note, “Researchers employ various techniques, including coding, thematic analysis, and constant comparison, to identify patterns, themes, and connections within the data.” This step helped the author uncover important themes and patterns across the interviews. Thematic analysis is commonly described as “a research method used to identify and interpret patterns or themes in a data set; it often leads to new insights and understanding” (Boyatzis, 1998; Elliott, 2018; Thomas, 2006).

Following this, content analysis was conducted to examine repetitive words and ideas that aligned with the research objectives. According to Patton (2002), content analysis is defined as “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.”

Finally, the author applied narrative analysis to explore the personal stories and experiences shared by the interviewees. The open format of the semi-structured interviews allowed for rich narratives, which offered deeper insight into motivations, influences, and themes not directly addressed by the original research questions. As McLeod (2024) describes, narrative analysis is “a qualitative research method used to understand how individuals create stories from their personal experiences.” He further emphasizes “the context in which a narrative is constructed, recognizing the influence of historical, cultural, and social factors on storytelling.”

3.5 Ethical Considerations and Data Management

In conducting this research, the author made a conscious effort to follow the key ethical principles required for human-centered studies. These include voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and the proper handling of personal data. At the beginning of the process, potential interviewees were approached by phone, where the purpose of the research was explained clearly.

Those who agreed to participate were further informed about their rights, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and how the data would be used. All participants gave their verbal consent, and anonymity and confidentiality were assured.
Only the author had access to the original interview recordings and could match them with participants' identities. This sensitive data was stored securely in the author's personal cloud storage, which was protected and used solely for research purposes.

Participants were informed that after the thesis was completed, all recordings and related identifiable data would be deleted. This was done to ensure full compliance with ethical guidelines and to respect the privacy of those involved. While the study may not cover every advanced detail of data handling, it followed the core ethical standards required for conducting academic research responsibly and with integrity. Additionally, to improve the academic clarity and language quality of the written work, tools such as ChatGPT and Grammarly were used solely for editing and proofreading purposes, without impacting the research content or data.

4. Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis and key findings of the research, with a focus on how the data was examined to understand the event planning process. The questionnaire used in the study was carefully reviewed to ensure that the results are presented in a clear and meaningful way. Through detailed chart analysis, the author was able to collect and interpret essential information that addressed the main research objective, exploring whether AI can be integrated into event planning to improve efficiency and enhance the attendee experience. The interviews explored how traditional planning methods could be combined with modern technological tools. The questionnaire was divided into four main sections, including 23 structured open-ended questions, designed to support a reliable and balanced data collection process.

4.1 Summary of Findings

When the research process comes to an end and the questionnaire data is analyzed with the use of specific software in order to examine the interviewees' responses and to extract meaningful insights.

From the first part of the interviews where the warm up questions are placed and general information for the event planners was requested we draw the conclusions that most of the planners are around 40 years old having a 8-10 years of experience in the field, and most of them are qualified in the field of tourism, business or event planning. Most of them seek every possible opportunity to attend seminars in the field. The younger planners tend to be more qualified and educated in their sector compared with older ones.

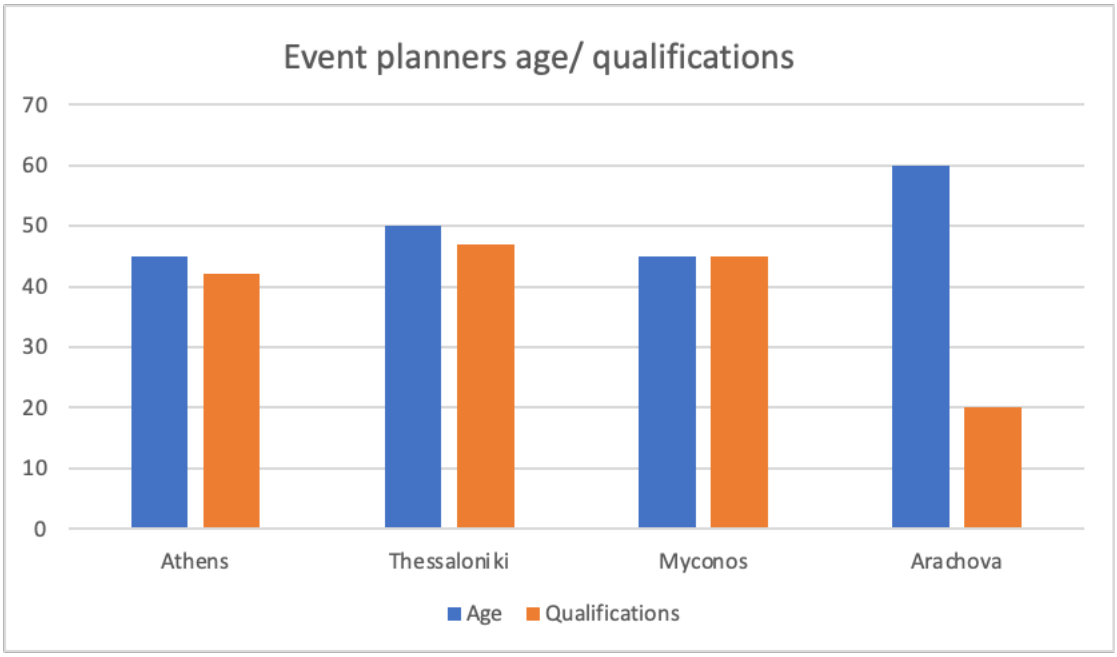

Figure 1. Event planners Age and Qualification (Paiteri 2025).

There are different types of social events and from the interviewing sample we can understand which events are more likely to be planned in Greece. In the first position there are the weddings and then comes the birthday parties and baptisms with a small difference. Events such as anniversaries and graduation parties are not quite common in Greece.

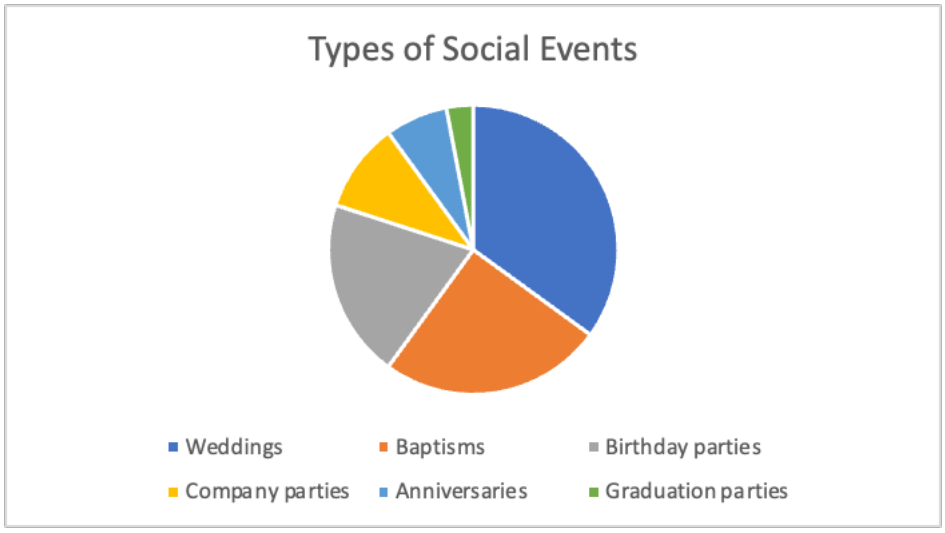

Figure 2. Types of Social Events (Paiteri 2025).

Another important aspect to highlight is the number of attendees for each type of event. It was observed that attendance tends to vary depending on the event category. In general, weddings attract the largest number of guests, typically ranging from three hundred to five hundred attendees.

This number remains consistent, with only slight variation when the events are held in island locations or outside of major cities. Baptisms follow, usually gathering between one hundred fifty to two hundred guests. Notably, anniversaries appeared to be the least in demand among all event types discussed.

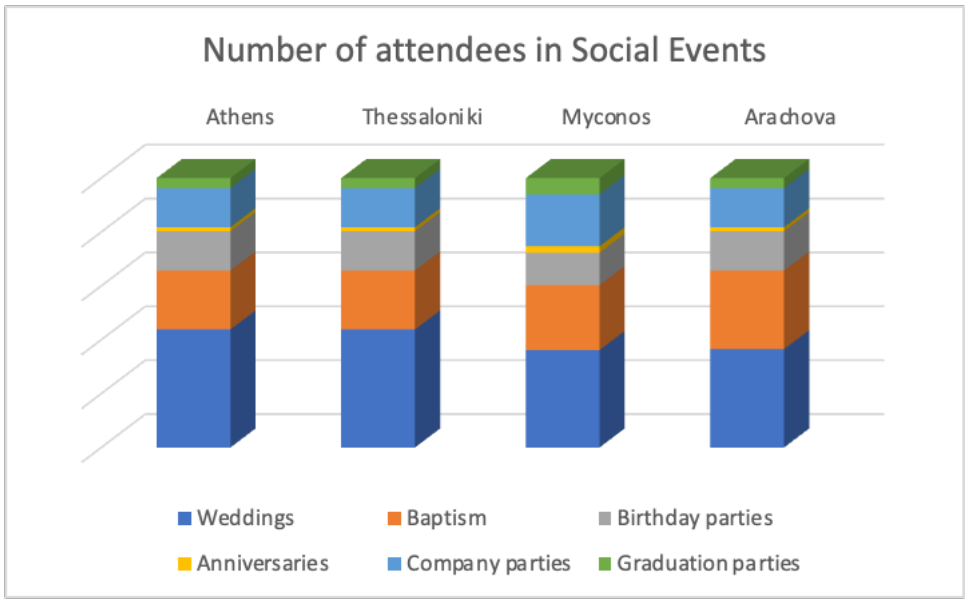

Figure 3. Range of Attendees in Events (Paiteri 2025).

Besides the managers and attendees, employees also play a key role in the success of an event. Based on the data, it is clear that in cities like Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mykonos, where more events are organized, there is a higher number of staff, and most of them are considered to be qualified. However, in areas like Arachova, there tends to be fewer employees, and many are not seen as equally qualified but with an experience. Another point that came up is that while most businesses have a core team of full-time staff, they often bring in extra help depending on the size and needs of each event. Many keep a database of people they can contact for future events when needed.

From the main part of the interviews, was noted that the reactions to receiving a request for an event vary. Some event planners feel stressed about the time available to organize the event, while others are confident they can meet the client's expectations, seeing it as part of their job. Despite these differences, the process tends to follow a similar pattern. First, they emphasize the importance of understanding the objectives and gathering all necessary information from the client about their vision for the event. A key aspect mentioned by all participants is the budget, as it often serves as the starting point. Many clients, according to the interviewees, may request something extravagant without fully understanding the associated costs.
Another key insight that emerged from the interviews is that many event planning companies have already taken initial steps toward incorporating AI systems into their work. Some have started using AI tools for tasks such as data analysis and keeping guests informed in real time. However, when it comes to core planning processes, such as scheduling, budgeting, feasibility, and event design, most planners shared that they still rely on traditional methods. These tasks are often handled manually, particularly through the use of spreadsheets like Excel. In terms of financial matters, none of the participants reported using AI tools. They explained that budgeting and payment management are areas they consider too sensitive to delegate to AI, and they continue to trust qualified accountants to handle those responsibilities.

Following the previous point, another insight relates to how event planners receive feedback after the event. It seems that most clients prefer to give their feedback in person or through reviews on platforms like Google or social media. The least common method is by email, where feedback is rarely shared or made visible.

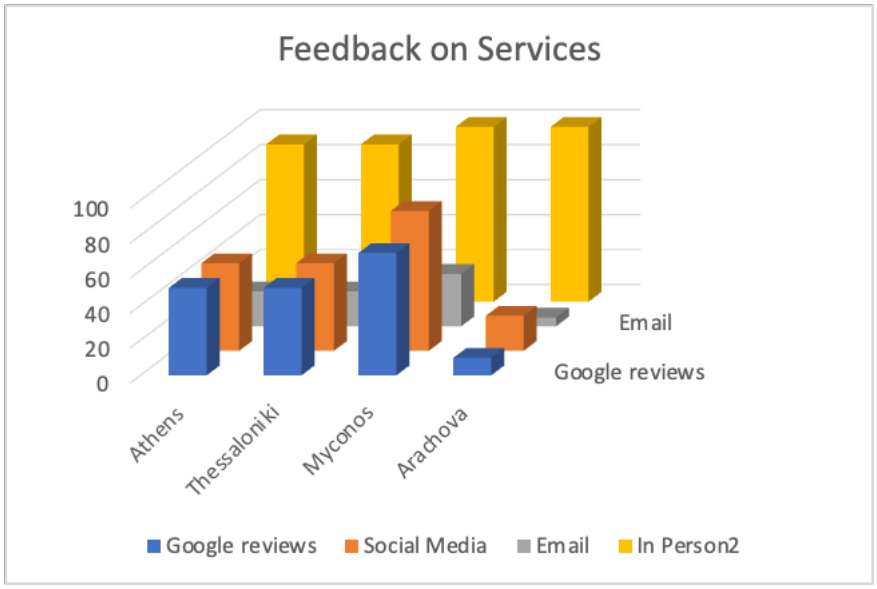

Figure 4. Feedback on Services (Paiteri 2025).

The most commonly used AI tool identified in the research is the chatbot, which is widely implemented in cities like Athens, Thessaloniki, and Mykonos. In contrast, its use in Arachova is still at an early stage. Another frequently mentioned tool is Canva, a platform that supports the creation of content, PDFs, and visuals. Other AI tools, such as Grip, for networking and matchmaking and Zenus, for feasibility analysis and data insights, were mentioned by only a few participants. Similarly, Synthesia, an AI tool that turns voiceovers into videos, was referenced by just one event planner.

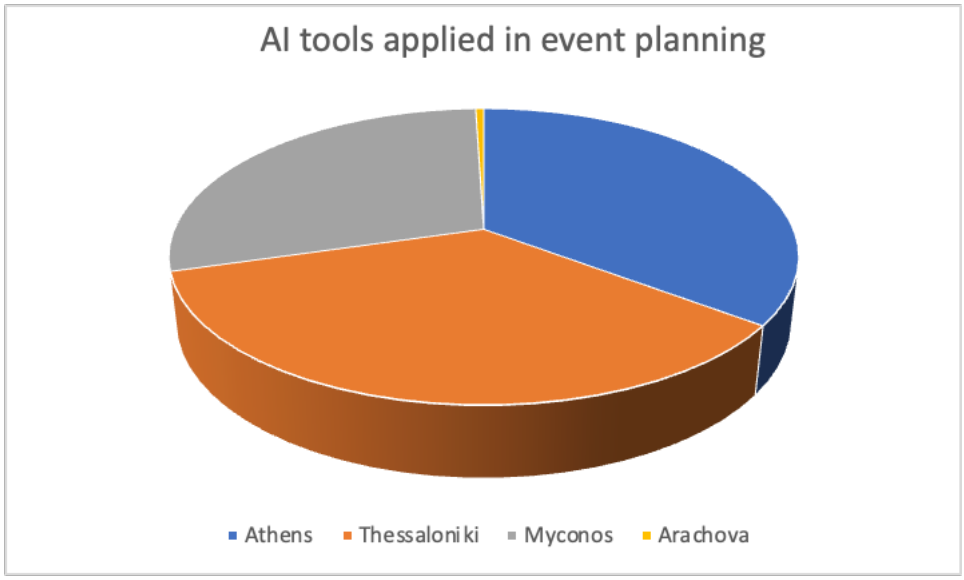

Figure 5. AI Tools in Event planning (Paiteri 2025).

The findings showed that the use of AI tools in event planning is still at an early stage. Some companies, especially those based in big cities and on the islands, have started using a few tools, mainly for support tasks like guest communication or creating content, but still not in the main parts of the planning process. However, all planners showed interest in learning more about AI and were open to using more tools in the future. They believe that AI could help improve and modernize their work.

4.2 AI's impact on Event Planning Efficiency

AI has gradually integrated into the event planning industry in Greece, with chatbots being the most widely adopted tool.

Event planners primarily utilize chatbots and Canva, while tools such as Zenus, Grip, and Synthesia are used to a lesser extent.

Although chatbots require significant setup and management, they automate follow-up reminders and task management, allowing planners to redirect their focus toward more critical responsibilities, including event design, timeline creation, and vendor coordination.

By leveraging AI tools, particularly chatbots, planners are able to analyze data, which aids in predicting client needs and gaining deeper insights into their audience. Analyzing feedback is also a significant factor in enhancing services.

Chatbots contribute to reducing human error by ensuring that important client communications and updates are not overlooked, thus preventing potential negative repercussions on the event planning process.

Despite the benefits, planners remain cautious about fully relying on AI tools for essential tasks, as they lack complete confidence in their ability to utilize these tools to their fullest potential.

The successful integration of multiple AI tools necessitates a dedicated budget for technical support and staff training to ensure effective implementation.

While AI tools offer numerous advantages, planners emphasize the importance of human involvement, believing that the personal touch and energy of the planners cannot be substituted by AI.

In conclusion, the majority of planners agree that AI integration greatly enhances organizational efficiency, predictability, feasibility, and resource management. They remain open to further learning and are eager to incorporate AI tools to optimize their event planning practices in the future

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore how artificial intelligence could be integrated into the event planning process to improve efficiency, minimize human error, and enhance the overall experience for attendees. The research findings indicate that AI is slowly being adopted in the industry, particularly in urban centers like Athens and Thessaloniki, as well as in prominent island locations. Chatbots are the most widely adopted tool, primarily supporting automated communication, data analysis, and handling repetitive tasks. Additionally, tools like Canva are utilized for designing digital assets and creating visual content.

However, more advanced AI technologies remain unexplored, with only a small number of planners utilizing them. While the potential advantages of AI—such as reducing human error, streamlining workflows, and providing valuable insights—are generally recognized, many professionals are hesitant to incorporate these tools into core planning tasks, particularly those related to budgeting and finance. This hesitation is often attributed to limited technical knowledge, the need for specialized training, and the financial investment required. However, most participants expressed their willingness to further their learning and explore the integration of AI tools in the future.
In comparison to the literature review, the findings confirm that event planners generally agree with existing research suggesting that AI can elevate the event planning process by offering valuable insights and improving efficiency. Moreover, as the literature suggests, many planners agree that AI cannot replace the crucial role of Human Resources, specifically the empathy, energy, and personal touch that event planners bring to the table, which are vital for creating a successful and meaningful event experience.

In conclusion, the research question has been effectively answered: While AI has the potential to significantly enhance various aspects of event planning, its full integration into the core planning process is still in the early stages of development and adoption.

5.1 Practical Recommendations for Event Organizers

Event planning is a dynamic and creative field, offering new challenges every day. To thrive in this industry, event organizers must have a genuine passion for what they do. As the industry evolves, integrating artificial intelligence (AI) offers an opportunity to improve efficiency and communication. However, it is crucial to maintain the personal touch that makes events unique. Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made to help event planners incorporate AI smoothly while preserving the human element:

- Start with low-cost AI tools: Begin by implementing AI tools like chatbots to automate communication and repetitive tasks. This will help streamline workflows without a significant investment, allowing for a gradual transition.
- Expand based on needs and budget: As planners become more comfortable with AI, they can incorporate additional tools based on their company size, budget, and specific needs. This ensures AI's role grows in alignment with organizational capacity and goals.
- Focus on organizational support and data analysis: AI can significantly improve data analysis, consistency, and organization, offering valuable insights for better decision-making and future event planning. This can improve the overall efficiency of the planning process.
- Maintain human interaction for core tasks: While AI is beneficial, it should not replace direct client communication or the on-the-ground execution of events. These tasks rely on empathy, creativity, and personal touch, which AI cannot replicate.
- Allocate budget and training for successful integration: Proper training and adequate budget allocation are essential to ensure AI tools are implemented successfully. Staff should be equipped with the necessary skills to maximize AI's potential and avoid underutilization.

Event planners should also remain open to continuous learning and adapting to emerging trends and new tools. Keeping up with the latest developments will allow them to stay competitive and effectively integrate AI while enhancing their unique, human-driven approach to event planning.

5.2 Learning Outcomes

The goal of the author was to explore in depth the event planning field and examine the potential integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within this industry. Throughout the research process, the author enhanced critical thinking abilities, improved skills in information gathering, and learned new methods of data analysis like thematic, content and narrative analysis. This experience also provided the opportunity to discover various tools and their usage, such as Nvivo and Descript. To improve the clarity and academic tone of the written text, tools such as ChatGPT 3.5 and

Grammarly were used, which assisted in refining the language, ensuring coherence, and enhancing the overall quality of the final document.

By studying event planning, the author gained a deeper understanding of key concepts and industry practices. Interviews with event planners helped the author explore these areas more thoroughly, offering valuable insights that contributed to meeting the personal goal. The author also explored AI tools, their features, and how they can be integrated into the event planning process.

Initially, the author believed AI could be applied throughout the entire event planning process. However, after speaking with event planners, the importance of the human element in creating memorable events became evident. This led to a shift in the author's perspective regarding AI's role within the industry.

Throughout the research, the author encountered challenges, including the limited academic literature on artificial intelligence subject, such as the social events and difficulties in time management. Additionally, staying focused on the objectives while sifting through a large volume of information was another challenge.

In spite of these challenges, the research provided valuable insights for AI tools and their use in event planning. The study reinforced the importance of human interaction in the event planning process while highlighting the potential of AI to improve efficiency.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

While this study provided useful insights into the integration of AI in event planning, several areas remain open for further exploration. Future research could expand the sample by including more event planners from various regions of Greece, as well as those managing large-scale events, to uncover potential regional or scale-related differences during the event planning process. Additionally, examining a wider range of AI tools and their more advanced applications would offer a deeper understanding of their potential in the industry. Including client perspectives through interviews or surveys could also enrich future studies by highlighting how attendees perceive AI-driven event planning. Lastly, it would be valuable to investigate the long-term impact of AI on the event planning profession, especially in terms of efficiency, client satisfaction, and the evolving role of human involvement.

6. Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Personal information

How long have you been working as an event planner?

Do you own a degree in the field?

Venue information

What are the types of events hosted?

What is the usual range of attendees? How

many employees do you have?

Academic degrees of your employees

Event procedure (according to the conversation some these question in this part were asked)

When an event is requested, what is the main procedure followed?

How do you create the event's timeline and ensure that it is followed?

How do you evaluate the feasibility of the event?

How do you plan and manage the budget for the event?

How do you identify the stakeholders for an event?

What strategies do you use to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and involved in the planning process?

How do you plan and create the design for the event?
How do you deal with finances and all payments?

Do you recruit extra staff for special events?

How do you receive feedback on your services?

AI tools

Are you familiar with AI technology?

Could you please name some of them?

Have you used any AI tool?

Do you believe that can be useful?

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