Social network analysis in cultural tourism organizations. methodological and managerial issues of text analysis approach of heritage festivals

ANDREA MORETTI[*] MICHELA CESARINA MASON[•] FRANCESCO RAGGIOTTO[♠]

Abstract

Objectives. *This paper proposes an interpretive framework addressing social network analysis in tourism-cultural organizations, helping develop a feasible solution for Social Media (SM) analysis within cultural organizations (better fitting organizations specificities, and culturally closer to their collective mindsets, generally humanistic).*

Methodology. *An interpretive framework has been developed. Such framework has been operationalized by performing Content Analysis using T-LAB software. Empirical analysis was divided in two steps, addressing the same research context (local heritage festival).*

Findings. *The analysis provides schematization of contexts classification in SM data analysis, that is potentially generalizable. Basing on empirical evidence, some insights about a) the possible uses of T-LAB, and b) of the conditions within which to use the software in small cultural/tourist organizations, have been provided.*

Research limits. *The proposed schematization is tested only on a single empirical context. Generalizability of usage processes of T-LAB, indicated in this paper on SM data analysis requires additional testing in other contexts.*

Practical implications. *The present work identifies stages and processes that small cultural/touristic organizations can follow to enable an analytic process, with respect to SM data (i.e., texts), using tools better fitting their operational capabilities, degree of complexity and cultural background.*

Originality of the study. *The study offers an original framework and mapping of possible analytic tools for analogic and digital data, in small cultural organizations. It also provides a representation of the usage processes of the T-LAB software, with respect to the processing of written contributions, within a consumer behavior perspective.*

Key words: *social media management; cultural tourism; small firms; cultural organization; heritage festival; T-lab*

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[*]   Full Professor *of Marketing and Management* - University of Udine
       e-mail: andrea.moretti@uniud.it
[•]   Assistant Professor *of Marketing and Management* - University of Udine
       e-mail: michela.mason@uniud.it
[♠]   Ph.D. Student *in Managerial and Actuarial Sciences* - University of Udine
       e-mail: raggiotto.francesco@spes.uniud.it

1. Introduction

In the last decade, it has become apparent the structural importance, in managing co-production relationships of adopting Social Media (SM) as an interaction tool, both from the side of consumers and companies (i.e., from a Relationship Marketing perspective). Such an inescapable process, its management potential appears not to have been completely exploited by organizations, mainly due to a general underestimation of related, complex, strategic and managerial implications. Few firms are in fact actually able to fully use and interpret SM data related to interaction with stakeholders (e.g., customers). In addition, the required investments (i.e., capabilities, tools, dedicated resources) are inadequate in the majority of firms. This tendency appears even more relevant in those contexts in which experiential production is the core component of organizational activities.

After collocating Social Network Analysis within a more general framework of interpretation, this paper reports the empirical analysis performed on a specific -and with a growing relevance- context: heritage festivals. Within this context, a process of analysis has been developed, specifically adapting it to the research context.

Such an application highlights the importance of considering the cognitive distance between analytic tools and specific decision-making contexts, within a SM Management perspective.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 The digital and social revolution in marketing

A framework for Social Network Analysis in tourism and cultural organizations, is certainly grounded on some established research areas. These areas, that have gained an increasing importance as component of an interpretative framework, can be identified as:

- studies on SM Management, SM Marketing, especially within a Relationship Marketing perspective;
- studies on information complexity and organizational decision-making;

In the last twenty years, the frenetic development of ICT and Web 2.0 have had profound implications for the business world. In particular, SM and the user-firm interactions allowed by the Web 2.0 have completely reshaped how business relationships are managed (Moretti and Tuan, 2014). SM have exponentially increased the importance of virtual users (Finotto and Micelli, 2010; Kietzmann *et al.*, 2011; Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Mortara and Sinisi, 2012; O'Reilly, 2005; Vernuccio *et al.*, 2012), leading to an entirely new paradigms in knowledge economy (Nonaka 1994, Rullani 2004a, 2004b). Research has emphasized the huge revolution that SM have triggered in marketing, enhancing value co-creation within virtual communities of heterogeneous users (Kornum and Muhlbacher, 2013), and leading to the today well-known SM Marketing. SM Marketing can be considered part of Relationship Marketing (Moretti and Tuan, 2014). This view is highly consistent with the inner aim and meaning of Relationship Marketing itself, whose underlying, basic assumption can be summarized as follows: identifying and nurturing a base of long-term customers appears more profitable than continuously seeking to enlarge customer base with new customers (Reinartz and Kumar, 2003).

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is considered as one of the most important tools of relationship marketing, allowing a clearer understanding of consumer behavior of the market. CRM appears to be intimately related with new technologies. The rise and development of SM has led to Social CRM (SCRM), a merge between traditional CRM and Web 2.0, leading to a model of «customer retention and involvement» (Faase *et al*, 2011). The engagement that is created between customers and the firm allows a substantial improvement of relationships: an increased engagement means, in fact, interactions that are more meaningful (Wang and Owyang, 2010). In SCRM, the customer-retaining perspective of traditional CRM is integrated with the involvement component,

which is strongly related to Web 2.0, in turn oriented towards interaction and exchange between users.

SM introduce new ways in which knowledge is created and shared. Co-creation of knowledge is allowed, and customers can influence others in their networks (Baird and Parasnis, 2011; Greenberg, 2010). SCRM appears a crucial tool to stay close to consumers, by monitoring constantly virtual communities in order to predict, and anticipate new and emerging needs and trends, overwhelming competition and reinforcing competitive advantages, especially in fast-moving markets (Woodcock *et al*, 2011).

Summing up, SM and SCRM can be identified as the highest point within a space of managerial-economic analysis, which increasingly sees a progressive transition from the production of transactional value, towards the production of a more *relational* value. In such a context, value production itself is shifting from being strictly *analogic* to being strictly *digital* (Figure 1).

Fig. 1: SM Analysis Managerial Framework
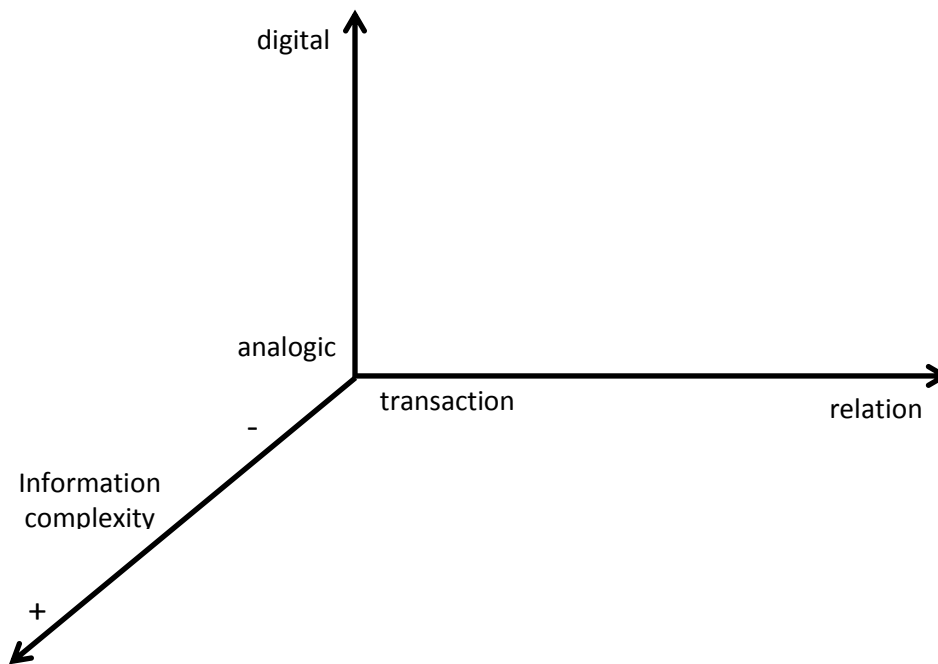
Source: our elaboration

2.2 Information complexity and managerial decisions in SME & Small Organization

The second stream of research useful in Social Network Analysis is represented by contributions classifying the level of complexity of information structures, supporting business decision-making processes. Such stream represents a traditional topic in organization studies literature (Costa and Nacamulli, 1993; Rugiadini, 1979).

Information complexity is commonly classified as high or low, according to the following parameters:

- the extent to which information is structured, with respect to the strategic decision-making level (Anthony, 1965). The more information is structured, the simpler its processing. As information becomes less structured, its complexity increases. Such levels of complexity are generally linked to the level at which decisions are taken (strategic, managerial, operative);
- the width of the spectrum with which information can be used (and the organization is willing to use it). Information collected and employed for well-defined, limited purposes (e.g., single decisions) is generally classified as low-complexity information. Instead, collected information that is used for wide range of purposes (i.e., many decisions in many organizational functions and levels) is commonly classified as highly complex;
- in addition, information density (concentration: i.e., the extent to which information is

distributed), is often used as an additional measure of information complexity (Bonifacio, Bouquet and Cuel 2002). Accordingly, whereas information is concentrated in terms of articulation and usage, complexity tends to be low; on the other hand, high complexity occurs as information and its use is distributed.

Organizations can consider the above criteria as decision-making conditions require information processing (i.e., complex, various, variable information). Such processing may be required to support business decisions, and to transform the original information size to a reduced and relevant one (for decision-making).

The relationship between information complexity and organizational dimensions is intimately linked to the topics presented above. Existing literature on firm dimensions (e.g., Di Bernardo, 1997) highlights the importance of adequacy of tools supporting decision-making, to existing organizational processes. In particular, operative information mechanisms (Rugiadini, 1979) must be strongly adequate to the context. An information system (tools and procedures) that is not able to adapt to organizational conditions is totally unuseful. Hence, from this perspective, the use of any information tool or process supporting decision-making requires contextualization.

As far as is known, academic and professional literature has not yet provided a definitive classification of analytic tools for Social Networks; not identifying, in this way, organizational and information complexities related to the implementation and to the use of such tools. Classifications exist only with respect to the characteristics of analytic tools[1]. In any case, such classifications do not represent an interpretation in terms of the relationship between the complexity of produced information, and supported decisions.

The elements that can be derived by such tools are exquisitely quantitative, and connected with specific online behaviors (e.g., if users "like" something on Facebook), that can be quantified and considered as evaluations or intentions. The point is, such information is not related to the textual content of social networks.

Instead, the textual content is extremely interesting for management analysis (of social interactions). In order to extract this interpretation value, specific research processes are required, usually based on text analysis (e.g., NUDE™, NVIVO™, T-Lab™), or data analysis tools (e.g. R™, Python™), and on analytic data processes (*data science*).

Both quantitative analysis of likes and text content require a strategic interpretive framework. The most diffused perspective today appears to be the relational perspective, that is pretty tactical, and not strategic (Tuan, 2015), limiting in this way the potential of such tools in terms of business management.

Within this framework, despite the enormous potential that SM offer, the Italian business landscape still appears not to fully understand such opportunities (Moretti e Tuan 2014): albeit an increasing number of Italian organizations is more present on SM than in the past, still they conceive SM as a sort of "clone" of corporate website. Furthermore there are no commonly accepted measures to assess SM marketing strategies (Gillin, 2009); firms can rely mainly to SM and marketing analytics (Lovett and Owyang, 2010).

3. Festival as knowledge creation systems

3.1 Festivals & Festival organizations: project work of knowledge creation

The general framework depicted in Figure 1 founds a great relevance in those contexts in which knowledge production is the main factor of the production process. In cultural and tourism productions, festivals well represent those situations (Getz, 2008). Research interest on festivals follows different perspectives of analysis:

•   research on events and festivals, (as esperiential, cultural and touristic phenomena denoted by

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[1]   For a more specific classification, see Kevan L. (2014) https://blog.bufferapp.com/social-media-analytics-tools

economic relevance), and the related organizations involved in managing and developing them;

- studies investigating consumer behavior and motivations in festivals.

National and international *festivalization* of cultural and touristic production has shown a dramatic growth in the last two decades (Richards, 2007). Such growth has triggered increasing attention from academic and professional literature. Such a strong interest for management and organization of *temporary* events (i.e., festivals) can be justified by, at least, three reasons:

- the experiential nature of festivals (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Carù and Cova, 2005);
- the festival potential, in terms of characterization and positioning effects on tourist destinations (Franch 2002; Prentice, Andersen 2003);
- the economic relevance of the phenomenon (Argano *et al*. 2007; Gibson *et al*. 2010; Long and Robinson 2004; Trezzini 1992)

According to the first perspective, processes of value production show a strong relational characterization. The most important relationships occurs between the system of product offering (one or many), participants (that are, in this case, *pro-sumers*), and other partners (e.g. members, sponsors, other cultural organizations). The intensity of the relationship varies according to the extent to which co-production takes place within different contexts.

Adopting the second perspective, the inclusion in the tourist offering of festivals is clearly identified as a key component of destination positioning, contributing also to determine the identity of the destination.

The economic relevance of the phenomenon has itself stimulated a wide research *corpus*; from a macroeconomic perspective, and from the point of view of the impacts of these events (Brown, Var and Lee, 2002; Lee, Taylor 2005). Such development has reached now a strong, established knowledge base, including both methodologies and indicators.

From a managerial point of view, festivals have been characterized mainly by an augmented role of value co-production, in all management stages (pre-festival, festival, and post-festival) and by the important role of "project organizations" (Argano 2005).

During the pre-festival stage, co-production involves strategic (e.g., selection of participants, definitions of the main themes) and operative (e.g., accommodation, communication and promotion) aspects. As the event takes place, co-production occurs as, normally, production and consumption coexist. In addition, strong interactions between the system of offering and participants can be noticed. As the event concludes, (post-festival), co-production may be strongly connected with narrative elements, concerning for example participants' experiences, and Word of Mouth.

Analyzing the three stages of co-production highlights where digitalized co-production can be more relevant in managerial terms. In fact, in all the three stages, interaction management could partially be -or even fully- digitalized. Highly interactive websites, and social tools connected with festival development, management, and narrative processes, exemplify the digitalization opportunities described above. Such virtual places represent a virtual reification of festivals, where their effects perpetuate, develop, and are testified by communities of users; in these knowledge-based processes, knowledge that is produced is characterized by redundancy, recursiveness, multiple usability, which determine, in turn, its value (Rullani, 2004a, 2004b).

On the other hand, such virtual processes and places require increasing resources (i.e., managerial, institutional, relational) as the festival phenomenon, and its reification through these processes, grow.

Project organizations tend to be majority of organizations in charge of festival management (Argano, 2004). Such organizations are commonly characterized by:

- the variety and variability of organizational dimensions, during the stages of festival development (in any case, micro-organization);
- the predominant role of voluntary work of their members;
- the unique combination of professional and nonprofessional subjects.

Such conditions lead to increasing difficulties, with respect to structuring and retaining competences and capabilities, useful in pursuing organizational goals. Managerial processes appears

problematic too. On the one hand, managing value production processes is denoted by a concentration in terms of time: as the festival takes place, but also extending to the time between one edition and the other, hence requiring increasingly structured resources.

On the other hand, the increasing digitalization of both production and reification of specific knowledge deriving from festivals, requires too specific resources devoted to a) collection and analysis of the produced knowledge, and b) managing the social interaction with all relevant stakeholders.

Such conditions are very unlikely to be present within the current configurations of organizations managing festivals. In fact, the majority of them still not appear to be strategically and dimensionally ready to face the challenges described above.

Basing on the above considerations, it is possible to highlight how, within SM Management, festival production is structurally positioned as far from the origin in Figure 1. The level of information complexity increases with the increasing use of SM (in both operative and strategic stages), and with the implementation of the storage festival collective memory within such information infrastructures.

3.2 Motivation in festivals

According to the goals of the present research, studies on motivation of festival participants support the interpretation of results obtained using the tools of Social Network Analysis, in this particular context. As other contributions point out (Mason, Moretti and Raggiotto, 2016) results reported in this paper appear in line with those deriving from motivation literature. The reminder of this paragraph highlights the main traits of literature on festival motivation, leaving a more detailed review to the publications indicated at the end.

Tourism research has focused strongly on visitor's motivations. Ralston and Crompton (1988) were among the first providing a study about the motivation of event participants. Following this seminal contribution, Uysal *et al* (1993) were among the first studies to provide an exploration of visitors' motivation dimensions. In general, studies on festival motivation have covered different kinds of festivals, in several countries (e.g., Ralston and Compton, 1988; Uysal et al, 1993; Formica and Uysal, 1996; Lee, 2000; Lee, 2004; Kitterlin and Yoo, 2014). Albeit some similarities in dimension of motivation are recurring in those studies, each contribution indicated specific dimensions of festival motivation. Some literature reviews on the topic, like Lee *et al* (2004), Li and Petrick (2006), and Thompson and Schofield (2009) provide extensive exploration of festival motivation literature.

4. Research context and methodology

4.1 Research context

"Tempus Est Joucndum" is an heritage festival located in Gemona del Friuli, a small town in northern-east Italy. Since 1992, the event is managed by *Pro Loco Glemona*, a local nonprofit organization. In *Pro Loco Glemona*, general direction is concentrated in the hands of a permanent committee. Event management and organization are, instead, responsibility of a small group of people (three/four). In particular, those young members are responsible for the artistic and marketing direction of the event. This small group widely increases, with volunteers during the event

The event is more than a simple historical reenactment: it is aimed at going back in the Middle Age, for one weekend, with ancient foods, no modern comforts, and even the use of the ancient currency of Gemona (Table 1).

Tab. 1: Summary of the event's major features

TEMPUS EST JOCUNDUM	
Foundation	1992
Editions	23 (2015)
Location	Gemona del Friuli (Italy)
General description	Heritage festival. Highly detail reenactment of every aspect of medieval life. The event develops around the traditional rivalry between the town
Characteristics	Highly detailed historical reconstruction: • Provision of only ancient foods and beverages (e.g., the *mellitum* wine) • Traditional costumes and apparel • No use of modern materials (e.g., plastics) • Temporary use of the ancient medieval currency (Tallero) • No use of electric energy during the event
Nr. participants	ca. 10.000 (5% from Austria and Slovenia)
Related events	Inspired by the ancient rivalry between *borgate* • *Cena Propiziatoria*: a dinner representing a sort of good wish, that takes place before contests between groups begin; • *Palio del Niederlech*. A big contest between groups. Inspired by the medieval tax named *Niederlech*. • *Disfida Dama*. Winners of *Palio del Niederlech* play a match of living draughts. The winners' *dame* is nominated as the Castle Dame • The overall event is disseminated of various ancient figures (inquisitors, jugglers, bandits).
Support services	Local operators, support of volunteers in organizing dining and resting spaces
Communication and promotion	• Traditional promotion (e.g., flyers, posters, spaces in newspapers) • Web editorial plan (since 2015)

Source: our elaboration

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 T-LAB

The entire analysis was carried out adopting the T-LAB software. It offers a unique combination of linguistic, statistical and graphical tools applied to text analysis. The software allows analyzing various texts (e.g., single books or a number of different web posts taken together). After a preliminary, proper text codification by the researcher (for data entry), a number of analysis are allowed, such as:
- perform various kinds of correspondences analysis, and cluster analysis;
- creating semantic maps, in order to identify sequential relationships between words or topics in the text;
- check for the contexts of occurrence of single words;
- analyzing the overall *corpus* (i.e., the codified text) or just some subsets of it, using different lists of keywords;
- creating various contingency tables or co-occurrence matrixes.

4.2.2 Methodological steps

This study adopts an experimental combination of different research methodologies, applied to text analysis. The analysis was divided into two separate steps.

The first step (*ex-ante* step) was performed analyzing contributions in various online sources. This activity was performed before the festival took place (few weeks before the event).

Selected techniques available in T-LAB were used explore the most recurring words, and to analyze the most important relations among them. During the *ex-ante* step, the texts to be analyzed were identified as follows. First, the most common social channels to find events and tourism information in Friuli-Venezia Giulia were identified (e.g., popular blogs or institutional webpages). The seven most popular contributions were selected. The number of Facebook "Likes" was considered as popularity indicator (see Table 2).

For the *ex-ante* step, among the tools included in the T-LAB software, were selected those appearing, to the researchers as the most significant for the purposes of the study. The T-LAB tools employed in this study were word association, co-word analysis, and comparison between pairs of keywords (co-occurrence analysis). A detailed description of the three tools will be provided *infra §* 4.1.

A second, *in itinere* step was then performed. During the event, a pen-and-paper questionnaire was distributed among visitors. The questionnaire was divided into 27 points, addressing different aspects of the event. Items were based on 7-point Likert scales; in addition, respondents were asked to list five major motivations leading them to visit "Tempus est Jocundum". 400 units were surveyed.

The same analysis steps conducted during the "ex-ante" stage were also performed in this step, on the questionnaire data, only with respect to non-structured answers (motivations listed). Results were then compared with those emerged from the *ex-ante* stage.

Tab. 2: Contribuition and FB Likes of Tempus est Jocundum festival

Source	Number of Facebook Likes (25.10.2015)
http://www.turismofvg.it/evento/131553	57.892
http://www.eventifvg.it/site/eventi/tempus-estjocundum-2015.html	29.097
http://www.udine20.it/gemona-tempus-estjocundum-la-rievocazione-medioevale-30-lug2-ago-2015/	26.372
http://newsmedievali.blogspot.it/2015/07/tempusest-jocundum-2015-gemona-del.html	24.263
http://www.girofvg.com/tempus-est-jocundumpalio-del-niederlech-e-dama-castellana-gemonadel-friuli-ud/	11.596
http://www.fogliogoriziano.com/tempolibero/gemona-medioevale/	4.780
http://www.youfolklore.it/tempus-est-jocundum-2015-gemona-del-friuli/	2.912
http://www.portalenordest.it/conoscere/costume-etradizioni/ rievocazioni-sagre-fiere-feste-emanifestazioni/tempus-est-jocundum-rievocazionestorica-a-gemona-del-friuli	285

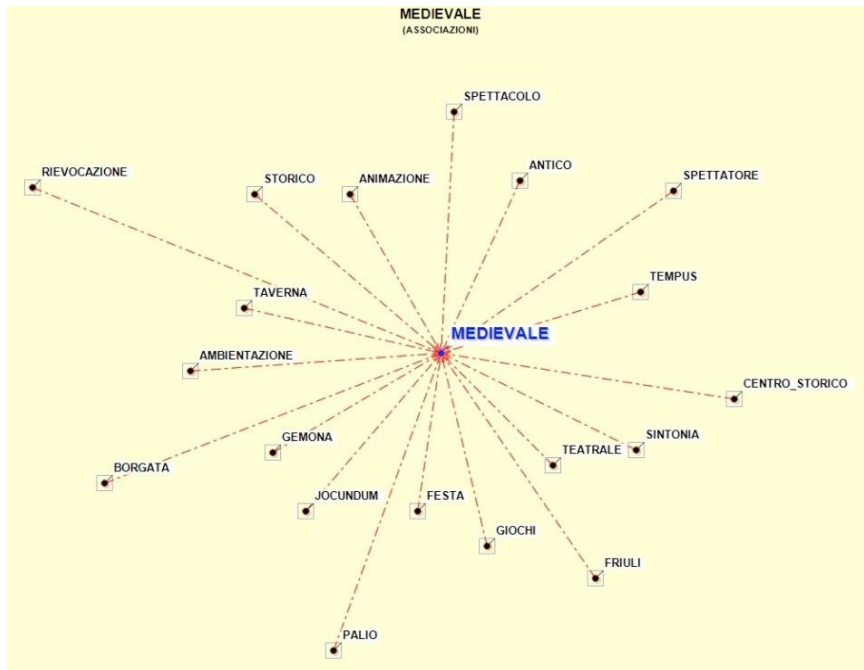Source: our elaboration

4. Results

4.1 The ex-ante step

4.1.1 Word association

In order to check for the most frequent word associations that occur in the selected web contributions, radial diagrams have been developed. The word "medievale" (medieval) was the most recurring word (19 times). The second most recurrent word was "Gemona". For both, a subjective analysis has been performed.

Such analysis brought to the definition of some clusters, obtained primarily by observing words referring to the same subject. Clusters can be defined as a number of elementary contexts, characterized by a pattern of keywords, and described by the most representative lexical units. Following this procedure, the analysis of the word "medievale" returned the following graphical representation:

*Fig. 2: Associations with the word "Medievale"*

Source: own elaboration

Subjective analysis identified three clusters:

- "storia" (history), grouping the lemmas "antico" (ancient), "Tempus" (festival's name), "Joucndum" (festival's name), "rievocazione" (reenactment), "storico" (historical);
- "Intrattenimento" (entertainment), grouping "spettacolo" (show), "spettatore" (audience), "sintonia" (harmony), "teatrale" (theatrical), "giochi" (games), "festa" (celebration), "palio" (historicaly tapestry), "Borgata" (small village), "tavern" (tavern);
- "Luogo" (place), grouping "centro storico" (old town center), "Gemona", "Friuli", "ambientazione" (location).

Figure 3 shows the radial diagram for the word "Gemona".

Fig. 3: Associations with the word "Gemona"
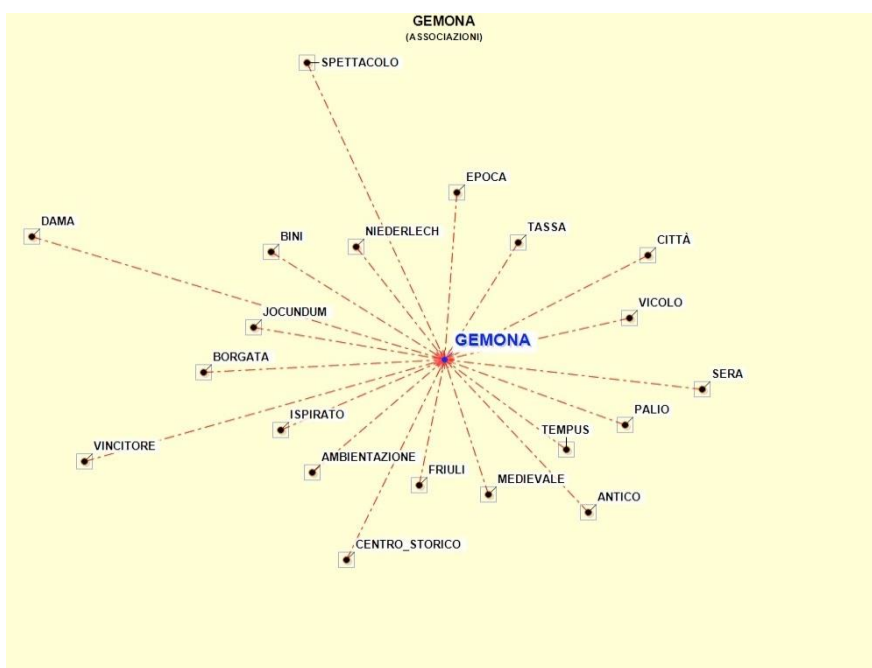
Source: own elaboration

The same procedure was followed, leading to the identification of the following clusters:

- "Storia" (history), grouping "epoca" (historical age), "tassa" (tax), "Tempus", "antico" (ancient), "medievale" (medieval), "Jocundum", "Niederlech" (a kind of medieval tax);
- "Intrattenimento" (entertainment), grouping "spettacolo" (show), "palio", "ambientazione" (location), "ispirato" (inspired), "vincitore" (winner), "Borgata", "dama" (lady), "Niederlech";
- Luogo (place), grouping "città" (city), "vicolo" (alley), "sera" (evening), "Friuli", "centro storico", "Bini" (Via Bini is the street in which the festival takes place).

Looking at the above figures, it can be noticed the emphasis given by the authors of the analyzed contributions to the historical and cultural value of the festival, together with the spectacular nature of the whole event, involving visitors in a number of ways: by tasting ancient food, providing highly evocative shows and games, and so on.

In addition, location is also strongly emphasized. The festival is in fact carried out entirely within the historical area of the town, and only in the evening.

4.1.2. Co-word analysis

The second analysis carried out during the *ex-ante* step is co-word analysis. T-LAB analyzes similarity matrixes by using a number of statistical techniques, allowing to represent the relationships between entered data within a reduced space (Multidimensional Scaling, MDS). In order to better provide a representation of the relationships between lexical units, T-LAB adopts the Sammon method: through the computation of an association index, the software identifies the proximity values of the processed data. Proximity values are typically square matrixes, allowing the interpretation of the relationships between objects (proximity/distance).

The stress function measures the correspondences between the MDS map and the input matrix: the lower the level of stress, the higher the goodness of fit. In this analysis, a value lower than 0.10 has been considered as an indicator of goodness of fit. In this case, the value was 0.606, indicating an optimal goodness of fit. Figure 4 provides a representation of co-word analysis.

Fig. 4: Graphical representation of co-word analysis
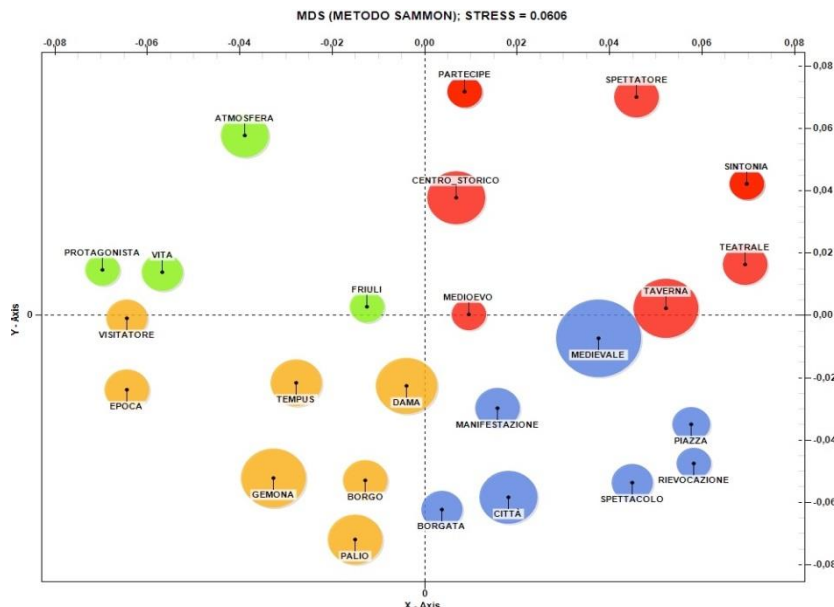
Source: own elaboration

Co-word analysis (Figure 5) confirms the willingness of the producers of analyzed online contributions, to promote the festival emphasizing the word "medioevo", and highlighting some peculiar aspects of the event, such the absence of modern food, the fact that the event takes place in the town center, the reenactment of medieval challenges.

*Fig. 5: The dominant words in co-word analysis*
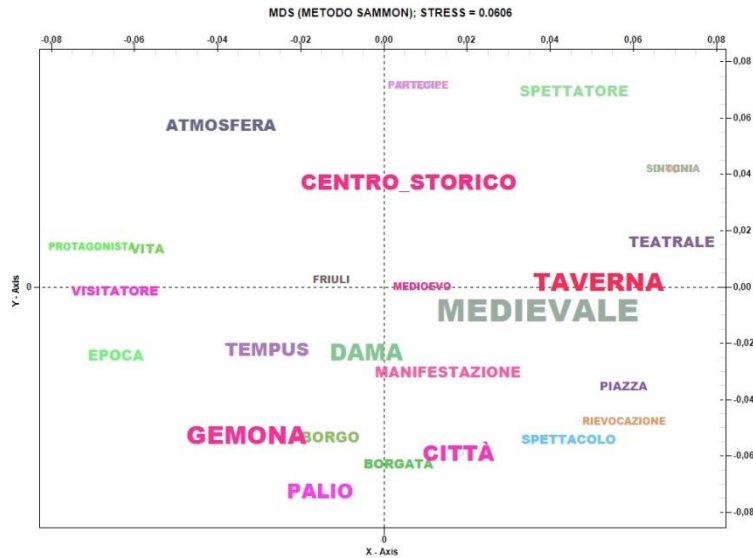
Source: own elaboration

4.1.3 Comparisons between pairs of keywords

The final type of analysis performed in this stage of the study compares couples of keywords. In order to perform this analysis, the researcher needs first to choose the lemmas to take into consideration. According to the results of both co-word analysis and word association, the most recurring words "medieval" and "Gemona" were chosen.

The resulting histogram (Figure 6) allows to observe the number of elementary contexts in which every lemma presents a co-occurrence relationship with the A keyword (in this case, "medievale", labeled in red), the B keyword (Gemona, labeled in blue), and both keywords (AB, labeled in green). Note that the lemmas with the most relevant co-occurrence are "Palio", "Niederlech", and "Festa".

Fig. 6: Comparison between the keywords "medievale" and "Gemona"
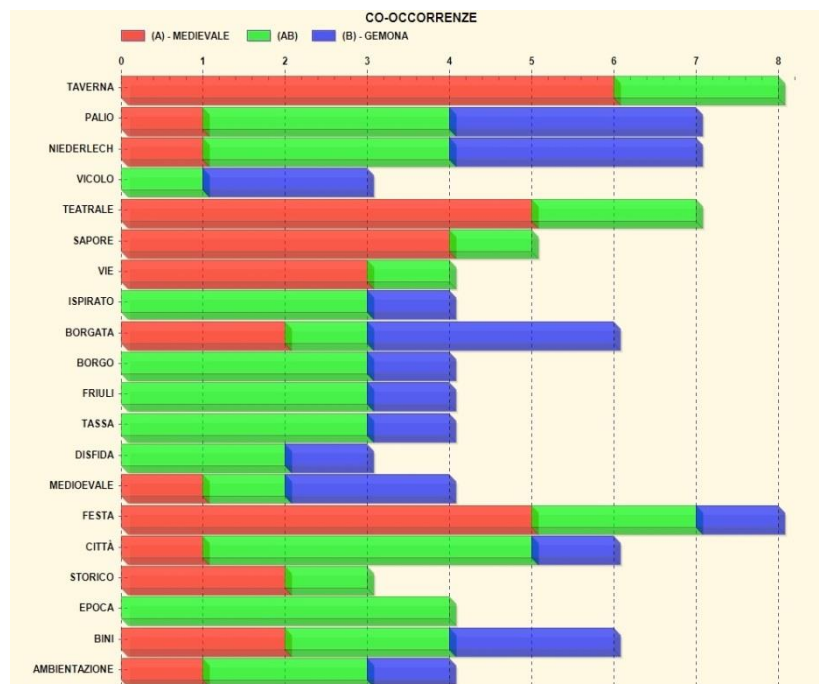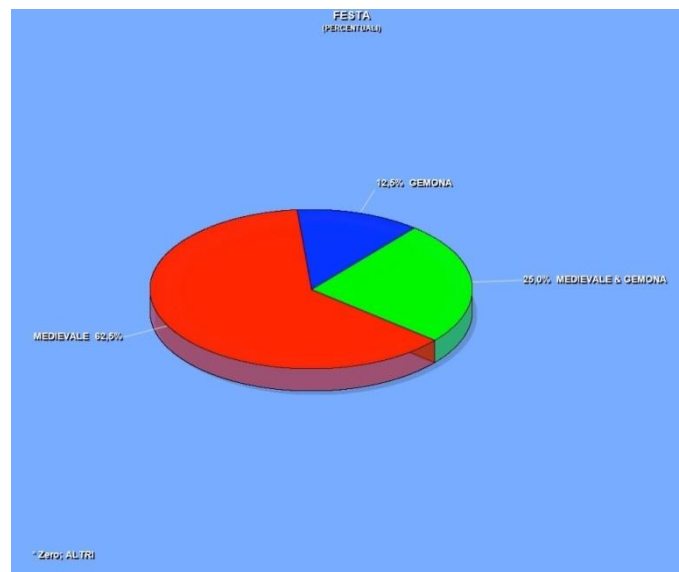

Source: own elaboration

A specific T-LAB feature allows to analyze the percentage with which every lemma develops co-occurrence relationships with the two lemmas that are mostly used.

Looking at figure 7, the following considerations follow:

- "Festa" is mostly associated to "Medievale" 62.5%, (the festival is by definition a medieval event);
- "Festa" is also sometimes associated (12.5%) to "Gemona". This indicates the perception of a complete involvement of the town in the event (the town is perceived as a component itself of the overall event, not just a location)
- Finally, "Festa" is also associated to both lemmas together (25%), indicating that, however, the event is perceived also as a good occasion for having a good, funny time, regardless of its historical and cultural value.

Fig. 7: Co-occurence relationships with their respective percentages

Source: own elaboration

Finally, the ex-ante step of the analysis shows at least four "thematic nuclei". First, the historical aspects of the festival; secondly, the spectacular nature of the event (recreating the rivalry among different groups of local inhabitants); finally, the presence of several artists entertaining visitors, and the peculiar location (the town of Gemona, illuminated only by torches).

4.2 The in itinere step

4.2.1 Word association

Also in this case, radial diagrams were built for the most recurring lemmas. In this case, "divertimento" (amusement) represents the most common motivation. Figure 8 depicts the radial diagram for the word "divertimento".

In this case, three clusters can be identified:

- "Evasione" (distraction), including the lemmas "spettacolo" (show), "musica" (music), "festa", "giochi" (games), "amico" (friend), "compagnia" (company of people), "convivialità" (conviviality);
- "Gastronomia" (gastronomy), containing "mangiare" (eat), "cibo" (food), "mellitum" (a particular wine sold during the event), "chiosco" (vending stand), "cucina" (cuisine), "taverna" (tavern), "enogastronomia" (gastronomy);
- "Luogo" (place), containing "storia" (history), "appartenenza" (belonging), "tradizione" (traditions), "abitudine" (habits), "passato" (past), "Friuli".

Fig. 8: Associations with the lemma "Divertimento"
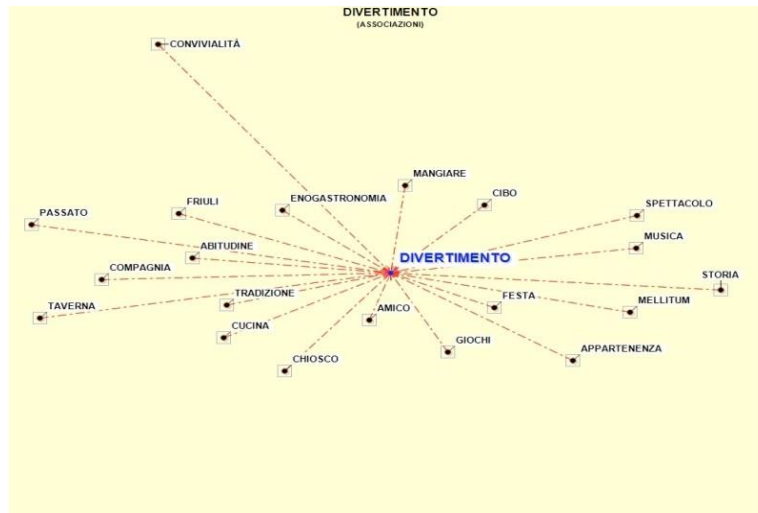
Source: own elaboration

The radial diagram in figure 9 represents the associations related to the second major motivation: "storia" (history).

Note that, despite the different semantic area, the identified clusters are the same:

- "Evasione" (distraction), containing the lemmas "vacanza" (holiday), "evento" (event), "visita" (visit), "partecipazione" (participation), "cultura", "passatempo", "passione", "interesse", "divertimento", "atmosfera", "immersione";
- "Gastronomia", including "cibo" and "sapore";
- "Luogo", including "passato", "medioevo", "usanza", "costume", "tradizione", "fuoco", "colori".

Despite notable semantic differences between the two diagrams, graphs clearly show the strong need, among participants, to find some distractions from everyday life. They see the historical reenactment as an ideal occasion to take some break from everyday life (as suggested by the lemmas "immersione", "distrazione", "convivialità"). There is also a strong interest towards gastronomy, perceived as an additional occasion of distraction.

It also worth to note the frequent use of the lemmas "Friuli", "appartenenza", "tradizione", indicating a strong sense of belonging to the local community, to the Region, and to the town and the event themselves.

Fig. 9: Associations with the lemma "Storia"
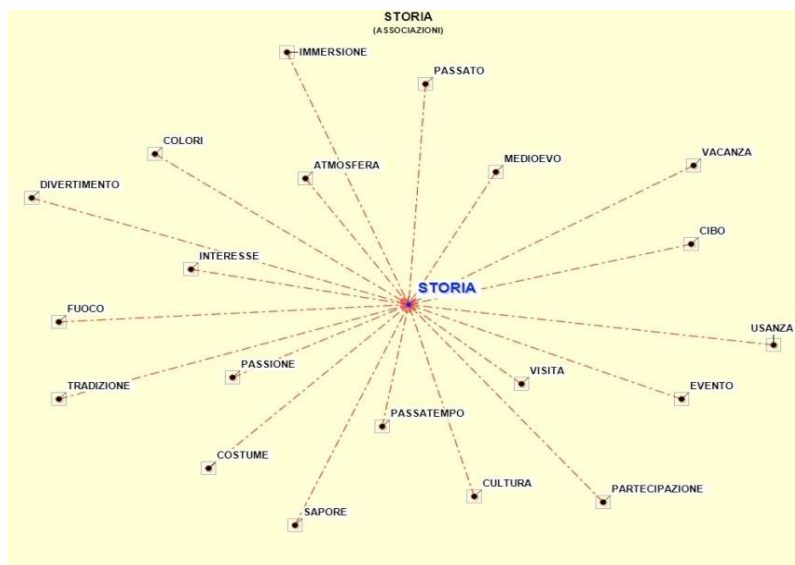
Source: own elaboration
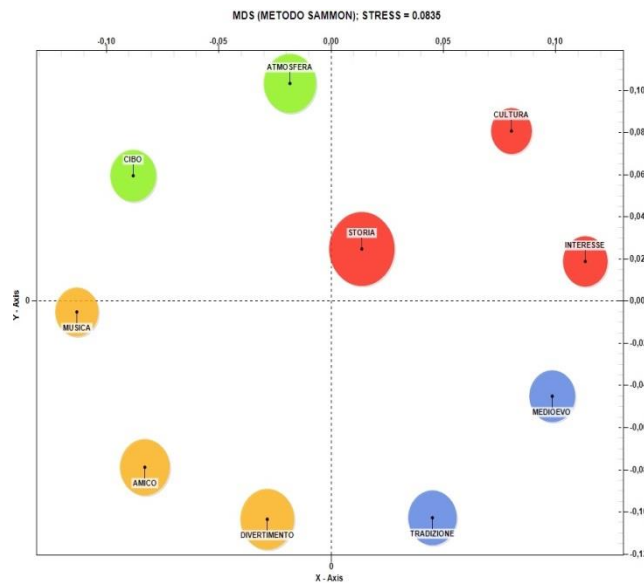
4.2.2 Co-word analysis

As mentioned earlier, co-word analysis consists in analyzing similarity matrixes and in the representation of relationships in a defined space (Multidimensional Scaling, MDS).

In this case, the value of stress (goodness of fit) is 0,0835. Note that it is slightly higher than the same value in the ex-ante step. This could be justified by the different typology of texts that has been considered (in the *in itinere* case, single words reported in questionnaires from a random sample of respondents).

The figures below confirm the situation depicted by radial diagrams. "Storia" and "Divertimento" are the most recurring lemmas in the "motivations" section of the questionnaire. Such lemmas are also the most relevant with respect to the relationships between lexical units.

Note the presence of the word "atmosfera" (atmosphere), one of the most influential lemmas in the co-word analysis. In this case, atmosphere can be considered as the historic atmosphere or as the right atmosphere to have some fun.

Fig. 10: Co-word analysis graphical representation

Source: own elaboration

Fig. 11: The dominating words in co-word analysis

Source: own elaboration

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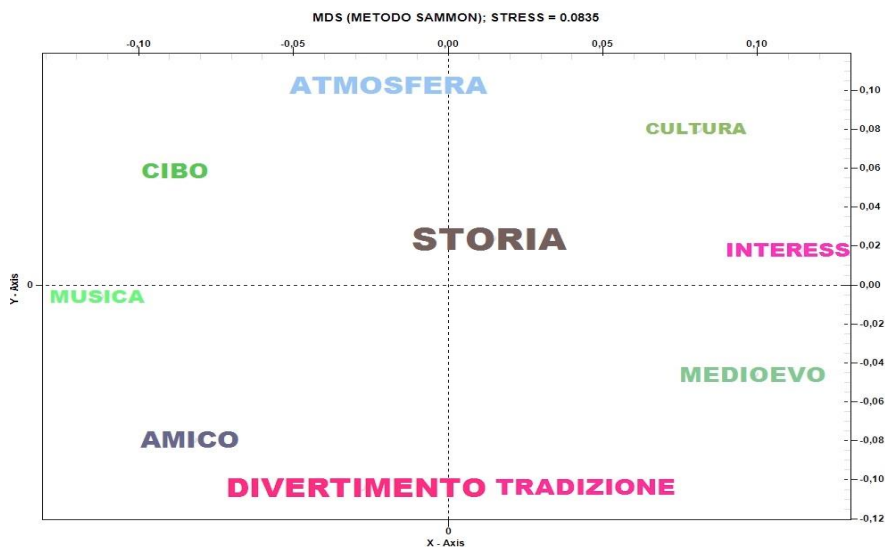
4.2.3 Comparison between pairs of keywords

As in *ex-ante* step, also here this part of the analysis took into consideration the most recurring lemmas.

Histograms (Figure 12) show the elementary contexts in which each lemma shows a co-occurrence relationship with the keyword A ("divertimento", amusement, indicated in red), the B keyword, labeled in blue ("storia", history), and both the keywords, indicated in green (AB).

The word "atmosfera" (atmospherics) is related to both words, singularly and with the two words taken together. This confirms how the term "atmospherics" has a double meaning, both in historical terms and in terms of pure amusement and distraction.
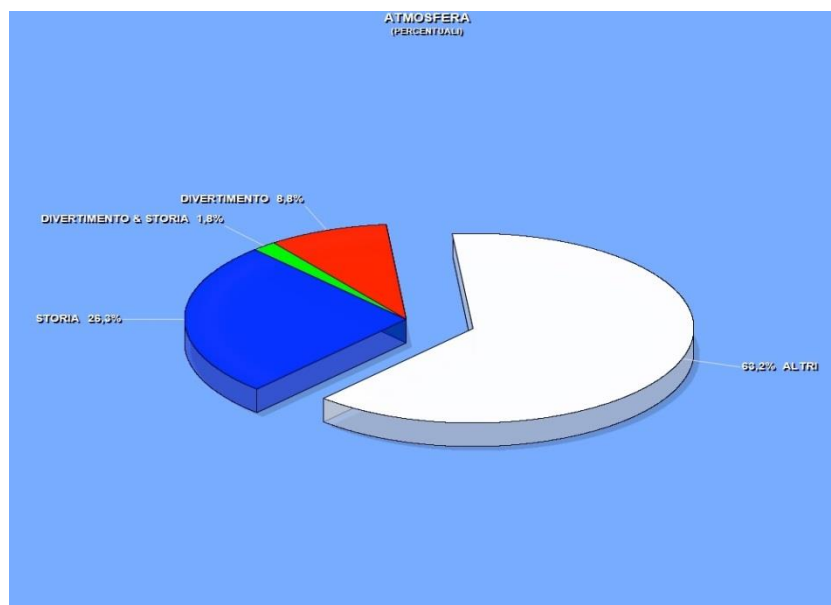
Figure 13 shows, instead, the percentages with which the term is present in the co-occurrency relationships.

Fig. 12: Comparison between "divertimento" and "storia"
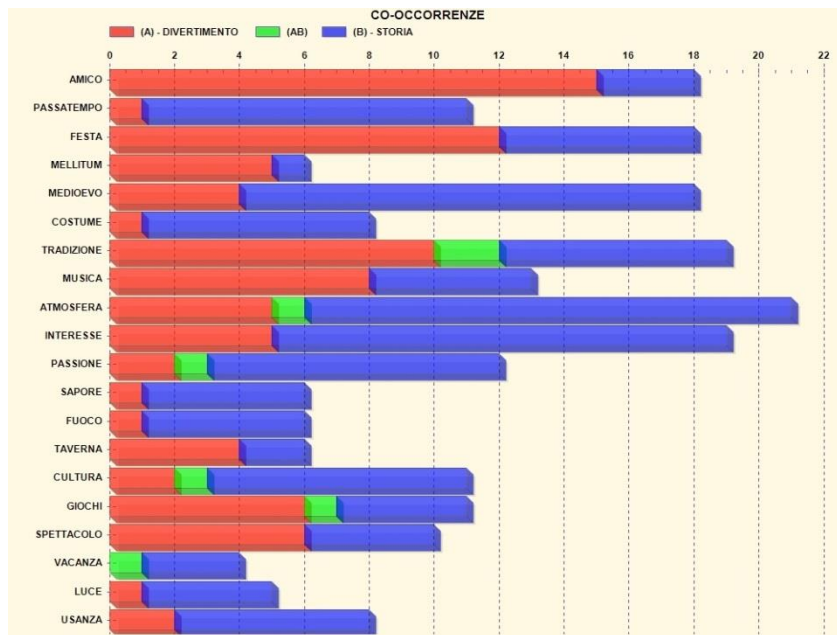
Source: own elaboration

Fig. 13: Co-occurrence relationships with respective percentages

Source: own elaboration

As in the *ex-ante* step, Figure 13 shows that, albeit 60% of the cases present "atmosphere" as related with lemmas that are different from those considered in the analysis, 40% of the cases shows a relation between "atmosphere" and one (or even both) the lemmas considered in the analysis. This means that, at least 160 units (on the total 400) have associated the word "atmosfera" to the word "divertimento", "storia", or both of them.

5. Discussion

5.1 Analytical aspects in a cultural/touristic context

Discussion can be articulated on different layers.

From a content analysis point of view, combinations of words developed in the *ex-ante* and in the *in itinere* steps are coherent with the most important contributions on cultural festival motivations.

According to the results reported throughout this paper, the importance of the historical connotation of the event, together with the peculiarity of the geographical location are both confirmed by the two steps. In addition, motivational analysis has shown a strong sense of belonging not just from the point of view of local inhabitants, but also from the point of view of visitors coming from different Italian regions. Finally, motivational analysis shows the strong role played by the gastronomy.

The choice of splitting the analysis into two, separate stages has allowed to stress some relevant aspects.

First, content categorization of texts in SM, using simplified text categories, allows the researchers to better identify the entity and the articulation of the phenomena to be analyzed. In addition, the possibility to verify during the *in itinere* step the correspondence between text categories and the results of questionnaires allows to stratify the analysis into more layers.

Such stratification leads to different effects. On the one hand, it offers the possibility for SM Manager to classify (especially during periods far from the "days of festival") all the information produced and detected using frameworks that the organization can understand (i.e., cognitively closer). On the other hand, checking for the correspondence between actions performed by the organization and participants' perceptions is allowed.

Additionally, the process of analysis performed using the T-LAB software is characterized by a high level of "frugality". This term refers to the possibility to obtain more information for decisions with less resources (e.g., with respect to *data science* processes). This is possible for, at least, two reasons: first, the possibility for the organization to use logic categories to classify texts, closer to organization's cultural categories (reduced cognitive distance); secondly, the possibility to translate results in such a way that they can be communicated to the members of the organization, without further interpretation or translations by other subjects.

Frugality is coherent with the organizational context of touristic/cultural organizations connected to festivals. Given that such organizations are "culture-driven", it is useful to underline the structuring potential of such tools, with respect to the institutionalization of the representation of relationships between organizations and their relevant value systems (Grandinetti and Moretti, 2004).

Finally yet importantly, the research confirms the managerial complexity of using SM data, in absence of any strategic perspective to connect them with.

In the case of the present analysis, results and their analysis have not been able to modify the organizational perception of the phenomenon, just leading to a while approval to the organizational member (marketing director) in charge of the initiative. Information produced have been considered as useful for all decisions; however this information have not been actually used in the decision making process. This suggests, under the perspective previous presented, that huge information complexity still exists.

5.2 Implications for future research

Firstly, confirmation about the importance of *content* and *place* aspects with respect to festival motivations, and the small dimensions generally associated to organizations managing cultural festivals, call for a more in-deep analysis of, whether, in managing a SM presence of such organizations should remain autonomous and how this presence could be organized.

As Tuan and Moretti (2015) pointed out, small organizations usually hire part time, freelance SM Managers. It could be interesting, from this point of view, to deepen if cultural and touristic organizations tend acquire such services following hence a vertical integration logic (i.e., the same SM Manager is employed by several organization within the same territory), or if they pursue a more horizontal-integration logic (a single SM Manager is used by many organizations, involved in managing festivals of the same kind).

In both cases, the analysis of the tactical (strategic) articulation of the use of SM could allow a deeper, more structured understanding of the phenomenon, with respect to current contributions, especially in terms of information complexity.

6. Conclusions

This paper enriches consumer behavior literature by applying an innovative approach of analysis, in a very specific tourism context. At the same time, important managerial and practical implications are embedded.

Taking together the results of the two steps of research allows to provide some insights in understanding whether the web actually influence tourists' choices.

It is easily understandable that Web 2.0 appears to be as an essential tool for tourism promotion. The proposed analysis also shows the importance of *integration*. Developing a strong social presence of an event goes far beyond developing and updating a profile in the most relevant social networks. The analysis provided in this paper shows the importance of a strong interconnection between editorial planning, content management, and SM management. The key to success, especially for smaller realities (e.g., cultural events in small communities) relies in developing a smart cultural promotion that starts *before* the event, being part of a wider editorial project aimed at reaching the highest possible number of users. A great deal of effort should be devoted in attempting to actively involve users, by establishing living communication channels, stimulating continuous exchange of opinions and information, trying to establish enduring relationships through feedback loops.

Such a strategy requires time, resources and capabilities that, in some small, limited realities may not be available. In addition, data sources cannot be actually affordable for small, voluntary organizations responsible for event management.

Building on such problems, this paper has tried to provide an affordable methodological/technical approach to develop, especially in small contexts, powerful insights to improve promotional and marketing actions. The techniques used in this paper are not just affordable in terms of costs and resources needed, but at the same time, they present an additional advantage. Semantic analysis does not require extensive capabilities and resources to be performed (like traditional market analysis), rather it allows a certain degree of autonomy to users (i.e., the possibility to use tools and procedures without extensive knowledge). In addition, such kind of analyses allows more room for casualty, allowing users to pay attention more easily to weaker signals and focusing on the element of more interest.

Semantic analysis applied to social network allows also to enlarge the scope of tourism professionals that can potentially use this powerful tool to assess consumers' motivations. Given the huge number of tourism professionals tend to have a humanistic background, quantitative, and statistical methods can be difficult to manage and apply. This leads, in turn, to losing a possible source of competitiveness (analyzing consumer motivation), unless great efforts (in terms of

investments) are devoted. From this point of view, therefore, semantic analysis appears to be as an alternative, both in terms of affordability, manageability, and because it can be perceived as closer in terms of cultural background for potentials users, allowing more casualty rather than structured procedures.

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