

Organization of business events: A new perspective of the development of business tourism through the application of technological innovations

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Abstract

The organization of business events is a very dynamic activity, which has contributed to the development of tourism by creating content for business tourists and connecting leisure tourism and business. As one of the oldest forms of tourism, business tourism is present throughout the entire year and affects all aspects of the development of a destination (economy, society, local development, etc.). The organization of business events in many destinations contributes to their affirmation as attractive locations for event organizers and a better position in the tourism market. Repeated arrivals of business event participants enable the continued progress of destinations and the achievement of better economic effects as well as seasonality reduction. Although the event industry is subject to constant changes in its development, it has not yet been adequately examined in which direction the modern development of business tourism is heading in the digital age. On the other hand, the organization of business events is not only about establishing communication and discussion between participants, but also about creating a certain experience in order for business tourists to revisit the destination in the future. The modern organization of business events today is very different in relation to the period when conferences and congresses were conventionally organized in large conference rooms and with a large number of participants. In addition, contemporary trends indicate a shift in business event organizers towards unusual locations such as theaters, museums, and castles, which is why the role of modern information technology is also important in organizing events in such spaces. Due to the development of technology, events can be organized in a hybrid form, but also enable event participants to organize their participation in a simpler way, with the application of technological advances. The application of technological innovations during the planning and organization of events, and during their holding, makes it easier for participants to register, present, discuss, and use additional services, giving them the opportunity to devote more time and attention to the motive of participating in a particular event and to reduce discomfort during all phases of the event itself. Therefore, the authors of this paper analyze the impact of modern information technology on more efficient organization of business events and creating a quality experience for business tourists through the analysis of examples of good practice.

Keywords: business events, business tourism, smart technologies

1. Introduction

The organization of business events is one of the strongest sectors of the tourism industry, which drives and improves the development of various activities that are involved in the process of satisfying the needs of business people. The frequency of organizing business events as well as business people's travel to meetings and other types of events indicates the economic importance of the development of business tourism for tourist destinations. In addition, business tourism not only contributes to the development of tourism and destinations, but also, through the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences, improves intellectual capital, the economy and the image of the country at the international level. Unlike leisure tourism, business tourism, with its development, touches all significant spheres of the development of the economy and society of a country. The business tourism market is registering growth per annum. According to the Business Travel

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Index Outlook (2025), global business travel consumption registered \$1.47 trillion in 2024 (+10%), which is slightly below the previously forecasted \$1.48 trillion. The achieved results are the result of influence of several factors, primarily the stabilization of inflation in many economies (strong growth in real GDP in the USA; constant core inflation in Germany and the UK). Global business travel consumption is expected to reach \$1.57 trillion by the end of 2025, or around \$2 trillion by 2029, as a result of the development of the international economy, investments, and frequent corporate travel. For the purposes of the aforementioned report, a survey was conducted on a sample of 7,338 travelers from 31 countries, which concluded that more than 80% of business travelers are traveling the same or even more than before the COVID-19 pandemic. The average consumption per business trip is around \$1,128, with the average trip length between 1 and 5 days. Statistics indicate that the global business travel sector has entered a phase of strong recovery, with rising costs and changes in traveler behavior patterns. Consumption per business trip has increased, while most travelers make a limited number of trips, but perceive them as highly beneficial for business purposes. In the digital era, the development of business tourism is taking on new dimensions. Unlike the classic organization of congresses, conferences and other types of business events, the modern development of business tourism emphasizes environmental sustainability (Hagen, 2021; Ong et al., 2022; Orthodoxou et al., 2021), social and corporate responsibility (Nicolaidis 2015; Nicolaidis, 2017), as well as the use of the advantages of modern information technology (Neuhofer et al., 2021; Lei & Couto, 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024), which allows the event industry to continuously adapt to the global environment and the requirements of event participants and organizers. Modern information technology has become an integral part of all phases of the management process, i.e., planning, organization, maintenance and analysis of the outcome of the event. Technological innovations in the form of virtual reality, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, etc., enable event organizers to plan and create an appropriate experience for participants (Srivastava, 2025), thereby influencing the creation of motivation for repeated participation in the same event in the future. The application of modern technology in the organization of business events has become particularly significant during and after the COVID-19 pandemic due to the necessity to implement hybrid and/or virtual forms of event hosting (Hutte et al., 2022). The introduction of travel ban measures during the pandemic also affected the reduced number of organized events, which led to meetings and events via the Internet and various platforms gaining importance. From an economic perspective, 2/3 of global direct consumption on business events was lost in 2020. The cumulative loss in the period from 2020 to 2022 was 1.9 billion USD, with the largest loss if observed at the regional level, the largest cumulative loss was recorded in Western Europe (621 billion USD), while the smallest was in the Middle East (16 billion USD). Global business events activity recovered solidly in 2022, with estimated direct business events consumption increasing by almost 80% compared to 2021. With this increase, global business events activity in 2022 was still around 20% below 2019 levels, measured in terms of nominal consumption. In other words, even in 2022, approximately one-fifth of pre-pandemic business event activity has not yet returned (Events Industry Council, 2023). As the health crisis has limited the ability to hold face-to-face events, the industry has sought alternative ways to conduct business, adopting either online-only or hybrid solutions. As a result, approximately 30% of association meetings held worldwide were exclusively virtual in 2020, and half of trade shows planned worldwide in 2021 included digital or hybrid formats (Statista, 2024). Companies have been forced to adapt to the virtual environment by switching to virtual and hybrid events in order to maintain their business during the pandemic, with digital transition requiring appropriate human resources and capital investments (Lekgau & Tichaawa, 2022). The organization of such events affects the reduction of travel costs as well as the reduction of the negative tourism of the event industry on the environment and the local community, travel costs for companies and associations, as well as the relatively simpler organization of events. However, the application of information technology in the organization of business events may also have smaller economic effects on destinations that develop business tourism, as well as the absence of a business tourist experience that could result in new visits to the destination and greater interest in its attractions and other forms of tourism activities. Therefore, the purpose of research in this paper is an analysis of the importance of modern information technology in the process of organizing business events, as well as specific solutions that contribute to improving the quality of business event management and the experience of business tourists.

2. Business tourism – theoretical framework

Business tourism is one of the oldest forms of tourism activities, considering that the need to gather people for conversations, resolving important political issues and/or going on military campaigns arose with the development of human civilization and the formation of the first cities (Marković, 2019). The initial impetus for frequent business travel was the development of trade, but over time people also began to travel to organized forms of business gatherings (fairs, conferences, congresses, etc.). Chronologically, business tourism developed intensively during the Middle Ages through the organization of trade bazaars, which over time grew into specialized fairs. On the other hand, the beginning of the 20th century was marked by congresses and conventions, i.e. the organization of business events in the Americas, primarily by political parties (Dragičević, 2012). A little more slowly, congress activity also took root in Europe, primarily through the organization of medical and political congresses (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2012). The Industrial Revolution, which influenced more intensive urbanization and the development of transportation, also influenced the increase in the number of business trips and business events. The development of congress activity influenced the establishment of the first congress bureaus as organizations for managing the development of congress tourism destinations, as well as the opening of the first congress centers in large cities such as London, Paris, Vienna, etc. The establishment of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) in 1963 institutionalized business travel with the existence of an organization that supports the development of business tourism on a global level. The specialization of the economy

has led to the organization of a large number of specialized fairs of international importance, where this type of business event contributes positively to the development of the destination and its image. The beginning of the 21st century was marked by the reorientation of business event organizers towards new tourist destinations in the Asia-Pacific region due to globalization and digitalization. The development of technology and its use in the development of numerous economic activities contributed to the discovery of new locations for event organization and the more intensive development of business tourism in all parts of the world (Davidson & Cope, 2003). Business tourism can be defined as travel, motivated by specific professional and/or business reasons, outside the place where the individual lives and works in order to attend a specific business event or activity (UNWTO, 2015). Although these trips are initiated for business reasons, business tourists have the opportunity to consume tourist services and facilities at the destination and thus experience tourism in the same way as classic tourists. Davidson and Cope (2003) define business tourism in the context of trips that are motivated by business activities, including participation in meetings, conferences, trade fairs and incentive trips, where business goals are combined with elements of leisure. This form of tourism is primarily based on the existence of the necessary infrastructure (congress and conference centers, exhibition spaces, hotels, transportation, etc.) and supporting services (catering, decoration, agencies for event organization, security agencies, etc.) in contrast to leisure tourism, which is primarily focused on tourist attractions. Business tourism is based on meeting the business needs and goals of companies, while a certain part of the trip can also be used to meet classic tourist needs by combining work and pleasure. For tourist destinations, the development of business tourism is very important because significant economic benefits are actually the result of frequent trips by business people (Ivkov et al., 2024). In addition, business tourism has numerous advantages for the tourist destination as well as venues for organizing business events in the form of greater demand for services within the destination (e.g. catering facilities for food and drinks, organization of gala dinners and cocktails), greater income from the use of accommodation and related services, controlled impact on the ecological environment, resilience to crisis situations, as well as growing demand for leisure activities in the destination (Marques & Santos, 2017). Due to the reduced impact of seasonality and the continuous organization of business events, the economic effects of business tourism for tourist destinations can be much greater in relation to traditional holidays. In addition, business tourists demand high quality services and are characterized as a high-paying segment of tourist demand, due to which their consumption in the destination is much higher than for traditional tourists. Business tourism can also contribute to the overall development of a destination by attracting investment in existing and opening new companies due to the recognition of the destination, in which the event is organized, as a favorable economic environment. Conferences and other forms of business tourism enable the transfer of knowledge and experience, professional and scientific development, but also the creation of the destination's image in the market. Bringing together experts from different fields in a business event destination has an impact on solving crucial problems in its development and the economic sustainability of the local community. Due to the combination of economic and social effects, this form of tourism is considered a strategic tool for strengthening the resilience and competitiveness of the local economy (UNWTO, 2014). Business tourism can have negative effects in the form of increased costs of real estate and basic products, environmental degradation due to the frequent use of air traffic and other forms of transportation, and environmental pollution due to the consumption of energy, paper, water and other resources. On the other hand, business events last only a few days, which is why the negative effects are smaller in scale compared to leisure tourism. Business tourism is a very dynamic segment of the tourism industry, which is very sensitive to all events from the external environment, primarily economic stability or instability, political developments, crisis events, etc. On the other hand, the development of modern information technology can minimize the influence of external factors on the organization of business events. The possibility of attending a business event via the Internet and various platforms reduces travel costs, but it also jeopardizes an important aspect of business tourism, which refers to the social dimension and networking of event participants, which is absent in the case of virtual events.

3. Technological innovations in the organization of business events

Although business events are based on direct communication and networking of participants due to exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas in a specific field, modern information and communication technology enables participants to gather in a virtual environment. Information technology has enabled more efficient implementation of the process of planning and organization of business events with the ability to connect and communicate with all significant stakeholders and service providers electronically. In addition to more efficient organization and saving time for event planning, technological innovations are used during the event so that participants have more time for the event itself and social interactions with other participants. A number of studies have analyzed the impact of technology on the organization of business events and the events industry in general (Sherlock & O'Connor, 2015; Sangkaew et al., 2019; Van Winkle & Bueddefeld 2020; Sangkaew et al., 2022). The advantage of applying technological innovations relates to the possibility of their implementation in various aspects of planning, organizing and holding business events, with significant benefits for all those involved in the implementation of the event in some way (organizers, service providers, participants, local community, etc.). Technological advances allow for the organization of business events outside of time constraints regardless of the time of day with the ability to send notifications via email, apps, or digital tools, which connect event participants. With the application of technologies, events can be extended or further expanded through media (videos, podcasts, social media reports) and can be broadcast globally regardless of where the participants are located (Anas et al., 2020). Marques & Santos (2017) highlight the key advantages of using various platforms, mobile

applications, and software to organize events more efficiently, reduce the costs of organizing and hosting events, and improve the quality of personalized experience. However, Mistilis & Dwyer (2000) express concerns about the implementation of ICT in the development of the MICE industry. The authors justify their position by stating that conference organizers are often unable to adopt ICT due to a lack of experience in its use in their previous management roles. Secondly, because technology is developing so rapidly, budgeting, often completed two years before the event, does not include certain technological developments, which then increases costs. Thirdly, the software for coordinating the many different operators of the organizer on the supply side has not yet been developed, which makes it difficult to coordinate the activities of individual stakeholders such as caterers, technical services in relation to, for example, accommodation providers. According to Davidson et al., (2002), a limiting factor in the application of ICT services in the organization of business events and the MICE industry is the extent to which the targeted event participants possess the skills and equipment to access new technology. The authors emphasize that ICT has an important role in marketing activities but that it is important for event organizers to examine the profile of potential participants and their ability to use technological innovations. In addition to congresses and conferences, the trade fair industry has experienced a digital transformation through new challenges in the form of data protection, staff training, adaptation of business models, etc. Given that fairs are events that bring together a large number of participants and are often organized at the international level, in addition to the application of technology in the form of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, etc., innovations aimed at creating the experience of participants and visitors, fair activities will have to adapt to modern trends in terms of environmental and social responsibility (Wu, 2023). One of the important factors influencing the intensive implementation of technological solutions in the organization of business events is related to the fact that today among business people there is a large number of young people, who use smart technologies in all segments of their lives, including work. Precisely, the presence of a large number of young and educated people in business, science, politics, economics, etc. requires the adaptation of the MICE industry to the segment of highly IT-savvy participants of events and meetings. Papageorgiou & Chalkia (2024) analyzed the impact of digital transformation on the events industry in Greece and pointed out the gap that exists between the younger and older populations when it comes to the way events are held. The authors pointed out that younger people prefer to participate in virtual events, while older people favor physical participation, and that live congresses offer a more stimulating experience than virtual ones, which must adopt ways to improve interactivity in order to attract a wider audience.

The application of technological innovations in the planning, design and implementation of business events has the potential to make these events more efficient (Davidson, 2024):

- The use of facial recognition technology during business events aims to speed up participant check-in, and increase security. At the HRTechWorld conference in Amsterdam, startup Zenus-Biometrics tested a system that automatically recognizes participants via the cloud and digitally checks them in, achieving 99% accuracy and the ability to check in up to 500 people per hour. However, data privacy issues arise, as attendees may be concerned about the collection and tracking of their biometric information. Event organizers must clearly explain how data is used and stored, as transparency will contribute to attendees' trust.
- Artificial intelligence (AI) is a special type of software that mimics human behavior and decision-making. AI is expected to bring greater efficiency to the organization of business events. AI is currently having the greatest impact through the use of chatbots – automated programs that communicate with users via text or voice. In the context of business events, bots can quickly answer frequently asked questions from attendees (e.g. Wi-Fi password, booth location, duration of session) and allow organizers to send messages and notifications to the audience in real time.
- Gamification is increasingly being used in business events because it encourages motivation, engagement, and learning among participants. It is especially useful in training seminars and incentive trips, where participants are rewarded with points for activities such as meeting new people, collaborating with colleagues, or sharing ideas for improving the business. Through such systems, participants record their activities in an application linked to a reward system, which creates a sense of play and competition. The formation of a “gamification community” is also key, where participants can track their progress, share content on networks, and compete for awards such as “best networker.” This approach increases excitement before the event, strengthens engagement during it, and maintains interest after it ends. However, experts caution that gamification must be closely tied to the goals and theme of the event. If used only as an entertainment addition without a clear purpose, it can seem superficial. When designed properly, gamification makes business events more interactive, dynamic, and effective in achieving educational and motivational goals.
- Due to its size and format, the trade fair industry has special characteristics, so it is important to highlight the impact of technology on this segment of business events. Although trade fairs have retained their traditional form, they are increasingly using digital technologies for promotion and communication with participants. Trade fairs are increasingly using touchscreen displays, computer simulations and appointment scheduling software, which improve the experience of participants. In addition, a system of “e-badging” has been introduced, which allows participants to print their own accreditations before the event.
- Virtual reality has significant benefits for the business events industry, and the technology's ability to function as a double-edged sword in this context is very well illustrated by the emergence of virtual exhibitions as a direct competitor to face-to-face events. Removing the need for buyers to visit a physical location to interact with

vendors, a virtual trade show is an online version of an event that showcases and demonstrates goods and services for a specific industry. The format can be as simple as a basic online directory or as complex as a virtual 3D world. Virtual exhibitions function in a similar way to a traditional offline exhibition, translating exhibition halls, educational seminars and networking events into a virtual environment. They allow visitors to visit booths, chat with exhibitors, attend seminars and keynote speeches, and even chat, network or speak live with other visitors. Visitors can exchange electronic business cards with the click of a button and immediately save this information to their databases. The advantages of virtual exhibitions are numerous: exhibitors and visitors can save money on travel, accommodation and other expenses usually associated with visiting exhibitions. The reduced costs of virtual exhibiting allow for a much larger number of exhibitors to participate, which increases the value of the trade show as a whole. Attendance also increases, as virtual events make it easier for attendees to join since there is no travel involved. They also offer exhibitors increased exposure in terms of time: while a physical fair lasts only one or two days, the duration of a virtual exhibition can be unlimited, and visitors can access stands, presentations, documents, videos, etc. at any time.

- Augmented reality (AR) differs from virtual reality (VR) in that it does not create a completely virtual environment, but rather adds digital elements to the real world, visible through smartphones, tablets, or smart glasses. At trade fairs, AR is used to provide visitors with additional information about the products on display, such as technical specifications or views of internal mechanisms. An example of this is the Aircraft Interiors Expo 2018 in Hamburg, where Lufthansa Technik used an AR app to allow visitors to view a 3D model of an antenna installation on their mobile devices, replacing the need for physical demonstration devices. This technology provided a deeper insight into the structure and operation of the product, making the presentation more efficient and interactive.

The usefulness and benefits of applying ICT technology have become inevitable for the purpose of high-quality organization and holding of business events. Although the Internet, social networks, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and other innovations are present in the practice of event organizers, it is clear that there are certain regional differences in their application (Statista, 2024; ICCA, 2024; Allied Market Research, 2023):

- In North America, the most common platforms implemented are for organizing *virtual events and hybrid conferences* (approx. 83%). In case of implementing *event management software* (e.g. EMS- Event Management Software) about 65% of event organizers prefer to use tools like Cvent, Eventbrite), *mobile applications for participants, analytics and big data* (45% of events) for monitoring engagement and financial ROI indicators, personalization of the delegate experience and integration of AI-chatbots for delegate registration and support during the event
- Hybrid events are prevalent in Europe (in 2022, around 50% of events were held this way). Event organizers in the UK, Germany and Scandinavian countries are using AR/VR technologies, while streaming platforms (Zoom, Webex, etc.) and digital networking applications are also prevalent. In Europe, the focus is on reducing travel costs and sustainability, which is why the hybrid model is being applied.
- Tour operators in the Asia-Pacific region play a significant role in implementing and promoting technological innovations in business tourism. A large number of event organizers, especially in China and Singapore, are using AI (about 56%), while mobile applications with integrated payments (about 65%) are used very much in Japan and Korea.
- In the Middle East and Africa, event organizers most often use online registration and ticketing software (approx. 50% of event organizers). However, AR/VR technology is less represented in only 15% of events and that of international trade fairs in Dubai. Hybrid events are represented predominantly in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar (about 35% of events). The focus is on the application of digital tools, but with significantly less application of advanced technological innovations compared to Europe and Asia.

3.1. Virtual events

Virtual events represent a modern trend in the development of business tourism, which is a consequence of the intensive development and application of modern technology in the organization of business events. They registered significant development as a necessity to find ways in the conditions of crisis situations to hold the event, which has been planned for a long period of time, and to achieve the goals of the organizers. The transformation of physical events into virtual ones has become an effective solution in order to achieve ecological sustainability, that is, to reduce the negative impact on the environment, to enable persons with physical and other disabilities to attend the event, to reduce the impact of social, cultural and other differences between participants and to encourage inclusive and quality education as well as the concept of lifelong learning (Ramely et al., 2021). Virtual events create new challenges for organizers, whether they are companies or associations, considering that in order to have a quality organization, they must continuously monitor and implement technological innovations and educate staff. In contrast to hybrid events, which represent a combination of the physical presence of event participants in the designated event space and the presence of participants through interactive online platforms (Angage, n.d.), virtual events take place in a virtual space via the Internet in virtual reality (Wasson, 2004). The advantages of organizing virtual events are related to reach and convenience, respectively, the possibility of participation through different platforms, regardless of where the participant is located. Also, the costs of event

organization are much lower considering that it is not necessary to rent a conference center or catering services, travel costs are reduced and the number of event participants from different parts of the world increases (Kęprowska, 2022; Guetter et al., 2022). However, the key disadvantage of this way of organizing business events is the absence of interaction between potential participants, which, along with physical presence, would result in the exchange of knowledge and ideas from different fields, socializing and the establishment of future collaborations and projects. Additionally, there are also economic impacts of the organization of business events on the destination, as well as the devastation of spaces primarily built for the organization of conferences, fairs and other events.

According to a report “Virtual Events Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report by Event Type, By Service, By End Use, By Enterprise Size, By Industry, By Region, And Segment Forecasts” (Grand View Research, 2024), the global virtual events market was valued at USD 98.07 billion in 2024 and is expected to reach USD 297.16 billion by 2030, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20.0% for the period 2025–2030. The North American market had the largest share with 39% of total revenues, while external events dominated by type of event (40% of revenues). Virtual events in the US have maintained a leading position during 2024, with data analysis gaining importance in order to measure engagement and event results. On the other hand, in Europe virtual events record stable growth, which is a consequence of the application of digital tools and hybrid forms of organizing business events. Great Britain is experiencing urban growth due to the extreme popularity of working from home and investing in online events, while Germany has a significant market share due to the application of virtual intelligence and virtual reality in the organization of business events. In the Asia-Pacific region, the virtual events market is growing even faster (CAGR >21% for the period 2025–2030) due to rapid digital transformation, high internet penetration and mobile device usage (Grand View Research, 2024). Many multinational information technology companies provide significant support to event organizers through continuous improvement and the creation of new and more innovative platforms, which can be used to globally connect a large number of business people. Market leaders such as Zoom Video Communications, Inc. and Microsoft Corporation provide advanced software capabilities that are used today for online meetings and events. The Zoom Meetings platform enables the organization of video conferences, webinars, and virtual events with quality audio and video performance. On the other hand, Microsoft Corporation is known for its Windows operating system and Microsoft Office package, which have become staples in both personal and professional environments. The company has diversified its portfolio to include cloud computing services through Azure, business solutions, and gaming under the Xbox brand. The company’s commitment to innovation extends to its virtual event capabilities through Microsoft Teams and other integrated solutions that facilitate seamless online collaboration and communication for organizations worldwide (Grand View Research, 2024). Technology has advanced in recent years so that the aforementioned platforms are still in use today, but there are also far more advanced platforms with many more benefits:

- Vosmos is a leading company in the field of creating virtual and hybrid event management platforms, part of the Kestone Group, a global marketing and event management company headquartered in India. Although founded in 1997, the Vosmos Events platform was launched in 2021 due to the growing interest of companies and associations in organizing virtual events. The platform is focused on providing a personalized experience for event participants by combining virtual reality, 3D and Web3 technologies. The platform supports a wide range of participants, and offers features such as 3D environments, live streaming, marketing analytics and networking opportunities (Vosmos Events, 2025).
- Hubilo Technologies Inc. was founded in 2015 in India and now has a global presence (headquarters in the US, UK and India) focused on increasing visitor engagement and delivering seamless event experiences. The platform offers a highly interactive solution that includes features such as live chat, polls, Q&A sessions, and gamification elements to create dynamic virtual environments. The company also provides comprehensive analytics tools and integrates with various marketing platforms, making it easier for organizers to effectively manage events. It focuses on virtual and hybrid events for corporate clients, especially in the areas of marketing, education, trade shows and internal business events. Hubilo company has so far raised more than \$150 million in investments from reputable funds, including Lightspeed Venture Partners and Alkeon Capita. Their platform is used by large corporations such as Coca-Cola, Deloitte and Verizon, as well as universities, NGOs and professional associations (Hubilo, 2025).

Business event management platforms represent a challenge for the modern development of business tourism, but also a useful tool for event organizers, not only in terms of planning and hosting events, but also in collecting quantitative data on the success of implemented activities and defining strategies for future events.

3.2. Mobile applications for business tourists

Mobile applications represent a significant innovation in the organization and implementation of travel, regardless of whether it is a trip for a holiday or business reasons. In the case of business events, participants very often have a pre-planned event program and very little free time, which they can use more efficiently to tour the destination using information they can collect through applications, find out more information about local restaurants, visit tourist attractions using an e-tourist guide, etc. Mobile applications have a significant impact on the experience of tourists, including business travelers, by changing their behavior and emotional state. From the tourist perspective, mobile applications enable more efficient and practical performance of activities in the destination, adherence to the travel plan

and tour of tourist attractions, contribute to the hedonic and emotional aspect of travel by intensifying the tourist's interest in the destination during the trip. Apps actually improve the tourist experience by including the functional, aesthetic and social dimensions of travel (Wang et al., 2012). Mobile applications for events allow for increased interactivity during the event and thus develop the engagement of participants, giving greater attractiveness to the event and the brand. They are also an excellent tool for marketing and communication. Event apps also allow improving user experience by facilitating event logistics, centralizing information, and informing attendees (Cardoso et al., 2023). In a study on the impact of mobile applications on the satisfaction of conference participants, Talantis et al. (2020) determined that the perception of application usefulness is the strongest predictor of a positive attitude towards its use, while the attitude towards the application itself significantly predicts overall satisfaction with the conference. Also, the perception of ease of use is the only variable that differs significantly among the age groups of participants, indicating different technology preferences of younger and older participants. The authors also pointed out that conference participants prefer mobile applications due to access to personalized agendas, opportunities for networking with other participants, access to notifications and interactive surveys. Researching the use of NFC technology in the development of mobile applications for business events, Silva-Pedroza et al. (2017) pointed out that the application of this technology in the creation of mobile applications enables more efficient participant registration, access to information, payment and networking, which significantly improves the user experience. The mobile event app market is experiencing significant growth due to the increasing adoption of technology among event organizers and attendees. Mobile apps enable attendees to have personalized schedules, networking, access to real-time information, interactive polls, and notifications. The market growth is driven by both hybrid and virtual events, as applications enable the engagement of attendees who cannot be physically present. Popular functionalities include integration with registration systems, e-wallet and cashless payments, attendee engagement analytics, and customized content. The key players in the market are Whova, Bizzabo, EventMobi, Swapcard and similar providers who are constantly adding new functionalities to increase the interaction and experience of the participants. Geographically, the largest demand comes from North America and Europe, but the market in Asia and other regions is also seeing growth. The aim of the applications is not only to facilitate logistics, but also to increase the engagement of participants and enable organizers to monitor and analyze the behavior of the audience, thus improving the planning of future events. Statistically speaking, mobile applications are most often represented at conferences and corporate events (55-60%), fairs and exhibitions (25-30%). The functionalities of mobile applications are numerous, especially in terms of connectivity (75-80%), creation of personalized schedules (70%), real-time notifications (65-70%), integration with e-wallet (40-50%) and others (Business Research Insights, 2025).

3.3 Sustainability and "green technologies" in business events

Business events create significant positive effects on the economy and local community of the destination in which they are organized. However, events, by their very nature, generate waste. Frequent organization of events affects a significant number of negative impacts primarily on the environment due to frequent travel by business tourists and travelers, creating significant water and air pollution, large amounts of waste, emissions of harmful gases, etc. (Dickson & Arcodia, 2010). The key environmental impacts of business events can be classified as: excessive use of physical materials, space, water and energy, waste generation, pollution and destruction of ecosystems and the aesthetic appearance of the destination, water pollution and noise, impacts associated with the use of services during the event, i.e. excessive food consumption, use of transport and accommodation services (Yuan, 2013). Due to the pronounced negative impact of business tourism on the environment, there is a need to increase the environmental and social responsibility of companies and associations that organize various business events, or rather, as event organizers, to strive to implement and independently innovate the organization of events with various environmentally friendly practices and solutions. In recent times, environmental responsibility has become one of the key challenges for event organizers, who want to differentiate their event and attract a larger number of participants by implementing innovative solutions that reduce the negative impact of the event on the environment. In recent times, the terms sustainable, responsible, environmentally friendly events have been used very often in literature to express concerns about the misuse of the ecological environment in the performance of commercial activities (Henderson, 2011). A green event is a planned, coordinated, and implemented event that reduces its negative impact on the environment and leaves a positive legacy for the host community (United Nations Environment Program, 2009). In order for an event to be environmentally sustainable, event organizers need to analyze and implement green practices in all segments of the event management process, from the selection of the destination, venue, service providers, activities during the event itself, etc. Some of the key recommendations for establishing sustainability in business events include the following (UNDP, 2023):

- **Event planning.** It involves setting sustainable development goals and implementing them in all aspects of the business event management process, involving key stakeholders and partners in the realization of the set goals, and assessing the impact of the event on the environment.
- **Transport and mobility.** Given that frequent business travel has a negative impact on the environment, the organization of sustainable events primarily involves favoring the use of public transport in the destination as well as the use of direct flights in combination with public transport if it is necessary to use this type of transport, which creates significant carbon dioxide emissions. Event organizers should encourage the use of environmentally friendly forms of transport in the form of public transport, electric and/or hybrid vehicles, bicycles and similar, as well as providing parking and charging stations for certain types of vehicles, encourage

shared transport or organize mass transfer of participants to a specific location. If it is necessary for participants to use air transport, event organizers can consider activities that will enable the compensation of CO₂ emissions resulting from this type of travel by event participants.

- **Waste management.** Events with a large number of participants mostly generate a significant amount of waste in the form of plastic, paper and other materials as well as food. Therefore, event organizers should apply the 4R principle - refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle during the organization and holding of the event. This strategy involves reducing or eliminating the use of paper and printed materials in marketing activities, during the event, etc., using products that can be reused as well as using materials and products that can be recycled. Reduction of printed materials can be ensured through the use of electronic communication, digital marketing, e-ticketing, etc. During the event, it is possible to use reusable products in the form of glass bottles, textile bags, biodegradable tableware, etc.
- **Food management.** During the event, large quantities of food are consumed and waste is generated. Therefore, event organizers are advised to reduce waste and negative environmental impacts by using local and seasonal products, planning the amount of food needed, donating excess food, composting leftover food, educating event participants and local community members, etc.
- **Communication.** It is key to promoting sustainability and includes all phases of event organization – from planning to reporting on achievements. Therefore, in order to achieve environmental sustainability, event organizers must strive to eliminate the so-called Greenwashing practice, i.e. the placement of incorrect information about the implementation of sustainable practices, which are not actually applied when organizing and hosting an event in order to create an image in the public. Communication not only transmits information, but also educates event participants and all relevant stakeholders, as well as raises awareness of the importance of sustainability in the development of the event industry.
- **Event space.** By adequately selecting an event space, it is possible to achieve the sustainability of the event itself to a certain extent, taking into account the location of the space, capacity, recycling options, disposal of various materials, etc. Event organizers who want to demonstrate environmental awareness during their events must choose congress centres and other places that are accessible by public transportation or alternative forms of transportation, that have option of waste disposal and recycling according to the 4R principle, that are energy efficient, and have IT support for holding events in a virtual environment or with remote access.
- **Promotion and merchandising at sustainable events.** Organizers of sustainable events must consider whether promotional materials are needed at all and whether they can be distributed in digital form. If used, they must be in line with the concept of sustainability, i.e., environmentally friendly and with the smallest possible carbon footprint.
- **Efficient use of resources (energy and water).** The amount of energy and resources required to prepare and hold an event can be an important indicator of establishing a sustainability concept. Event organizers should therefore choose spaces with as much natural light as possible and/or introduce energy efficiency measures (moderate use of heating and cooling, energy-saving light bulbs, use of low-energy appliances, lighting timers and sleep mode equipment).

4. Conclusion

The impact of modern information technology on the events industry is more pronounced than ever. Unlike conventional business events, the virtual environment allows for the gathering of large numbers of people regardless of where they are in the world. Modern information technology provides a wide range of applications in different phases of business event management, which allows event organizers to save time and available resources. On the other hand, an important aspect of organizing online events and using technological innovations is providing technology and staff with the appropriate abilities and skills to apply them. This paper provides a theoretical overview of the importance of technological innovations for the organization of business events as well as their key advantages and disadvantages from the perspective of event organizers and event participants. Although there is a large number of papers on the impact of digital technologies on the organization of business events, an important aspect of future research would be to analyze the attitudes of event participants as well as employees in the event industry about their willingness to use modern technology instead of traditional means of communication during the preparation and during the actual participation in a particular event. An aspect of future research also relates to the risk of eliminating events that require the physical presence of participants in comparison to those organized in a virtual environment. A key risk for the future development of business tourism relates to the overestimation of the advantages of virtual events compared to the classic organization of congresses and other types of events with the presence of participants.

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