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The potential of a wedding planning business start up in Eastern Switzerland

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Abstract

Since the rise of the notion of weddings in the middle ages up to today, trends have changed and evolved in this domain, not only trends concerning the meaning of marriage but also trends per county or even per region. The United States of America is the pioneer of wedding planning as a career and people do not shy away from hiring a wedding planner to organize their big day (Weddings for a living, 2016). However, this trend has not yet managed to reach Switzerland the way it has taken over the USA.

The objective of this report is to investigate the question is there a potential for a wedding planning start up in Eastern Switzerland.

The above mentioned question was researched through the collecting of preliminary data on the wedding trends in Switzerland and of research data through the interviews of five stakeholders of the Swiss wedding business: a wedding planner, a wedding photographer, a catering business, a wedding venue and restaurant business and an event management company. A qualitative and quantitative textual analysis of the interviews was carried out with the help of the statistical analysis program Sphinx. In addition, a business plan for a fictional wedding planning company offering wedding services in Switzerland and abroad has been developed.

The overall qualitative results of the interviews suggest a positive feeling of the interviewees but some specific key words are seen as negative so that the theme class "wedding planner potential" is seen as negative. The quantitative data suggest rather positive opinions related to different theme classes but the numbers are small. Overall, the research part does not allow a conclusive answer.

The business plan is rather negative, suggesting that a stand-alone wedding company would be hardly financially viable.

In conclusion the answer to the research question is rather negative. An alternative where the company would provide other services in addition to weddings could be considered.

Keywords: Wedding, wedding planner, interview, Eastern Switzerland

Foreword and acknowledgements

Already during my tourism management studies at the HES-SO Valais I felt inclined to continue my working life in the event business. The planning of my own wedding then gave me the idea that a wedding planning company might be an interesting path to take career-wise. As I am living in Eastern Switzerland, this is the region which would most likely come into consideration for such a start up, which led me to write my bachelor thesis on the potential of a wedding planning start up in Eastern Switzerland.

In order to obtain the answer to the research question, five people from Eastern Switzerland, who work in the wedding industry were interviewed. The interviews were then analyzed with the help of the statistical analysis program Sphinx. The final answer to the research question was achieved by bringing together the results from the preliminary and research data, as well as the business plan for a virtual wedding planning company.

The main difficulty which I encountered while writing this thesis was getting some of the interviewees to reveal the real nature of their business. Translating the interviews from Swiss German to English all the while maintaining the feelings expressed by the interviewees and analyzing it with a program which works in French was a challenging task too.

I would like to thank all the people who have helped me write this paper. A special thanks goes to Mrs. Miriam Scaglione who coached me through this thesis. I would also like to thank Carmen Himmel, Debora Vogel, Dario Sidler, Urs Anderegg and Simon Müller for taking time to hold the interviews and providing me with useful insight into the wedding business in Switzerland.

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List of abbreviations

SEO	Search Engine Optimization
PEST	Political, Economic, Social, Technological
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TS	Très signifiant (very significant)
PS	Peu signifiant (slightly significant)
S	Signifiant (significant)
FTE	Full-time equivalent

Introduction

Picture the scenario of a wedding in the United States of America. 80 guests are enjoying the party and the happy couple is smiling while enjoying its big day. Everything has gone smoothly and according to plan up to this point, this thanks to one barely noticeable person standing in the background and watching the wedding party: the wedding planner. Now, let us picture the scenario of a wedding in Switzerland. There are 80 guests present, 65 of them are enjoying themselves, the other 15 are quite tense because they were asked to organize more or less big components of the wedding. The bride and groom are having fun but they realize some details have been overseen by their friends who have organized the aperitif and the dinner. One person is missing at this wedding: the wedding planner.

Due to the movie 'The Wedding Planner', the notion of wedding planning as a career has been around approximately since the year 2001 in the United States of America, but is not yet widely known in Switzerland (Weddings for a living, 2016). Therefore, this study looks at the potential of starting up a wedding planning business in Switzerland, and more specifically in Eastern Switzerland.

The study begins with a literature review including the definitions of terms important to the further comprehension of the paper, the evolution of weddings over the years and the concept of textual analysis which is important in order to understand how interviews are processed and evaluated. The literature review is followed by the explanation of the objective of the research in order to give a clear goal to this study. Data were also collected to highlight the wedding situation in the different regions of Switzerland, and following this comes the exposition of the methodological note on the collection and processing of the interviews. The results of the interviews with different people who work in the wedding business, are obtained from a qualitative and quantitative textual analysis. The interpretation of these results is presented. Finally, a business plan for a virtual wedding planning company in Eastern Switzerland has been developed to evaluate the practical feasibility of starting up such a company and make a career of it.

1 Literature Review

Weddings nowadays are getting bigger and couples are looking to stage their wedding in a way that will make it memorable to themselves as well as their guests (Camponovo, 2015). As the trend is going in a direction in which weddings are more and more personalized, especially in the United States of America (Soat, 2015), it can be asked if there is the potential for new businesses such as a wedding planning start up, assuming this model of personalized wedding also applies to Switzerland. In this preliminary study Eastern Switzerland has been selected as the study region.

In order to answer this question, it is crucial to be aware of current knowledge to base the study upon. There is a certain amount of literature concerning the wedding industry in Switzerland and abroad. Furthermore, a study on textual analysis will be reviewed which is the research method used for this thesis. Thus, the next subchapters comprise the following aspects: 1.1) the definitions of wedding as an event and wedding planners, 1.2) the evolution of the wedding concept and corresponding market and trends and 1.3) textual analysis.

1.1 Definitions

In order to fully understand the thematic of this study, it is important to define some expressions which are used throughout the text. This chapter gives the definitions for the expressions “wedding as an event” and “wedding planner”.

1.1.1 The wedding as an event

As the main topic of this thesis is the wedding industry, it is important to examine how we can define the occurrence we call wedding. The first step consists in defining an event, or more specifically, a “planned event”.

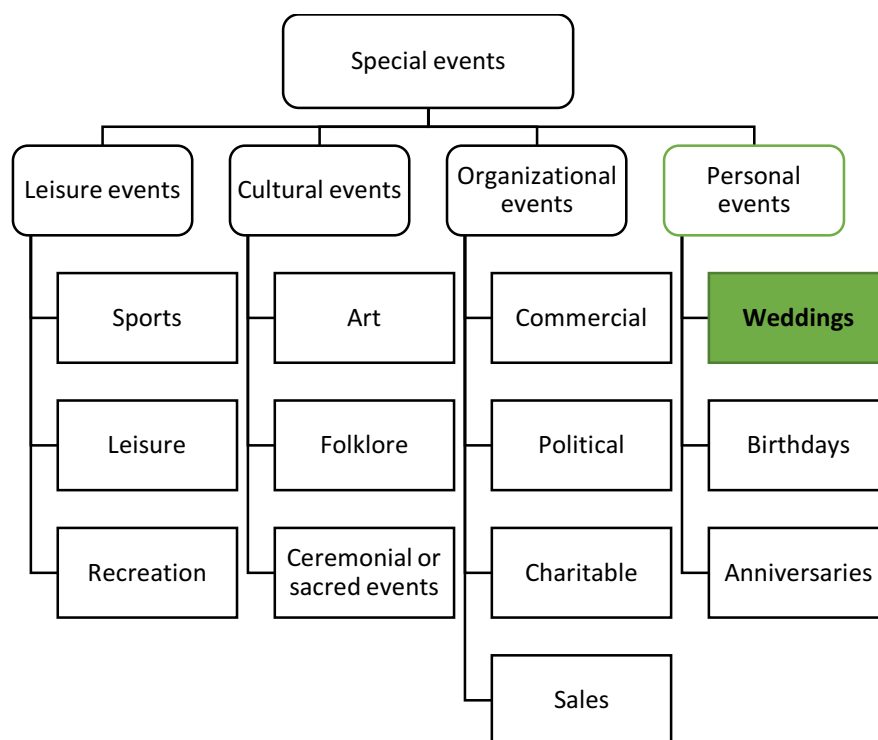
According to Getz, a planned event can be described as a spatial-temporal phenomenon which is unique due to interactions in the setting, management and people. There is always a reason for which a planned event is created. Once the task of individuals and community initiatives, these events are becoming the task of professionals, so-called event managers. Event managers are formed to organize a wide range of planned events such as sport and art events, festivals, conventions or weddings (Getz, 2008). Shone & Parry describe planned events as special events and define them as follows:

That phenomenon arising from those non-routine occasions which have leisure, cultural, personal or organizational objectives set apart from the normal activity of daily life, whose purpose is to

enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people. (Shone & Parry, 2004, p. 3).

Special events can be divided into four categories, as shown in figure 1. Leisure events include sports, leisure and recreation, cultural events such as art, folklore, ceremonial or sacred events, organizational events like commercial, political, charitable or sales events and finally, personal events which comprise weddings, birthdays or anniversaries (Shone & Parry, 2004).

Figure 1: Special Events



Source: Adapted from Shone & Parry (2004)

The number and complexity of events has grown in the past years. The media is pushing the event industry additionally, including the wedding industry. A number of bridal magazines and TV shows such as “Say yes to the dress” or “Don’t tell the bride” awaken the desire for big, pompous weddings in couples, especially brides. These factors have resulted in a rising need for, and a rising number of event planning firms, but also wedding planning companies (Helo, 2015).

1.1.2 The wedding planner

Wedding planners play their role in the category of personal events. This role is to deliver a dream. According to Silvers there are six dimensions, which the wedding planner needs to incorporate into a whole in order to deliver the dream:

1. Anticipation, which arises when the invitation to the event is sent out and people are looking forward to taking part in the event.
2. Arrival, which begins with the decision to attend the event and schedules are planned around it.
3. Atmosphere, which depends on the physical environment of the event, such as décor and audiovisuals.
4. Activity, which incorporates simple discussions between guests, but also music, dance and show.
5. Appetite, which means organization and coordination of food and beverage
6. Amenities, which make the event memorable, such as table gifts, photographs or welcome baskets (Silvers, 2012).

Helo explains another aspect of the role of wedding planners and gives us the typical procedure through which a wedding planner goes when organizing a wedding. It includes the following seven steps:

1. Sit down with the clients to discuss their vision
2. Research on venues for the ceremony the reception and the after party
3. Research for vendors like florists, DJ's and caterers
4. Make the wedding invitations
5. Create the event program and a master timeline
6. Manage the communication and problem solving
7. Evaluate the event afterwards (Helo, 2015).

Wedding planning as career is a fairly recent concept (Weddings for a living, 2016) and so are weddings as we know them today (Helo, 2015), which leads us to the chapter on the evolution of the wedding concept.

1.2 Evolution of the wedding concept and wedding market

Referring to western culture, marriage has not always been based on the mutual love of two individuals. From the middle ages, up to the 18th century, the upper classes would marry for political and economic reasons. People spent large sums of money on these weddings and they could last for

days. The middle classes would marry for security. The family of the woman would pay a fee to a man so that he would marry her. In return he would support her financially. Finally, the lower classes would marry for more labor force. Only towards the end of the 18th century did marriage become more associated to mutual love. Rituals such as white dresses to symbolize the bride's purity or exchanging vows also appeared around this time. Up to the 1960's, weddings followed a strict structure and men and women each had their role to play at the wedding celebration, as well as in the family. However, couples nowadays wish to personalize their wedding celebration to their own style and personality (Helo, 2015).

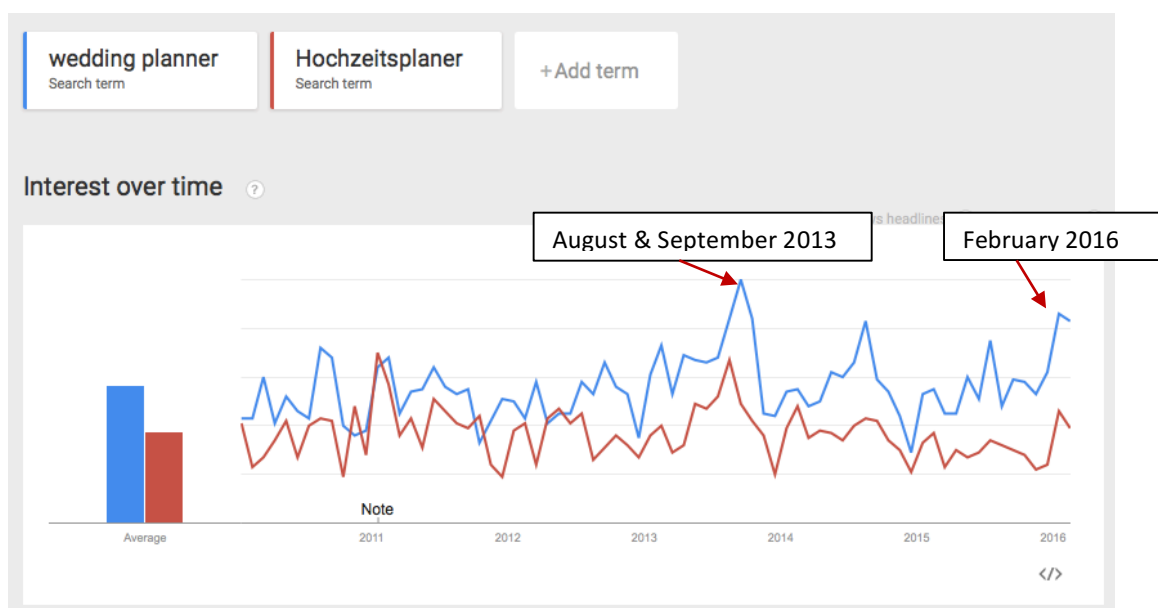
Swiss wedding planner, Lucie Pilliard, claims that people in Switzerland are increasingly celebrating their weddings in a big style. On average, one ceremony brings together 80 guests and costs 50'000 CHF. Pilliard organizes between 15 and 20 weddings per year. She states, that in contrast to French clients, Swiss clients are wealthy enough to pay for such a wedding (Camponovo, 2015).

But the wedding market offers a number of challenges to face. One challenge is that people "normally" only marry once, which means that wedding planners do not usually have regular customers. Wedding planner businesses need to constantly acquire new customers which makes communication extremely important (Bohlmann, 2010). The second challenge is the long term buying cycle. Copeland, a wedding planner in the state of Florida confirms that communication also proves itself important when considering this challenge. Often couples have some months or even over a year of time until the date of their wedding. They will likely be looking at the wedding planner's website, blog and photos months before they even contact him. The third challenge is the seasonality. Copeland states that January and February are the months during which marketing is especially important. Bookings tend to be highest from people having gotten engaged over the holiday season, but wedding planner's cash flow tends to be lowest as the weddings take place in the summer season. Thus, a marketing budget should be saved for these months in which cash flow is low. The fourth challenge is the economy. The wedding planning industry is very dependent on the economy, meaning that if the economy is bad, couples are willing to do without a wedding planner in order to spend less money on their wedding (Copeland, 2015). More challenges include competition offering lower prices, unrealistic expectations by couples and vendors who do not offer the quality they promise (Wedding Planner Magazine, 2014).

A Google Trends analysis of the search term „Wedding planner“ in Switzerland, which is indicated in blue in figure 2, shows that the term has been more or less steadily searched on Google. The search term saw a peak in August and September 2013 as well as in July 2015 and February 2016 (Google, 2016). The reasons for the term search in February 2016 could be caused by a number of wedding

fairs which take place at the beginning of the year, for example the wedding fairs in Zurich, Lucerne or Bern (Wir-heiraten.ch, 2016). Concerning the peak in August and September 2013, no apparent explanation could be found. It could however be assumed that the Swiss TV show “4 Hochzeiten und eine Traumreise”, in which the protagonist is a Swiss wedding planner for four weeks, and which aired on Swiss TV in July 2013, gave the stimulus for people to look for the term “wedding planner” on Google (Your perfect day, 2013). The curve of the term “Hochzeitsplaner” has been steadily decreasing, maybe hinting to an increasing use of the English term in this area of activity.

Figure 2: Google Trends search „Wedding planner” & “Hochzeitsplaner”



source: (Google, 2016)

Another trend analyzing system used in this thesis is the statistical analysis program Sphinx. The function of this program is further explained in chapter 4.

1.3 Rationale for the study methodology

In order to answer the research question which is formulated in the next chapter, it is important to understand the manner of collecting the research data. The technique used for this thesis is the interview, which implies asking open questions. The statistical analysis of a text composed of open questions is a whole different process than that of closed questions. This chapter summarizes the techniques used to analyze open questions as are found in interviews and is based on the book *Analyse statistique des données textuelles* by Ludovic Lebart and André Salem.

Before beginning with the main research one must consider how to obtain research data, the main question for this paper being, if it makes more sense to use closed or open questions. Closed questions can be more straightforward and easier to analyze but there are three reasons which speak in favor of open questions:

1. In order to get extensive information in a short period of time.

Interviews give the questioned person the opportunity to give extensive answers in little time compared to answering a questionnaire, especially if there is a large amount of answers to choose from. Interviews are also less tiring and answers come more naturally.

2. In order to have the same questions with a variety of answers over time.

Some questions, which are asked in 2016 may be answered differently in 20 years. This means that it is a better choice to use open questions in order to capture these differences.

3. In order to understand the answer to a closed question.

The answer to a closed question mostly does not make the reason for the answer visible. Open questions give the opportunity to find out the *Why?* to the answer of the closed question (Lebart & Salem, 1988, S. 14).

In addition, the statistical analysis of a text is a whole different process than that of closed questions. The next paragraphs summarize the techniques used to analyze a corpus of open questions as are found in interviews.

The first step is to transform the text into segments of distinct units. In order to form these segments, the text is lemmatized, which means that verbs are transformed into their infinitive forms, nouns are transformed into their singular forms, adjectives are transformed into their singular masculine forms and forms which are shortened are transformed into forms without elision (for example "*it's*" to "*it is*") (Lebart & Salem, 1988, S. 20).

The text is then subdivided into repetitive segments defined by word chains which repeat themselves more than one time throughout the corpus. These repetitive segments are sorted by alphabet, by frequency, by length or by other factors. In the analysis of texts, they make it possible to detect repetitive factors such as feelings, expressions or themes (Lebart & Salem, 1988, S. 24).

The way Sphinx analyzes these segments is by breaking down the corpus into numbers and letters. Lebart & Salem explain that a corpus is set together by "occurrences", "forms" and "vocabulary". An occurrence is a set of characters with separating characters at both ends. Two identical occurrences are defined as having the same form. Finally, the number of forms found in a corpus constitute its

vocabulary. The total amount of occurrences which can be found in a text is its length or size (Lebart & Salem, 1988, S. 28).

As example we can consider the following sentence which was in the answer of one of the questioned interviewees:

The dinner is the most expensive part of the wedding.

This sentence has 10 occurrences and eight different forms. By giving each form a capital letter (“the”=A, “dinner”=B, “is”=C, “most”=D, “expensive”=E, “part”=F, “of”=G, “wedding”=H) the following example can be obtained:

A	B	C	A	D	E	F	G	A	H
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The size or length of the text is equal to 10. The occurrences 1, 4 and 9 are identical and have the form “A”. The corpus counts eight different forms (A B C D E F G H) which constitute its vocabulary “V” (V=8) (Lebart & Salem, 1988, S. 29).

The richness of the corpus is deduced by the number of forms allocated to the vocabulary. The higher the value of V, the richer the text. The relative richness index per class calculated by Sphinx is as follows: the number 1 is the average richness of all the classes. A relative richness index which is higher than 1 is above average and subsequently, a relative richness index which is below 1 is below average (Sphinx, 2016).

2 Objectives of the report

This research pertains to the wedding industry and more specifically to the question: “Is there potential for starting up a wedding planning company in Eastern Switzerland?”

2.1 In scope of this study

The following topics are addressed in the scope of this study: Heterosexual weddings in Eastern Switzerland, weddings in other regions of Switzerland and weddings in Europe. Not in scope are same sex weddings, registered partnerships and weddings outside Europe as logistics would be too complicated in the frame of this study.

2.2 Limitations of the study

The following limitations concerning the study are to be taken into account:

- The research question is limited to Eastern Switzerland for practical reasons (see chapter 3). Eastern Switzerland encompasses the following cantons: Appenzell Ausserrhoden,

Appenzell Innerrhoden, Glarus, Graubünden, St. Gallen, Schaffhausen and Thurgau (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015).

- The analysis of the interviews rests on a relatively small number of interviewees and therefore the conclusions must be taken with caution.
- The automatic translation of the interviews linked to the analysis program sometimes leaves to be desired. Therefore, the analysis might have been influenced in certain cases.
- It is possible that the competition section of the business plan is incomplete due to wedding planners having websites with bad search engine optimization which makes them difficult to find online.

3 Preliminary considerations on the wedding situation in Switzerland

This section lays out the wedding situation in Eastern Switzerland in comparison with the other regions of Switzerland in support of the research question stated in section 2.

3.1 Wedding situation in Eastern Switzerland

In order to evaluate the suitability of starting up a wedding planning business in Eastern Switzerland it is important to know how many weddings take place in this region per year and how this number has developed.

Table 1 by the federal statistical office displays the actual number of weddings and analyses the kinetics of civil weddings per canton in Eastern Switzerland for the years 2010 to 2014. The last row of the table shows the total number of weddings in Eastern Switzerland per year. The last column of the table shows the increase or decrease in % of the civil weddings between the years 2010 and 2014.

Table 1: Number of Weddings in Eastern Switzerland 2010 - 2014

Canton	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% change 2010-2014
<i>Appenzell AR</i>	262	257	285	226	294	+12.2%
<i>Appenzell I.</i>	76	82	96	71	82	+7.9%
<i>Glarus</i>	173	195	189	172	190	+9.8%
<i>Graubünden</i>	930	1'018	944	860	908	-2.4%
<i>St.Gallen</i>	2'546	2'665	2'689	2'538	2'664	+4.6%
<i>Schaffhausen</i>	366	388	391	340	385	+5.2%
<i>Thurgau</i>	1'274	1'234	1'345	1'263	1'368	+7.4%
Total	5'627	5'839	5'939	5'470	5'891	+4.7%

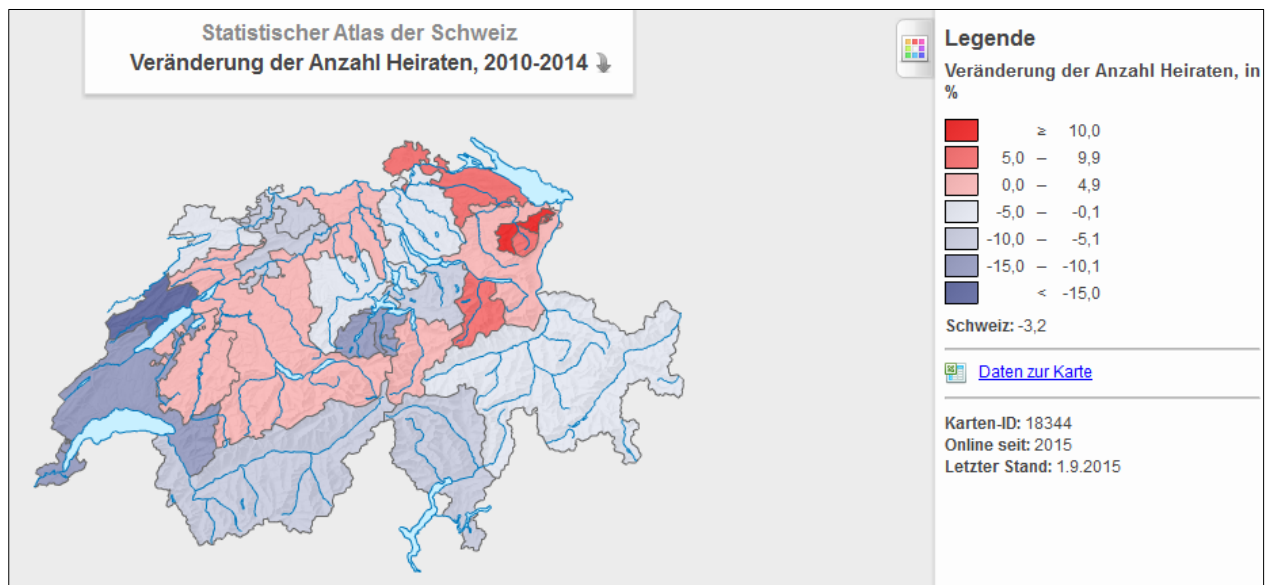
Green color: highest total number of weddings
Orange color: lowest total number of weddings

Source: Adapted from Bundesamt für Statistik 2015

The year 2012 saw the highest number of civil weddings in Eastern Switzerland with 5'939 weddings. The year after this, 2013 had the smallest number of weddings with 5'470 civil weddings. The change in percentage of number of civil weddings between 2010 and 2014 in Eastern Switzerland is +4.7%. The only canton which has not seen an increase is Graubünden with a decrease of -2,4 %. The canton with the lowest increase since 2010 is St.Gallen with +4.6%. Then come Schaffhausen with +5.2%, Thurgau with +7.4%, Appenzell Innerrhoden with +7.9% and Glarus with +9.8%. Appenzell Ausserrhoden has seen the highest increase with 12.2% more weddings in 2014 than in 2010. Therefore, the kinetics of change was mostly positive with the highest change in Appenzell AR.

The following map shows the range of change in percent of the number of civil weddings per canton between 2010 and 2014 (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015).

Figure 3: Change in number of weddings 2010-2014



Source: (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015)

The map confirms the data of table 1. All the cantons in Eastern Switzerland except Graubünden have had more civil weddings in 2014 than in 2010, whereas the other cantons of Switzerland have seen less of an increase in weddings in 2014, and in those cases where there was an increase, it was only up to 4.9% higher than in 2010.

3.2 Wedding situation in other regions of Switzerland

The other regions of Switzerland are the Lake Geneva region, the Espace Mittelland, Northwestern Switzerland, Zürich, Central Switzerland and Tessin (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015). The wedding situation of the years 2010 to 2014 is shown in table 2. As in table 1, table 2 shows the number of weddings per canton and per region in the years from 2010 to 2014. The last column shows the difference in percentage of the number of weddings in 2010 and 2014. The green colored field is the year with the highest number of weddings per region and the orange colored field is the year with the lowest number of weddings per region.

Table 2: Number of weddings in other regions of Switzerland

Canton	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% change 2010-2014
Lake Geneva region						
<i>Geneva</i>	2'682	2'239	2'451	2'295	2'337	-12.9%
<i>Vaud</i>	3'964	3'661	3'609	3'289	3'500	-11.7%
<i>Valais</i>	1'656	1'620	1'593	1'506	1'560	-5.8%
Total	8'302	7'520	7'653	7'090	7'397	-12.2%
Espace Mittelland						
<i>Bern</i>	5'049	4'974	5'120	4'927	5'250	+4.0%
<i>Jura</i>	302	301	304	281	297	-1.7%
<i>Fribourg</i>	1'383	1'363	1'396	1'322	1'390	+0.5%
<i>Neuchâtel</i>	918	837	753	744	765	-16.7%
<i>Solothurn</i>	1'361	1'297	1'312	1'198	1'256	-7.7%
Total	9'013	8'772	8'885	8'472	8'958	-0.7%
Northeastern Switzerland						
<i>Aargau</i>	3'243	3'200	3'206	3'123	3'293	+1.5%
<i>Basel Stadt</i>	1'028	985	993	939	980	-4.7%
<i>Basel Land</i>	1'454	1'453	1'436	1'259	1'328	-8.7%
Total	5'725	5'638	5'635	5'321	5'601	-2.2%
Zürich						
<i>Zürich</i>	8'781	8'708	8'734	7'975	8'470	-3.5%
Total	8'781	8'708	8'734	7'975	8'470	-3.5%
Central Switzerland						
<i>Luzern</i>	2'081	2'010	2'059	1'955	2'070	-0.5%
<i>Nidwalden</i>	222	207	243	216	199	-10.4%

<i>Obwalden</i>	196	174	191	164	176	-10.2%
<i>Schwyz</i>	838	811	846	787	765	-8.7%
<i>Uri</i>	162	166	167	159	168	+3.7%
<i>Zug</i>	629	640	662	601	623	-1.0%
Total	4'128	4'008	4'168	3'882	4'001	-3.2%
Tessin						
<i>Tessin</i>	1'681	1'598	1'640	1'584	1'573	-6.4%
Total	1'681	1'598	1'640	1'584	1'573	-6.4%

Source: Adapted from Bundesamt für Statistik 2015

Table 2 shows a general trend towards a decrease of the civil weddings in 2014 compared to 2010. Only some cantons, such as Bern with +4.0%, Fribourg with +0.5%, Aargau with +1.5% and Uri with +3.7% have had a higher number of weddings in 2014. As seen in table 1, Eastern Switzerland is the only region of Switzerland which had a higher number of weddings in 2014 than in 2010.

Interestingly, all the regions except Tessin saw the smallest number of weddings in the year 2013. Evelyn Schärer, the founder of the “Verband unabhängiger Schweizerischer Hochzeitsplaner” which can be translated into the association of independent Swiss wedding planners, gives a possible reason for the slump in the number of weddings in 2013. She states that 13 is an unlucky number, which makes it possible that people wanted to wait until 2014 to get married. The same statement came from the wedding ring company FurrerJacot who says that the sales went down in 2013 but stabilized again in 2014 (Kappeler, 2014).

After having looked at the situation of the number of weddings in Switzerland in the past years, our research leads into more detail in the next chapter.

4 Data collection and analysis

The following sub-chapters lay out the methodological process and the analysis of the primary research which was conducted in order to answer the research question of this study: “Is there potential for starting up a wedding planning company in Eastern Switzerland?”

4.1 Justification of the methods and techniques

The primary research conducted as a part of this report has the purpose of finding out how different actors of the wedding business perceive the potential for a new company in Eastern Switzerland.

Interviews were conducted with different stakeholders in the wedding business. This research was deemed to be the most appropriate due to its individualized nature, meaning that the answers can vary strongly from person to person, giving the possibility to get detailed answers. The interviews were first reproduced in writing and scanned into the Sphinx analysis program in order to be analyzed. The analyzed text contains 4'029 words.

4.2 The global synthesis

The global synthesis represents a semantic and statistical analysis of the text. The quality of the synthesis varies according to the size of the analyzed text. The main semantic fields are established by the program and are illustrated by word clouds which contain the most frequently used words. The size of the words in the cloud indicates their frequency.

In turn, the primary word cloud is divided into four classes of themes, which are also populated in the form of word clouds. The size of the theme classes is indicated at the top right corner of the word cloud numerically and as pie charts. For each class, as in the primary word cloud, the size of the words is in proportion with the number of times they are used. The theme classes can be named according to their interpretation by the author.

Finally, the characteristics of each class are defined in a table.

Using the classes defined above, Sphinx analyzes feelings based on recognition of negative or positive opinions in each observation. One observation can hold opinions of different nature and intensity. The feeling of each observation is determined by the following rules: Clearly positive or negative means that the observation contains only positive or negative opinions. Rather positive or negative means that the observation contains both, positive and negative opinions but that one is more present than the other. Ambiguous means that there is the same amount of positive and negative opinions in the observation and without opinion means there is no positive or negative opinion in the observation (Sphinx, 2016).

4.3 Limitations

The program used for analyzing the interviews has its limitations. The form, the correctness, the syntax and the length of the scanned text all have an influence on how exact the analysis is to be.

Moreover, the analysis of qualitative studies is not as exact as that of quantitative studies (Sphinx, 2016). The interviews which are analyzed in this thesis were conducted in German and then translated and written down in English. The English text was then auto translated into French by Sphinx, which has generated some lexical errors due to the spoken language style of the original text.

4.4 Sampling and construction of the interview

The interviewees were selected by screening for certain keywords on the internet. One important keyword was “Ostschweiz” – Eastern Switzerland. In order to find out which stakeholders are involved in the wedding business one can look up the website of any wedding planner and click on the “partners” section. Wedding planners normally have many stakeholders of the wedding business listed as partners. One example is Debora Vogel from Seite an Seite, a wedding planner from the region of Eastern Switzerland. Her website features a list of partners which includes different photographers and videographers, clothing boutiques, florists, masters of ceremonies, caterers and cake vendors, stylists and makeup artists, musicians and entertainers (Seite an Seite, 2015). Taking a look at this list gave an overview about which kind of people were to be contacted for the interviews.

The interviews had four main questions:

1. What are the main changes in wedding trends which you have noticed in the past year?
2. Which are the most important factors in the decision to hire a wedding planner for a couple?
3. Which are the tasks that couples like to delegate to the wedding planner and what do they like to do by themselves?
4. What do you think of the potential for a wedding planner start up in Eastern Switzerland?

Every question has sub-questions which could be asked in case the interviewee did not give a satisfying or long enough answer. Moreover, two additional questions per interviewee were asked. These two questions were adapted to the job of the person being interviewed.

4.5 Data Collection

Interviews were conducted with five different stakeholders of the wedding business: Carmen Himmel from the Kartause Ittiningen, a former convent turned into a hotel and restaurant based near Frauenfeld, Simon Müller from Fix & Fein, a catering business based in Schaffhausen, Urs Anderegg, a wedding photographer based in St.Gallen, Dario Sidler of Festix, an event managing company based near Frauenfeld and Debora Vogel, a wedding planner from Winterthur. The interviews were mainly conducted at the workplace or at the home of the interviewees.

5 Results

After having translated the interviews into English, they were merged together and scanned into Sphinx. The analyzed text corpus comprised of all interviews contained 4'029 words.

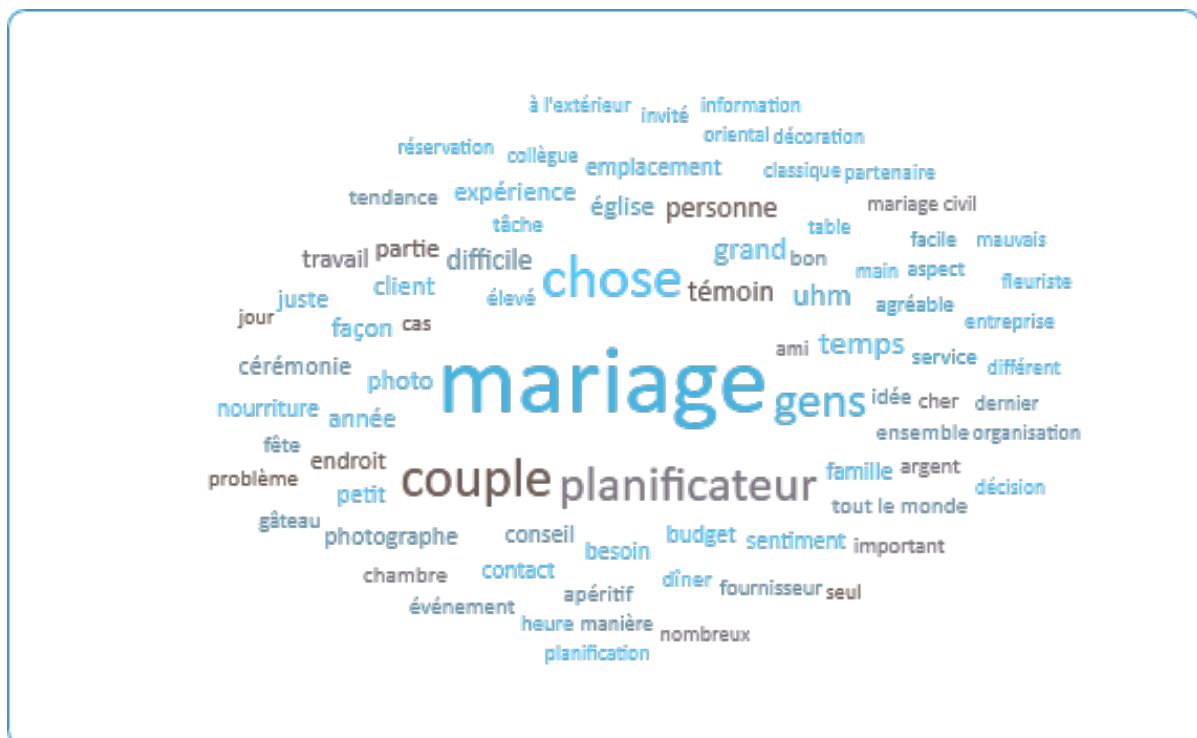
5.1 Qualitative data

The following chapter presents the qualitative findings resulting from the conducted interviews.

5.1.1 Semantic and lexical overview

The following word cloud shows the main words (in French) used in the conducted interviews. The word which repeats itself most often is “wedding”. Other words which are frequently used after the word “wedding” are “planner”, “couple”, “thing”, “people” and “time” (Sphinx, 2016). The reason for the word “thing” appearing frequently in the text is the use of everyday language, for example sentences containing the expression “or something like that”. In the context of this paper this word can be disregarded.

Figure 4: Lexical overview – main keywords



source: (Sphinx, 2016)

5.1.2 Thematic distribution

In the global synthesis of Sphinx, four theme classes can be distinguished. These are represented by the following four word clouds in figure 5. The titles of the theme classes were given by the author of this study and are explained further below.

Figure 5: Thematic distribution



source: (Sphinx, 2016)

The frequency of each theme throughout all the interviews is visualized in figure 6 and table 3 further down. Having each been referenced 15 times throughout the interviews, the themes “wedding planner potential” and “trends & rituals” are the most represented. The theme “budget & wedding planner” was mentioned nine times and “services” seven times.

Figure 6: Frequencies of the themes



Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

Table 3 below additionally shows the specific keywords of each theme class as well as the specific concept, feeling and orientation. The average length of the corpus is longest for theme class “wedding planner potential” with 89 occurrences, followed by theme class “budget & wedding planner” with 88 occurrences. Theme class “trends & rituals” has an average length of 57 occurrences and the shortest corpus is theme class “services” with 39 occurrences. The relative richness index represents the number of different words or forms in a text. If this index is superior to 1, it means that the answers in this category are richer than the average. If the index is inferior to 1, it means the answers in this category are less rich than the average (Sphinx, 2016). Table 3 suggests that the relative richness index is correlated with the average length of the corpus. Subsequently, theme class “wedding planner potential” has the highest relative richness value with 1.24 and is followed by theme class “budget & wedding planner” with a value of 1.23. The main keywords of these theme classes are varied and could appear in completely different contexts, whereas theme class “trends & rituals” has a relative richness index which is under the average with a value of 0.86 as well as theme class “services” with a value of 0.66. The keywords of these theme classes can all be linked into a similar context and are not very different from one another.

Table 3: Characterization of the classes

Class	Frequencies	Average length	The 5 specific words	Specific orientation	Relative richness index
Wedding planner potential	15	89	people - planner - time - difficult - photo	Rather negative	1.24
Budget & wedding planner	9	88	thing - couple - planner - budget - advice	Ambiguous	1.23
Services	7	39	marriage - year - event - room - aperitif		0.66
Trends & Rituals	15	57	couple - thing - church - ceremony - just	Without opinion	0.86

Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

The theme class “wedding planner potential” represents what the interviewees think of wedding planning in Switzerland. The specific orientation is rather negative, meaning there are some positive feelings with negative ones dominating (Sphinx, 2016).

Theme class “budget & wedding planner” represents the wedding budget in the wedding planner’s interest. The specific orientation is ambiguous, meaning that there are positive and negative feelings without one being dominant (Sphinx, 2016).

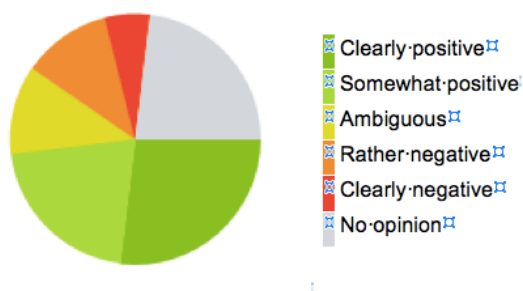
Theme class “services” represents services offered by the service providers.

Finally, Theme class “trends & rituals” represents the trends and rituals of weddings these days. The specific orientation is without opinion.

5.1.3 Orientations of responses and feelings

Figure 7 and table 4 show the orientations and feelings of the responses over all the interviews merged. Figure 7 shows that “the dominant trend in the responses reflects a positive orientation” (Sphinx, 2016). There is also a high amount of responses without opinion or ambiguous responses.

Figure 7: Orientation of the responses and feelings



Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

Table 4 presents the specific words over all the interviews merged, which were used in a positive or negative context. The words most used in a positive context are “thing”, “just”, “person”, “witness” and “experience”. Just like the word “thing”, the word “just” results from the everyday language used by the interviewees and can be disregarded in the context of this paper. The words which were most used in a negative context are “wedding”, “planner”, “time”, “difficult” and “big”. The specific context of the positive words is not clear, however, the specific context of the negative words is theme class “wedding planner potential”.

Table 4: Orientation and feelings specific words

	Positive	Negative
Length	97 words	86 words
Specific words	thing just person witness experience	marriage planner time difficult big
Specific Contexts		Wedding planner potential

Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

5.2 Quantitative data

Sphinx provides quantitative and statistical analysis of the relationships between different variables drawn from the conducted interviews.

The following Hypotheses are to be verified in chapters 5.2.1 and 5.2.2:

1. H0: There is no link between the nature of the opinion of all interviewees and the different classes in the interview analysis.
2. H0: There is no link between the individual interviewee and the different classes in the analysis.

5.2.1 Classes and opinions

Table 4 and figure 7 show the relationships between the theme classes and the opinions or feelings expressed.

Sphinx provides the statistical analysis of the data above (Chi-square test). In this test a null hypothesis is formulated whereby two variables are independent of each other. This is determined by the provision of the degree of freedom of the test as well as the so-called χ^2 value. Given these parameters a p-value can be determined using a cross-table. The p-value is then compared to a significance level arbitrarily chosen and the significance of the p-value can be determined. If the p-value exceeds the chosen significance level, the null hypothesis is valid, otherwise it is rejected.

In Table 5, the null hypothesis is that the opinions and the classes in the interview analysis are independent variables. For a degree of freedom of 15.00 and a χ^2 value of 26.24, the cross-tabulation provides a p-value of 0.04. The significance level of 0.1 is chosen by default by Sphinx. As the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.1, the null hypothesis can be rejected and therefore there is a significant relationship between the classes and the opinions or feelings expressed by the interviewees

(Sphinx, 2016). The interviewees react to the different classes with different opinions, which can help us understand how they feel about the potential for a wedding planning start up.

The graphical report in figure 8 simplifies the visualization of the distribution of the different opinions per theme class.

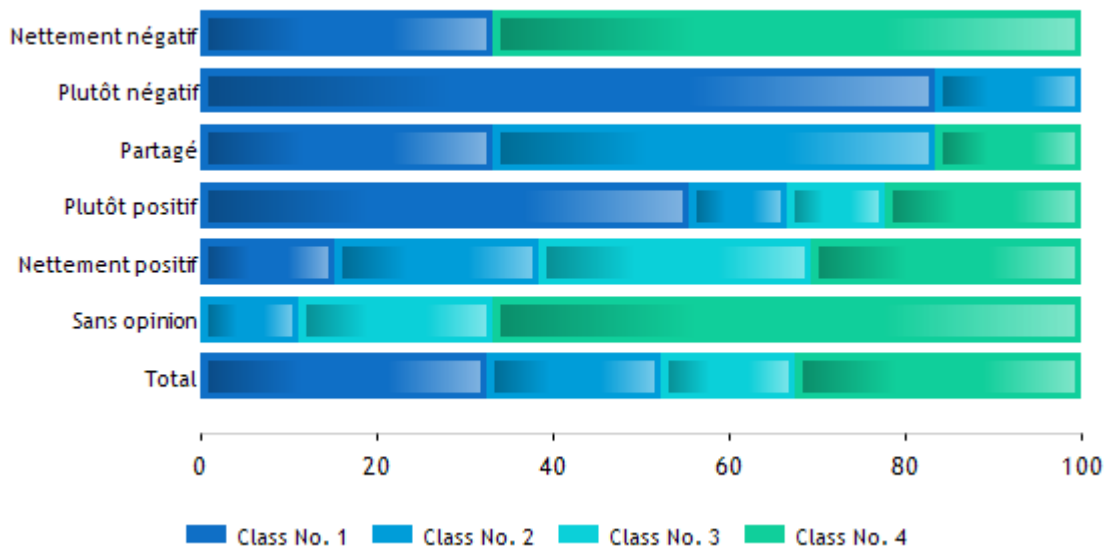
Table 5: Bivariate Analysis of Classes and opinions

Classes →	Wedding planner potential			Budget & wedding planner			Services			Trends & Rituals			Total	
	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.
Clearly Negative	1	33.3%		0	0%		0	0%		2	66.7%		3	100%
Rather negative	5	83.3%	+ TS	1	16.7%		0	0%		0	0%	- PS	6	100%
Ambiguous	2	33.3%		3	50%	+ S	0	0%		1	16.7%		6	100%
Rather positive	5	55.6%	+ PS	1	11.1%		1	11.1%		2	22.2%		9	100%
Clearly positive	2	15.4%	- PS	3	23.1%		4	30.8%	+ PS	4	30.8%		13	100%
Without opinion	0	0%	- S	1	11.1%		2	22.2%		6	66.7%	+ S	9	100%
Total	15	32.6%		9	19.6%		7	15.2%		15	32.6%		46	

Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

p-value = 0.04 ; Khi2 = 26.24 ; ddl = 15.00 (The relationship is significant) (Sphinx, 2016)

Figure 8: Graphic overview of the relationship between classes and opinions



Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

The numbers in the table which are in bold, dark blue are those opinions which are very significantly or significantly overrepresented in the classes. For theme class “wedding planner potential”, the overrepresented opinion is “rather negative” and is very significantly higher (+TS) than the other opinions with 83.3%. Only slightly significantly higher than the other opinions is the opinion “rather positive” with 55.6%. This means that the opinion of the interviewees concerning “wedding planner potential” is divided but more significantly negative than positive. Any answer with “no opinion” is significantly underrepresented or not present at all meaning that all interviewees have an opinion on the subject.

For theme class “budget & wedding planner”, the overrepresented opinion is “ambiguous” and is significantly higher than the other opinions with 50% of the answers, which means that the interviewees see positive, as well as negative aspects concerning this theme class. The other opinions are without significance but rather on the positive than negative side. None of the interviewees had a “clearly negative” opinion about this class.

Concerning the class “services” the opinion, “clearly positive” was slightly significantly overrepresented with 30.8% of the answers. No other opinion is over or underrepresented, nevertheless it is noticeable that there are no negative opinions at all about this class.

Theme class “trends & rituals” features “without opinion” which is overrepresented and is significantly higher than the other opinions with 66.7%. This means that the interviewees do not express opinions on this subject but rather just state the facts.

5.2.2 Relationship between theme classes and interviewees

The goal of this sub-chapter is to determine the relationship between the theme classes and the interviewees. The null hypothesis is that the individual interviewees and the different classes are independent. In order to reject or not reject the null hypothesis we need to conduct the χ^2 test for independence.

Table 6 gives the number and relative percentage of answers each interviewee gave related to a class according to the analyses of Sphinx. Given a degree of freedom of 12.00 and a χ^2 of 15.36, the p-value is 0.22. (Sphinx, 2016). Since the p-value of 0.22 is higher than the significance level of 0.1, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, which means there is not enough evidence that there is a link between the individual interviewees and the different theme classes generated by Sphinx. Subsequently there is not enough evidence that one interviewee is overrepresented in the generated classes.

Table 6: Cross tabulation of classes with interviewees

Classes → Interviewee ↓	Wedding planner potential			Budget & wedding planner			Services			Trends & Rituals			Total	
	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.	Ecart	Eff.	% Rep.
Interview with Debora Vogel	4	66.7%	+ PS	1	16.7%		0	0%		1	16.7%		6	100%
Interview with Festix	2	25%		1	12.5%		2	25%		3	37.5%		8	100%
Interview with Fix & Fein	4	28.6%		2	14.3%		4	28.6%	+ PS	4	28.6%		14	100%
Interview with Kartause Ittingen	0	0%	- S	3	37.5%		0	0%		5	62.5%	+ S	8	100%
Interview with Urs Anderegg Photographer	5	50%		2	20%		1	10%		2	20%		10	100%
Total	15	32.6%		9	19.6%		7	15.2%		15	32.6%		46	

Source: (Sphinx, 2016)

Effective responses: 46

p-value = 0.22 ; Khi2 = 15.36 ; ddl = 12.00 (The relation is not significant) (Sphinx, 2016)

6 Discussion of results

This chapter summarizes the results of the preliminary and research data and presents the discussion about what the data means for the starting up of a wedding planning company.

6.1 The wedding planner

Swiss wedding planner, Lucie Pilliard, in the business since 2010, claims that she organizes between 15 and 20 weddings per year (Camponovo, 2015). On the other hand, wedding planner, Debora Vogel, who was interviewed for this study admits to only having organized one whole wedding since finishing her education as a wedding planner in 2011 (Vogel, 2016). So what is the difference between these two wedding planners who have had their companies for approximately the same number of years? Pilliard calls herself an „event and wedding designer“ and hence actively offers the organizing of private or business events in addition to weddings. Her website can be viewed in French and in English (Pilliard, 2016). Vogel calls herself a „wedding planner“. She offers the organizing of other events in addition to weddings on her website, but in a more reluctant way. Her website can only be viewed in German (Seite an Seite, 2015).

From this it can be deduced that a company actively offering and organizing other events such as anniversaries or corporate events in addition to weddings may have a higher potential for success than a pure wedding planning business. One possible explanation could be, that the event planner's network grows with every event he realized. There is almost no better way to acquire new customers than meeting them as guests on one of the event planner's own well organized events (Böhm, 2016).

Another difference between the two wedding planners mentioned above is their life career. Vogel was formed as a baker and then went to work in sales (Seite an Seite, 2016), whereas Pilliard has a marketing degree and then worked in the luxury hotel business (Pilliard, 2016). It is possible that Pilliard has better marketing abilities and subsequently is able to sell her product more successfully. The background education of the event planner most likely has an impact on who the potential clients choose to organize their event.

6.2 Wedding trends in Switzerland

Are weddings still trendy in Eastern Switzerland? Does this region have a potential for a wedding planning start up and how does it look in comparison to other regions of Switzerland? Table 1 in chapter 3.1 shows that the year with the most weddings in Eastern Switzerland since 2010 was 2012 and that there was an overall increase of 4.7% in the number of weddings between 2010 and 2014.

Compared to the remainder of the Swiss regions as shown in table 2 in the chapter 3.2, Eastern Switzerland is the only region which saw an increase in the number of weddings between 2010 and 2014 (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015). These data suggest that Eastern Switzerland might be the best region to start up a wedding planning company. Moreover, taking a closer look at wedding celebrations in Switzerland, the way they are evolving reveals that the need for wedding planners is growing. Pilliard states that Swiss weddings are getting bigger with 80 invited guests on average, which could mean that weddings are becoming more complex and difficult to organize for the couple alone. Therefore, potential could be growing everywhere in Switzerland, despite of the total number of weddings decreasing.

What does the qualitative analysis of the interviews reveal? Four main classes were found in the conducted interviews. Firstly, the potential for wedding planning, second, the budget and wedding planner, and third, services and fourth, trends and rituals (see figure 6 in chapter 5.1.2).

The theme class “budget and wedding planner” showed an ambiguous connotation. Vogel states that “many people have the feeling that it’s very expensive to have a wedding planner and that you can’t afford it”. In the process of planning the wedding, she presents her partners to the couple and “if the couple chooses one of these partners, then the couple always has, [...] something like a 10% discount on every service provider [...]. If you think of it that way you even make a plus at the end, because you can get things cheaper and because you get tips [...] from the wedding planner that you wouldn’t have had otherwise” (Vogel, 2016). In other words, a wedding planner can help couples save money thanks to existing partnerships with the different providers. These savings can exceed the fee conducted by the wedding planner. The challenge is to change the mindset of potential customers.

For the theme class “services” The interviewed service providers explain what is included in their offer, for example caterer Fix & Fein who offers its room located at the river Rhein, where they will set the tables in white or offer setting up a tent outdoors (Fix&Fein, 2016), or Festix, who offer to organize weddings as well as other even bigger events (Sidler, 2016). Since none of the interviewees had a negative opinion concerning this theme class, it shows that in general, service is seen as something positive. Any couple getting married would like to have a perfect service. The provided services can be used to persuade potential customers in hiring a wedding planner. Linked to the findings of the preceding paragraph about the “budget & wedding planner” a successful sales argument for a wedding planner could be: “get better service for less money”.

As can be seen in table 3 of chapter 5.1.2, the theme class „trends & rituals“ was addressed in a neutral way without negative or positive opinion.

Carmen Himmel from the Kartause Ittingen says that there is a sort of standard wedding format where “you have 20 people for the civil wedding, then there is a big aperitif with 150 people and in the evening it is reduced to 60 people” (Himmel, 2016). She continues saying that the trend is going towards doing the civil and the church ceremony on the same day in order to save money, instead of holding them on separate days (Himmel, 2016). Dario Sidler from Festix noticed that they “have more and more [...] open air ceremonies. [...] People want to be outside more often than before. They don’t want to get married in the church anymore [...] they want something special that others don’t have” (Sidler, 2016). Photographer Anderegg states that there are often minor trend changes but over all weddings stay very traditional (Anderegg, 2016).

As shown in table 5 of chapter 5.2.1, the negative connotations in the interviews were mostly in association with the theme class “wedding planner potential”. It can also be read out of the comments in the interviews that the interviewees are rather suspicious about the success of starting up a wedding planning business (see Appendix I).

Anderegg states that the beginning is difficult because the wedding planner needs to build up connections and make a name for himself. “when you just newly got into the business you won’t have an easy time finding your clients with wedding planning, because your capital is probably experience and connections with professionals (Anderegg, 2016). The second problem is that in Switzerland, couples prefer organizing their weddings by themselves. “I have the feeling that couples usually keep the strings in their own hands at my weddings” (Anderegg, 2016). This last statement is confirmed by Vogel (2016): “It’s rather difficult because [...] people always say, [...] ‘we can organize it ourselves’”, Sidler (2016): “Swiss people like to do everything themselves. They like to keep control over things and have a hard time handing over big tasks [...] to someone else” and Himmel (2016), who says that “if you’re planning one year, one and a half years in advance [...] you do it yourself”. The third problem is that couples think it is too expensive to hire a wedding planner (Anderegg, 2016). Vogel states that people have that feeling that “it’s expensive after all [...] so let’s just do it ourselves” (Vogel, 2016).

The interviewees do mention some ways in which a wedding planning start up could have a chance. Himmel sees a chance for people having a background in the wedding or event business (Himmel, 2016) and Anderegg thinks that if “there are weddings, for example in Tuscany, that take place somewhere in a little castle [...] then it makes sense to take someone who has already been there” (Anderegg, 2016). In other words, offering customers something unique, such as weddings abroad, which are highly complex to organize alone, has a higher potential. Furthermore Vogel mentions that if the wedding planning business could clear up the prejudice that it is too expensive it would stand more chances (Vogel, 2016).

Vogel, who knows the problems of being a wedding planner first hand, states that couples have the misconception that wedding planners are too expensive, when actually the couples give the planner their budget at the beginning of the planning process and the planner then calculates his price into the budget. A couple can additionally get good discounts with the wedding planner's partners. (Vogel, 2016).

What can be deduced from the results of the research, is that Eastern Switzerland is a good region to start up a wedding planning business in comparison with the rest of Switzerland, as it is the only region with a rising number of weddings since 2010. The comparison of wedding planners Pilliard and Vogel makes it clear that the company should actively promote and organize other private or corporate events in addition to wedding planning. It also suggests that the company should not call itself a "wedding planning company", but rather an "event planning company" and in that sense the owner should call him or herself an event planner rather than a wedding planner. The opinion of the interviewees on the potential of a wedding planning start up in Eastern Switzerland is rather negative but some tips which were given in order to increase the potential are to offer weddings abroad, having a background education in the events business and clearing up the prejudice of wedding planners being too expensive.

The Chi-square test results shown in tables 4 and 6 must be discussed in terms of what they mean.

For table 4 the data is relevant to the answer of the research question. The orientations are in relationship with the classes which shows clearly what the interviewees think about each class.

For table 6 there is not enough evidence to prove that there is a link between the individual interviewees and the classes.

In conclusion, the research above suggests that 1) the qualitative data are ambiguous in relation to the establishment of a wedding planning business in Eastern Switzerland and 2) the quantitative data are too weak to draw any firm conclusion but show that even if the demand for a wedding planning business is not extremely high, there is at least a positive development in favor of it.

The next chapter presents a business plan of a virtual wedding planning company implementing the recommendations given by the interviewees.

7 Development of business plan

Based on the research conducted for this study, a business plan will provide the final factors which could speak for or against starting up a wedding planning business. It presents the virtual company called Destinevents and lays out the offered services, the pricing and marketing strategies, as well as the financial aspects of the start up. As this study mainly concerns a wedding planning start up and not an event management company, the business plan is designed accordingly for a dedicated wedding planning company.

7.1 The company

Destinevents is a start-up company created by event manager Anya Favre. The name of the company was chosen because of the two meanings which can be read out of it. The first meaning is “destination events” which is what the company specializes in, and the second is “destiny events”. Destinevents provides full professional support of clients for their wedding from the first decisions up to their big day and even beyond. The planning of the wedding should be a stress-free and nice time in the lives of a couple. Thanks to Destinevents, couples can truly bring their own personal touch to their wedding without having to invest a big amount of time and effort. Destinevents will be focused on weddings in Switzerland but will also offer destination weddings abroad, albeit not outside Europe.

7.1.1 Company ownership

Destinevents is a stand-alone enterprise founded and owned by event manager Anya Favre. As the company grows along the years, it will be reevaluated and decided if it should be turned into a limited liability company or a limited company, whichever one is more suitable for future business sustainability.

7.1.2 Company location

Destinevents will be based at a home office in Frauenfeld, Switzerland. In case the need for larger or different facilities arises in the future, the owner will reconsider renting a new office space in Eastern Switzerland.

7.1.3 Mission

The satisfaction of our clients is our foremost concern, which is why we give them our complete attention and make their dreams come true. No matter the country or the theme, be it glamorous, western, Indian or fairytale, we are ready to go the extra mile to exceed expectations.

7.1.4 Objectives

It is the objective of Destinevents to give couples wanting to get married or renew their vows a first class organizing service which reaches from the first choices on budget and where to do the ceremony over the big day itself and even to the honeymoon. Offering an attractive and complete package, we feel confident that the company will be able to double its income within three years.

7.2 Services

Destinevents offers its clients a complete and professional organization of their wedding:

- ✓ Planning and organizing of destination weddings abroad and Swiss weddings
- ✓ Detailed advice and tips for the planning beforehand and for the big day
- ✓ Budget planning
- ✓ Location search in Switzerland and abroad
- ✓ Vendor search and discounts in Switzerland and abroad
- ✓ Graphic design for invitations, thank you notes, table cards, menu cards and so on
- ✓ Attendance of the rehearsal
- ✓ Attendance and supervision on the wedding day
- ✓ Planning of the honeymoon

7.3 Market Analysis

This chapter lays out the customer segments targeted by Destinevents as well as their needs and the positioning strategy of the company. A PEST analysis shows the political, economic, social and technological factors in the wedding business and a competition analysis reveals the companies which would compete with Destinevents on the wedding planner market.

7.3.1 Market segmentation

With 5'891 weddings in the Eastern Switzerland region in the year 2014, and the numbers not having varied much in the past five years (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015), the wedding market appears to be staying stable. Therefore, Destinevents primarily markets to those people who are in the focus of any wedding - brides and grooms. Moreover, this market segment can be separated into two categories which are interesting for the company. First, there are brides and grooms wanting to get married in Switzerland and second, there are those wanting a destination wedding, meaning a wedding abroad.

Further, Destinevents will target the customer segment of Bridesmaids and Groomsmen, as well as family members and other guests of the couple getting married or renewing its vows.

All the customer segments targeted are mainly from Eastern Switzerland. Partly, because the company is based in the stated region and partly, because the main language of the service provider as well as its partners is German. Destination weddings are also targeted since the organizer is fluent in English and French and is accustomed to foreign travel and business.

7.3.2 Market needs and positioning strategy

In the wedding planning business, the market needs are based on couples desiring to have a wedding which is planned and carried out professionally and into every last detail. Such couples may find out, after setting up their budget and researching different vendors, that such a wedding takes more time and money to organize than expected. This is when they contact a professional wedding planner who can accompany them through their wedding planning procedure and who can make their dream wedding happen all the while staying within the planned budget. An additional special scenario takes place when couples wish to have a destination wedding. They may start searching for a venue and vendors but realize that the organizing is difficult because of the language barriers or because communication mostly takes place by e-mail and not face to face. This is another situation where couples seek professional help.

Destinevents will thus position itself as a full service wedding organizer and coordinator with an additional special focus on destination weddings. It will further target families and friends of the bride and groom and put a special emphasis on high quality partners thanks to whom the company can ensure cost saving but yet a high quality wedding.

7.3.3 PEST Analysis

The PEST analysis allows an evaluation of the potential of a business in context of a specific market by examining the external environment of the company. PEST is an acronym for political, economic, social and technological, as these are the four aspects which are examined (businessballs.com, 2016).

Table 7: PEST analysis

Political	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tax situation of married couples, known as the “Heiratsstrafe”, the marriage penalty, in which they pay more taxes than single people could have a negative impact on the wedding planning business, as couples may decide to just stay in a registered partnership instead of getting married (Zimmerling, 2014). • The retirement provision situation in Switzerland could, on the other hand, have a positive impact on the wedding business. Only married couples have the right to widow’s pensions in case of the death of the partner, couples in a registered partnership do not have this benefit (ch.ch, 2016). • The inheritance tax of couples in a registered partnership is high compared to that of married couples. Depending on the canton it can be up to 50% of the total inheritance (Chatelain, 2015). This is a reason for couples to get married which can be positive for the wedding industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The economic situation has a high impact on the wedding industry, as weddings cost a lot. Couples often have a limited budget and try to cut costs. • The Swiss franc is strong, so destination weddings could become more popular • Competition is growing as wedding planning gets more known • People think wedding planners are expensive.
Social	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Christian community in Switzerland has seen a decline of about 30% since 1970 (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2015). As consequence less people are having church ceremonies and big parties, which can be negative for the wedding industry. • The wedding ceremony is often about sharing a unique moment with friends and family. Therefore, couples may look for ideas and advice from these people. Other sources which help couples organizing their wedding are online wedding planners or bridal magazines, which are also a form of competition to wedding planners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology such as internet has made it easier for couples to organize their own weddings and is a form of competition for wedding planners. • On the other hand, technology such as social media and internet is also a big help for marketing to clients for wedding planners. Pictures on the company’s website can show couples which type of weddings have already been organized and clients can easily find the company if the SEO (search engine optimization) is done effectively.

source: Author’s table with data from multiple sources

Due to the fact that wedding planners have the reputation of being expensive, it is important for Destinevents to offer affordable solutions. It will be made clear to the clients that Destinevents will stay within the budget they give. The company must also plan its marketing strategy in a way to show couples that a wedding planner brings added value with respect to the help which can be found online or in magazines. In order to differentiate Destinevents from the competition, it is going to specifically offer destination wedding planning services.

7.3.4 Competition

There are five wedding planning businesses in the region of Eastern Switzerland. This is not a high number considering the size of the region and considering that in comparison, only the canton of Zurich occupies a total of 22 wedding planning agencies (Zankyou weddings, 2016). Following is a short description of the five competitive companies in Eastern Switzerland:

- Wedding planner Angelica Bernard is based in Rhäzüns, Graubünden and offers the planning of all or parts of the wedding and also takes over tasks on the wedding day (zankyou weddings, 2016).
- WeddingPlan St.Moritz Engadin Graubünden is located in St.Moritz with a branch in Chur, Graubünden. The company mainly targets people getting married in the canton of Graubünden by advertising weddings in the Alps. They provide full- or partial planning of the wedding (zankyou weddings, 2016).
- Art of wedding is based in Schaffhausen and offers the organizing of all or parts of the wedding (zankyou weddings, 2016).
- Your perfect day is located in St.Gallen and targets mainly couples in the St.Gallen region. They provide the planning of parts or all the wedding (zankyou weddings, 2016).

None of the above mentioned wedding planners is specialized in destination weddings, which Destinevents will specifically offer in its range of service.

7.4 Strategy and Implementation

Destinevents will differentiate itself from other wedding planners by specifically offering the organization of destination weddings in addition to weddings in Switzerland. It will also make clear to potential customers that there are no hidden costs. The budget they give us will be the basis for our cost estimate which will be all inclusive, i.e., including goods and services.

7.4.1 SWOT

The SWOT analysis serves the purpose of examining the internal and external factors of a company and is useful for business and marketing planning (Businessballs.com, 2016).

Table 8: SWOT analysis

strengths	weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destinevents will differentiate itself from the competition by specifically offering destination wedding planning. • It will have high quality partners • It will offer high quality planning service • It will have the the SEO for its website done professionally so people can find it on the internet. • Tri-lingual planner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company is going to be new, without any references. For a business, which relies strongly on references from former clients, this can be a challenge.
opportunities	threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to the strong Swiss Franc destination weddings could become increasingly popular • Social media can give us access to customers who could not be reached otherwise • There are fewer competing wedding planners in Eastern Switzerland than in other regions (Zankyou weddings, 2016). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The competition is big. Online wedding planners are a threat to the wedding planner business. • The seasonality in the wedding business can be a threat. • The strong Swiss Franc can be a threat for weddings in Switzerland, as people do not want to spend too much money. • There are normally no repeating customers, which means new customers must constantly be won. • The tax situation in Switzerland, where married couples pay more taxes than unmarried couples may be a threat to the business (Zimmerling, 2014).

Source: Author's table with data from multiple sources

7.4.2 Sales strategy

The sales strategy implemented by Destinevents will be the following:

- Word of mouth and references from past clients
- Presence at wedding fairs
- Advertising in wedding- and bridal magazines
- Advertising on wedding planning websites
- Advertising on social media

7.4.3 Pricing strategy

As Destinevents is going to sell its service taking strict account of the couple's budget, it is not going to charge a fixed price per hour. Rather it will charge 15% of the total price of the parts which were organized by the planner. This way it is easier to control the couple's budget (Bplans.com, 2016).

7.5 The financial plan

The financial plan lays out the start up costs for Destinevents, as well as the time it might take to break even based on three different scenarios. The profit and loss statement shows the company's situation after one year and the income statement gives a detailed look at the company expenses and revenues for the first year.

7.5.1 investment cost

As Destinevents is going to be a stand-alone enterprise, there is no minimum investment cost, which there would be for a limited liability company. Additionally, the home office reduces the initial investment cost. The first cost to arise is the purchase of a computer budgeted at CHF 1'500.-. A webmaster budgeted at CHF 2'500.- must then be hired to set up a website which will afterward be updated and taken care of by the owner of Destinevents. The budget of the initial marketing campaign is of CHF 5'000.-. The marketing campaign comprises public relations, magazine ads and social media. In order to protect the company, a budget of CHF 500.- is set for the setting up of the terms & conditions and the contracts. The owner of the company has a family member who can help with these formalities, which reduces the cost. CHF 2'000.- are budgeted for extra or unexpected start up costs.

Table 9: Initial Investment cost

Computer	CHF 1'500.00
Website	CHF 2'500.00
Initial Marketing	CHF 5'000.00
Terms & conditions / Contracts	CHF 500.00
Extras / unexpected	CHF 2'000.00
Total investment cost	CHF 11'500.00

Source: Author's table

Table 10 shows the expenses of the company for the remainder of the year after the initial investment cost. A monthly marketing budget of CHF 100.- will be needed for Google AdWords and Facebook ads. There is no fixed cost for the payroll as the owner of Destinevents will take what is left over after all deductions, as salary.

Table 10: Company expenses

Payroll	CHF 0
Promotion cost	CHF 1'200
Total cost	CHF 1'200

Source: Author's table

7.5.2 Break-even Analysis

The payback period depends very strongly on the time it takes for clients to hire the company as their wedding planner, on the number of guests and if the couple contracts Destinevents to organize its whole wedding or just a part of it.

Table 11 shows the services which are likely to be organized by a wedding planner and the potential cost for each service. The prices are calculated for 80 guests and for 2 hours of open bar. The prices in the table can vary strongly depending on the selected partners and other factors and are thus hypothetical.

Table 11: Services likely organized by a wedding planner

Service	Cost
location	CHF 5'000 (a)
Invitations	CHF 1'000 (b)
Catering (food and wine, without bar drinks)	CHF 150 per person (CHF 12'000) (c)
Florist	CHF 2'000 (d)
photographer	CHF 2'000 (e)
Hair & Makeup	CHF 300 (f)
Band or DJ	CHF 2'000 (g)
Open bar for after party (2 hours)	CHF 30 per person per hour (CHF 4'800) (h)
Total cost of services organized by wedding planner	CHF 29'100

Source: Author's table with multiple sources

a. (Kartause Ittingen, 2016)

b. (Karten Kaiser, 2016)

c. (musik und show, 2016)

d. (musik und show, 2016)

e. (superfotos.ch, 2016)

f. (Beratung & Styling, 2016)

g. (musik und show, 2016)

h. (Giessbach, 2016)

In order to calculate the break-even point, three scenarios were taken into account: the worst case scenario, which would be one wedding per year, the realistic scenario, which is three weddings per year and the best case scenario, which is 30 weddings per year. The best case scenario is based on the case of organizing a wedding every week during the high season which goes from April to mid October (Anderegg, 2016).

According to Pilliard, a Swiss wedding celebration counts 80 invitees on average, which is the number used in the three scenarios (Camponovo, 2015). As most couples will probably want to organize some parts of the wedding themselves, the scenarios only take into account some of the components. The location, the catering, the florist, the photographer and the hair & makeup costs as

shown in table 12. These are the components of a wedding, which are more complicated to organize alone.

Table 12: Services organized by Destinevents for three scenarios

Service	Cost
location	CHF 5'000
Invitations	CHF 1'000
Catering (food and wine, without bar drinks)	CHF 150 per person = CHF 12'000 for 80 people
Florist	CHF 2'000
photographer	CHF 2'000
Hair & Makeup	CHF 300
Total cost of services organized by wedding planner	CHF 22'300

Source: Author's table

As previously mentioned, the owner of Destinevents will take 15% of the cost of services organized by the company as salary. This equals CHF 3'345 for a wedding as shown in table 12. The tables 13 and 14, as well as figure 10 illustrate the payback period for the three scenarios.

Table 13: Payback period – three scenarios

Number of weddings	Cash Revenue / event	Investment cost	Payback period
1 Weddings	CHF 3'345	CHF 11'500	3.4 years
3 Weddings	CHF 10'035	CHF 11'500	1.1 years
30 Weddings	CHF 100'350	CHF 11'500	0.1 years

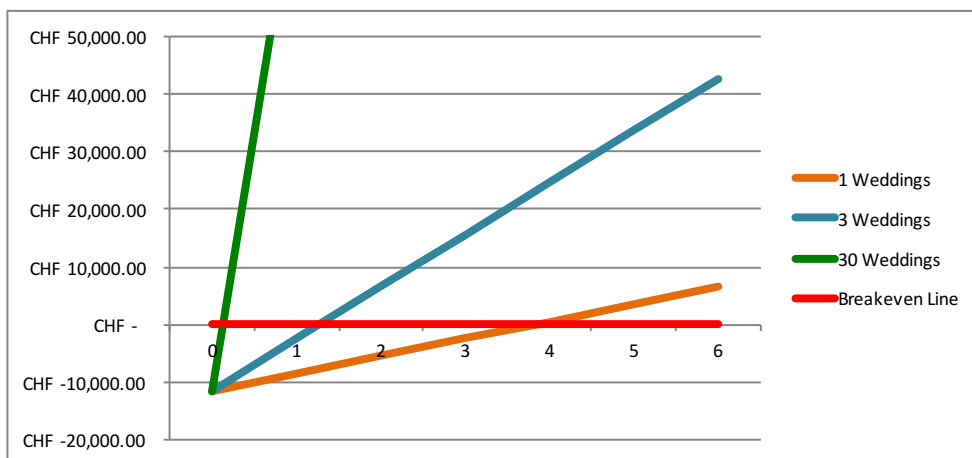
Source: Author's table

Table 14: Payback period – revenue per year in CHF

Years:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Weddings	-11500	-8489.5	-5479	-2468.5	542	3552.5	6563
3 Weddings	-11500	-2469	6563	15595	24626	33658	42689
30 Weddings	-11500	78815	169130	259445	349760	440075	530390

Source: Author's table

Figure 9: Payback period chart for three scenarios



Source: Author's figure

In the worst case scenario with one wedding per year, the payback period would take 3.4 years. In the realistic scenario with three weddings per year, the payback period would be 1.1 years and in the best case scenario with 30 weddings per year, the initial investment can be earned back in 0.1 years.

7.5.3 Profit and loss

Table 15 displays the profit for the year in the case of the three scenarios presented in the break even analysis. In the best case scenario, a profit of CHF 99'150.- can be expected at the end of the year. In the realistic scenario the company can count with a profit of CHF 8'835.- and in the worst case scenario there would be a profit of CHF 2'145.-. The profit at the end of the year is equivalent to salary of the company's owner.

Table 15: Profit and loss

Best-case scenario: 15 weddings		Realistic scenario: 3 weddings		Worst case scenario: 1 wedding	
Average Revenue/wedding	3345	Average entrance fee (CHF)	3345	Average entrance fee (CHF)	3345
Number of weddings	30	Occupation	3	Occupation	1
Total Revenue	100'350	Total Revenue	10'035	Total Revenue	3'345
Cost of staff (CHF)	0	Cost of staff (CHF)	0	Cost of staff (CHF)	0
Promotion cost (CHF)	1'200	Promotion cost (CHF)	1'200	Promotion cost (CHF)	1'200
Total cost (CHF)	1'200	Total cost (CHF)	1'200	Total cost (CHF)	1'200
Profit (CHF)	99'150	Profit (CHF)	8'835	Profit (CHF)	2'145

Source: Author's table

The income statement in table 16 below is calculated for the realistic scenario of three weddings in the first year of the company. The calculated profit of CHF 8'579.- is after deduction of the taxation rate of 2.9% which applies to Frauenfeld, where Destinevents will be based (Steuerverwaltung.tg, 2015).

Table 16: Income statement summary

Summary Income Statement			
Revenue			
Core	10'035		100.0%
Other	0		0.0%
Total		10'035	100.0%
Cost of Sale			
Core	0		0.0%
Other	0		0.0%
Total		0	0.0%
Gross profit			
Core	10'035		100.0%
Other	0		0.0%
Total		10'035	100.0%
Direct Payroll			
	0		100%
		0	
Direct Expenses			
Distribution	0		
Operation	0		
Other	0		
Gross Operating Profit			
Undistributed Costs			
Admin & General	0		
Sales & Marketing	1'200		100%
Human Resources	0		
POM	0		
Total Undistributed		1200	
Fixed Charges			
Operating Cost	0		100%
Interest	0		
Other	0		
Total Fixed Charges		0	
Net Profit		8'835	
Taxation		256.22	2.90%
Profit		8'579	

Source: Author's table with data from Steuerverwaltung.tg (Steuerverwaltung.tg, 2015)

Overall Conclusion

The wedding situation in Switzerland is stable and has even been seeing a rising number of civil weddings in Eastern Switzerland since 2010, which sets a good prerequisite for the start up of a wedding planning company in the stated region. According to wedding planner Pilliard, Swiss people are willing to pay more for their wedding than couples of the neighboring country France (Pilliard, 2016). On the other hand, there are some factors which speak against a wedding planning company start up according to the questioned interviewees. They state that Swiss couples prefer taking things into their own hands and giving tasks to family and friends instead of hiring a professional wedding planner. Anderegg states that a wedding planning company would have trouble starting up because there are usually no repeating customers and it relies on references which are nonexistent at the beginning (Anderegg, 2016). A further big problem is the prejudice of wedding planners being too expensive. Wedding planner Vogel explains that the couple hiring a wedding planner first gives its wedding budget and then the planner calculates his own price into the budget. Wedding planners can get high discounts with their partners, which practically results in the couples making a plus (Vogel, 2016).

The business plan in chapter 7 shows that the investment cost for a wedding planning start up would approximately be of CHF 11'500. In a realistic scenario of three organized weddings per year, the break even period would be 1.1 years. The profit after taxes at the end of the year would be of CHF 8'579. The break even period of the worst case scenario, which is one organized wedding per year is of 3.4 years. Therefore, the expected yearly income or profit for the wedding planner in the considered scenario is small.

If the wedding planning company can acquire a good reputation and the Swiss population can get clarified on the price of hiring a wedding planner, it may come to be a successful enterprise. Strong competition in the event management field may offset these upside parameters. From the results of the study and the business plan, it is not recommended to start up a dedicated wedding planning company in Eastern Switzerland for someone wanting to make a living off the job. Instead, it is recommended to set up the company as a side job.

In conclusion:

- The business plan and especially the financial plan makes clear that it is not possible to open a wedding planning company and expect it to have an income corresponding to one full-time equivalent (FTE) (HRzone, 2016). So until the company generates enough profit

for at least one full-time equivalent, the founder can only work as part time wedding or event planner.

- A wedding planning company start up could make sense in Eastern Switzerland in combination with the organizing of other private and corporate events besides weddings. In this sense the company should call itself an “event planning company” instead of a “wedding planning company”.
- Subsequently the owner should call herself “event planner” instead of “wedding planner”.
- Moreover, it is an advantage for wedding or event planners to have a background in the event business which they can reference on their website.
- A customer segment to target specifically would be couples wanting to get married abroad
- The pricing and budgeting strategy of the company should be clearly stated on the website so potential customers can understand that hiring a wedding planner does not mean spending a big amount of money.
- In order to grow, the company needs references from customers, which means marketing activity is very important, especially in the beginning.

For further research it could be interesting to consider the case when the wedding company is associated to other events and/or analyze wedding planning niche markets such as same sex weddings, cruise weddings or other.

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Appendix I: Interviews

E: Interview with Urs Anderegg Photographer

Name: Urs

CSP: Photographer

Q: How many weddings do you photograph per year on average?

R: Well, it has been... in the last five, six years it has always been about 12 to 15 weddings.

Q: And how has this number evolved in the past years?

R: Well, I clearly have more requests but there comes a moment when I'm just fully booked. I mean, I work 40% at a library, we have two children, uhm, and it's my turn at least one day per week because my wife works then and that just restricts my capacities. Well, if you have a longer wedding... my rule of thumb is that if you photograph for 10 hours, for example, then you'll be retouching for another 20 hours. That makes it about 30 hours of work and depending on different factors it can take three, four days. So that way it's my goal to do a wedding only about every two weeks. Of course there's the main season, May, or this year it starts in April, then until September and then it's actually already over again with weddings.

Q: And where are the weddings you photograph?

R: Well, because I have a family I don't look for weddings that are too far away... also with my homepage, I look more in St.Gallen, Thurgau, Appenzell, I live in St.Gallen. So especially Eastern Switzerland and here and there I'll go to Zurich and also... well, some years ago I would also go to Bern or places like that but then the time and effort is quite big with the trip to go there. I also think it's quite nice to be home again in the evening at a reasonable hour. A few years ago I liked to stay late, partying with them until 2 in the morning until the end but somehow... yes... maybe also dancing. By now I've photographed a good 100 weddings.

Q: What are the biggest changes in wedding trends in the past years?

R: Well, now there was a time when I noticed... the Polaroid cameras were very popular. Then you would make photos during the celebration, uhm, always also in the evening, and now there is clearly a photo booth at about a third of the weddings, just kind of a photo station. That's something that doesn't attract me, just because I want to make a different type of photo. I want to go more in the direction of reporting or just to try and put the people into their natural light or into a liveliness, that's

my goal and I don't have photo stations in my offer. I've done it twice already but not in the sense that I took care of the station during the whole time but more that it just worked.

Q: And what can you tell me about the willingness to pay of the couples in that context?

R: I've really never had any problems with that. By me it's the case that my clients have to pay 30% of the approximate cost in advance and then I send them... they get a CD, and now I just changed to USB stick, uhm, and I make an online gallery and if the people wish to, they can go download the photos there, also the guests to whom they give the access code. I've really never had any problems, I've had luck there. And I will get problems someday but I won't change my system because of that, well, I just think you have to expect one or two cases in a hundred.

Q: What can you tell me about the wedding styles and trends?

R: Well, I just have the feeling that there's still a big amount of very classic weddings actually. I would say the church aspect is one change. That there are more free ceremonies. Sometimes that not only a pastor does the ceremony but also maybe an writer or someone. Then, that the church gets left out, well, maybe at one third of the weddings there isn't any church part. Then I would say that the couple is very often expecting a baby. That was maybe not so widespread some years ago. But that's what often gives the impulse, when a family is going to be created, that couples get married before. But I still had a thought, you know, when you look at the weddings from the outside, everyone has the feeling that they're doing it in such an individual and original way but actually there is still so many aspects that are standardized. Many people have some special car, maybe a racing car or and old timer but... often it's something with balloons or somehow at a wedding there are always so many classic aspects. And also, there is like a script that belongs in every wedding, classically you do the photos of the couple, then comes the ceremony, the aperitif, then there's maybe something going on, productions or something, then there's another small aperitif and then the party begins.

Q: and do you always get contacted by the couple or also by wedding planners?

R: I haven't ever had contact with a wedding planner up to now. I actually always got my requests directly. I would say one part comes through weddings, where I photograph, when a person was going to get married soon too and thought "he actually did that quite well", then they ask you, and sometimes it's even the witnesses. And one part comes in over the website, people that I don't know at all or where I don't exactly know, maybe they like the pictures or something.

Q: and do the couples organize everything alone or do they have someone helping them?

R: Well, I'm sure they're happy if someone helps them and as photographer you come into the scene quite early on, I would say normally you're something like eight or six months in advance... you come together and there you actually also can have a bit of a wedding planner role, even as photographer, because you can say, how many people do you have? Do you have 200 people? Ok, then you have about 100 minutes at the aperitif with the line to congratulate the couple, so actually you can help them quite a bit. If something is still missing, I already have my own collection of addresses with which I've made some good experiences, so if they ask if there's still something missing, do they still need something, then... but it's very nice to be able to meet so early because you can really plan enough time for the photos and I can give them tips about what makes sense from my perspective.

Q: What are the most important factors for a couple to hire a wedding planner?

R: Well, I think it's actually a very big project, a wedding. You know, you have things to organize on many different levels, you want a nice location, you want music, you want a DJ, you want a photographer, you maybe need flowers, you have an idea for... well, a graphic idea... yes, I think they are sometimes just a bit scared of that big task and would like some consultancy. Also the time aspect is sometimes difficult to estimate, the first time you do it. In that sense also experiences and that the planner can take things off of your hands. I think it's the case that one is sometimes quite happy. I think, you know, traditionally couples look in their circle of friends or family or ask the witnesses or maybe someone who can lead the day, who has already proven himself before. Just someone that you trust can do it.

Q: And what do you think of the income of the couple?

R: Yes, I think... well, I think that not everybody wants to or can invest in a wedding planner. I have the feeling that I am positioned in a middle segment with my wedding photos. I'm sure there are cheaper photographers around and... but when I think back, I have the feeling that the couples usually keep the strings in their own hands at my weddings. They may have hired someone for certain things, graphic expertise for some idea they had with wedding invitations and the table cards or something. But someone who stood over everything and managed everything... there the question is, is there the need for such people in Eastern Switzerland? I think that, maybe in bigger cities like Zürich or something you will surely find people who need a planner, when maybe both are full time workers and have high salaries and who also think it's very important and who place a high significance to their wedding and it needs to be perfect. And then they hire someone. Maybe so they don't have to give so much work to the witnesses or something.

Q: So what potential do you see for a wedding planner in Eastern Switzerland?

R: Well, I have the feeling it's really not very common here. And I also think the economic situation right now is at a very medium stage. If somehow there were a full high and salaries were higher, then people would probably afford it. I think it's difficult to assess because I've never had direct experiences with wedding planners, but I have the impression it's quite... well, when you just newly got into the business you won't have an easy time finding your clients with wedding planning. Because your capital is probably experience and connections with professionals, but if you really get paid for having that knowledge or for having looked at those places... I think it's hard. For example a hotel that offers basically the whole service with food, tables, florists and so on... there you don't need an independent planner. They have their partners with whom they work. The question is, where is a wedding planner needed in the end? I think there are weddings, for example in Tuscany, that take place somewhere in a little castle, and people from here want to marry there but don't know it so well, but they want stable weather at a very nice place and so on. And then I think it makes sense to take someone who has already been there, but it's so much work then to plan that, and you need to make it visible on your homepage as wedding planner, that you have that knowledge. But if you talk about the exact location then you have the problem that people find other ways to get the location themselves. So you have to give some information but still keep some back. It's really difficult.

E: Interview with Karthause Ittingen

Name: Carmen

CSP: Event coordinator

Q: How many weddings do you host per year?

R: Well we have... I discussed it with my two colleagues who have been at the Kartause for many years and now we're at... it always depends how you count it, if you also count the small civil weddings, but let's say about 80 per year. This year we had... well last year, 2015 we had over 90 but on average probably about 80.

Q: And how has the number changed in the last couple of years?

R: We can't really tell like that. It always kind of depends on how you take it out of the system, do civil weddings count? From how many guests do you count? Do you also count a wedding with only 10 guests? But about 80 weddings are organized since a couple of years, yes. And these are already quite a few if you take into consideration that the wedding season is also a bit compressed from April to September, nowadays sometimes October. Uhm, the winter months are not very often booked,

only very scattered, so considering this, it is a lot. Sometimes also Fridays and Saturdays, so we're equipped in a way that we can have multiple parties at once with separate autonomous kitchen teams and so on.

Q: And where do your clients come from, from a geographic point of view?

R: Well, mainly the German part of Switzerland. Anything else is really an exception, also because Germany is very nearby.

Q: So more from Eastern Switzerland or also further away?

R: Of course, mostly Eastern Switzerland and also a lot from the region of Frauenfeld and the surrounding towns, uhm, but it is possible that people occasionally come from Zürich, Lucerne and God knows where else, especially that one Person in the couple comes from further away.

Q: What are the biggest changes in wedding trends in the last years?

R: Well, we just have that... of course we don't have that written down and saved statistically or anything but what we've observed is, for example, that people often tend to have smaller and smaller wedding parties, so the trend is not to go as large anymore, but it also depends on the nationality. Many... for example Italian weddings are still Grande fiesta with lots of dancing and everything. Then, what we've also noticed is that, uhm, the budget has gotten a bit dispersed in the sense that the things going on around, the framework program and, uhm, all those kind of things have a higher importance than the actual food and dinner, than the gastronomic service, the food and beverage. For example there are trends, also like cupcakes instead of a wedding cake, so often you have a dessert buffet with a cupcake stand. Or Photo boxes are almost always a hit. Uhm, what else is there? Many couples forego the religious church wedding and it's not really so important. But they still want to enjoy that type of ceremony, I mean the celebrating and then they just have their own pastor or just a speaker or someone of the family who is used to holding speeches or someone like that. So the ceremony is kept almost same as in a church, the middle aisle down which they walk to the front, to the speaker, and then they'll just have a ceremony like that. Often also outdoors, meaning open-air weddings, which we also offer, uhm, it doesn't need to be a classical church wedding anymore.

Q: So the trend is going more towards symbolic weddings than religious ones?

R: Yes, well there are still very classic traditional church weddings, but many say that they want to forego this, but they still want more than the civil wedding at which you just sign a paper. And yes, that's something we observed, and it's also often the case that there is only one date. Before, it was normal, uhm, to have the civil wedding, uhm, at the civil registry office and then one only celebrated

with a small circle, just with the family and the witnesses, and then you did the church wedding on another date, sometimes even one year later. And now it's often only one day. So, for example, the civil registry office is in the morning and in the evening there's the big party. And in these cases the parties are sometimes also separated. For example, you have 20 people for the civil wedding, then there's a big aperitif with 150 people and in the evening it's reduced to 60 people again, something like that. It varies a lot.

Q: What factors influence a couple to hire a wedding planner?

R: I think they, of course hope to have pressure taken off their backs. They are all very committed in their jobs and with sports clubs and things, and hope that they can hand over some work to someone else. Maybe also, if they don't want to load too much work onto their witnesses or those leading through the day. Uhm, they're surely also happy to have tips and experiences, professional, uhm yes, counseling who knows a lot about the material and who has the necessary connections, who has those addresses and contacts, for the framework program, hairdresser, locations... sometimes if the couple is short with the date, if the wedding planner is really good she might have some loop holes and is still more likely to get a location than if the couple asks itself, but I don't really know. Uhm, anyway the trustworthiness and that you can trust those tips. And I can imagine that there is a certain pressure for the couples. You know, you go to many weddings as a guest yourself and you always want to top them, you always want to make it better and nicer. It's often that way and, well, I can imagine that there's the hope that the wedding planner manages to create the cherry on top of the cake.

Q: What can you tell me about the budget or the willingness to pay of the couples in this context?

R: We don't really know because we don't get involved in that. That's really between the couple and the wedding planner. We don't have anything to do with that, but the planners have different salary models, some take a percentage of the whole budget, I think that's more of an American trend where the wedding planner concept also comes from, so they just take so and so much percent of the total volume for themselves and then there are others who have an hourly rate. That's a bit more common in Switzerland as far as I know. 150 CHF per hour or something like that.

Q: Which tasks does the couple like to delegate to the wedding planner?

R: Well, they surely like to delegate... for example the budget plan. A wedding planner should have a professional template and also a certain experience so there are no bad surprises. So you can have faith that these numbers are correctly applied and that it comes out in a way that you can afford the party. And, uhm, the price comparison. The wedding planner normally has experience and contacts, and knows exactly what you have to budget for food, for the rings, all these details that come with it.

Then some administrative things like writing up the guest reservations, room bookings if the whole extended family announces itself, that's... you shouldn't underestimate what comes in your direction with all the lactose intolerances and then, "I still want a baby bed and also a babysitter", and so on. It's surely also something that older and wealthier couples count on, that someone can take over things like administration, and not leave it to friends or witnesses, things like that. Then surely to look for the location if you don't have something in mind already where you absolutely want to do it, or for example a very specific place, then, if I were getting married I would also trust them to be able to give me some examples of where I could get married, on an island or whatever, you know. Then for contacting the photographer, the hair dresser, the makeup artist and so on, and also the framework program with a bus or carriage, and as I said, cupcake queen or whatever. Then the whole support and counseling. Couples also go to wedding fairs and get some information. heiraten.ch and all those kind of websites. You can really cover yourself in information but it's also always nice to have that personal contact and that there's trust and sympathy, so that you can have faith in the counseling and the tips, and reassurance and good conscience which is... maybe towards the end... And what they do themselves, I think surely everything that concerns decisions, what do we want, what don't we want, uhm, all the ideas, bringing in a personal handwriting to make the celebration really personal so it fits with the personalities and the hobbies, to have identification with the couple and, uhm, deciding on drinks, guest list, sitting places, things like that. I can imagine these are the things the bride and groom do together. But well, we don't really know because we're like a third aspect in the constellation.

Q: What do you think of the potential for wedding planners in Eastern Switzerland?

R: I see it as a very very challenging business. If someone really has the basic formation, well, a formation that has something to do with it and that he can take reference to, it can be any domain, it can be a lot of things, administration, event management, but also a gastronomic background or photographer, anything that still covers an area, then I can imagine he could have a chance, but he really has to have experience and has to be very active, also marketing, in the way he presents himself, making contacts and maintaining addresses and contacts. Uhm, the budget of a wedding is huge and I just don't know how many people want to and can afford, additionally to that big sum, to invest into a professional counselor. Uhm, we are... it's special here at the Kartause, we're really professionals in that field. I haven't been here so long but I've done things like this before and my three colleagues, we're a team of four people in the reservation and sales department, and we also do seminars and banquets, and all kinds of events but of course also weddings, and we're professionals. And I have the impression that we can cover pretty much of what a wedding planner would also do. As I said consulting, we also have those contacts, for example they can get room reservations directly through

us with a contingency, so the couple has nothing to do with it and the witnesses don't get bothered either. There's also a lot we do, not like service providers where we charge a certain sum per hour, except if it goes beyond the normal administrative things, then we do. But otherwise there is a lot included that a wedding planner does or charges for. For us the communication is much easier if we can communicate directly with the couple, really much easier. Sometimes it's... well I don't really have experience with wedding planners but my colleague has to say everything twice because she doesn't know who told what to who. Then the guests call for the rooms, when actually they got an email with clear information but that somehow didn't get communicated to everybody. Well that's... it's quite difficult like that. And the decisions are anyway made by the couple at the end so actually the wedding planner is just a cumbersome intermediary in a certain way, not with everything of course but... I just have the feeling that the Swiss, well, young couples who get married for the first time, don't like to hand over the reins so much. You really need to trust. That's again the thing with the personal handwriting. If someone is just in a situation in life where he's extremely occupied and gets married because it just resulted that way and he would like a relief, then I can imagine, yes, then he might pay for it. But if you're planning one year, one and a half years in advance, I have the feeling, yes, then you do it yourself because you want to find the information yourself and the decisions and things. My tip would be, if a couple asked me "Do you think we should hire a wedding planner?", then I would say, really clearly no. For our situation at the Kartause, we can basically offer the same service for less money and then I would rather split things like reservations and those things between two, three friends and family, siblings, than only the witnesses. Just split the work, and they really enjoy helping for a celebration like that. They have fun giving their opinions and experiences and just supporting a bit.

E: Interview with Fix & Fein

Name: Simon

CSP: Caterer

Q: How many weddings do you cater per year?

R: So, it is about between 25 and... and 40 weddings per year.

Q: And have you noticed a difference in the number of weddings in the past years?

R: Yes, they have gotten more. We were just able to position ourselves really well in the region of Schaffhausen with our caterings. Uhm, we've been doing that... before we did it with the Müller Beck, we did many caterings with the bakery. We Delivered Aperitifs, and then we founded a second company, Fix & Fein und now we really do everything with this company. It is also separately

accounted for, uhm, we also have a nice party room at the river Rhein, down by the Rheinfall where we also rent the room for weddings and other events. So actually the number of weddings has augmented in the past years.

Q: And where do most of your clients come from?

R: It really stays very regional but now with the party room at the Rheinfall... there we also have people from further away, sometimes even from Zürich or Winterthur. But otherwise we are really rooted here in the region. People here know us and acknowledge us.

Q: And what are the biggest changes in wedding trends that you have noticed?

R: People want more and more... very many want a bit of, uhm, extra things and so on. But I can say that actually people often prefer the traditional aspect. This has really proven itself. Not all the new things that come, uhm, are necessarily good. But otherwise I haven't noticed any real trend like, say, super exclusive wedding cakes and stuff. We don't really see that kind of thing by us very often.

Q: Ok. And what about themed weddings?

R: We've had some of those already. Mostly the theme is... now we just had one this morning that was country, American style and things like that and then we then have to adapt. Brownies, Hamburgers and things like that.

Q: And what about the readiness to pay of the people?

R: Uhm, it's quite funny. Well, we don't actually have any problems with the payment behavior with the caterings, here everything gets paid. Uhm, of course it often happens that people have many high demands to a wedding and so on. And then when we make an offer, then they mostly see... then it's mostly, uhm, the level of what they imagined is too far apart from the price. But mostly the people are actually willing to pay quite some money for their wedding which is nice of course.

Q: And then you told me that you are mostly contacted by the couple itself and that you don't have much to do with wedding planners.

R: Yes, exactly. Here it's really the case that we get a request by phone or by mail, uhm, then, uhm, I get into contact with the couple and then we really just discuss the whole aperitif and so on, we discuss food with them and then we can just send them an offer and then we adjust one or two things and afterwards... it actually always works this way.

Q: Ok. So even though you don't have much contact with wedding planners, what do you think of the potential for new wedding planners in eastern Switzerland?

R: Yes I think the potential is there for sure. Uhm, it's surely also a relief for the couple who's getting married because they really have so much to do in that moment or in that intense time and if you can hand all that over to someone who can plan the whole thing. I think it's more a bit of a, uhm, trust problem or that maybe people don't want to give the most important day of their lives into the hands of someone else. I think that's kind of the reason why it isn't so popular yet.

Q: But do you think people are willing to pay for a wedding planner?

R: I think so, it just needs to be reasonable because a wedding is just also quite expensive financially, I would say in Switzerland, when you really have to spend quite some money, and, well, when you additionally see the costs of a wedding planner, well, you need to weigh it up, how much does it really serve you?

Q: And what do you think of the number of weddings nowadays regarding this aspect?

R: So, We really have enough work. But of course we also do a lot of other things. Things like... well really with the catering, it's working very well here but of course it's, I would say maybe 20% are weddings and then we have lots of birthdays and so on. But it's also fun doing a wedding. The Expectations then are mostly... The expectations are relatively high and it's nice when you can fulfill them and also the way the client wants it.

Q: You have a room. You also do weddings there.

R: Yes, we do weddings there too. It's right by the Rheinfall. We really are perfectly situated there with the view over the waterfall. There we also have... there you can... we have already set the tables in white, put candles and everything around it, we put up tents outside, uhm, yes basically the whole program.

Q: So basically you can do the job of a wedding planner?

R: Actually yes, we're just, let's say if somebody comes and says he wants a wedding, then we of course discuss, would they like standing tables? How would they like the buffet? Also how is the procedure of the ceremony and then we just plan the aperitif, so in that sense we also organize, let's say, a part of the wedding with consulting of course also with our experience, it's the best like this. And then we see to it that everybody gets something to drink. We just plan the whole aperitif.

Q: Do you think that the part with the location and the tables and so on is something that couples like to delegate?

R: yes, they can... it's surely easier if they can delegate that, it's just... We also notice, some customers are very relaxed and then one or two meetings are enough for the wedding and then we can quickly meet before and say like this and this, how do we see the situation, this is our experience, we can do it this way. Other people need one, two, three, four, five meetings until we get to a conclusion. Well it's an exciting... the planning is really exciting. Some people are super relaxed and others want to go more into detail, they want to label every little bread individually and want to have a food trial and things like that.

Q: Do you do food trials?

R: If necessary of course, yes. For an aperitif we don't need to do a food trial but when it's about dinner we can definitely discuss a test dinner.

Q: would you consider entering a partnership with a weddingplanner?

R: yeah... no actually not because we have enough experience and we can organize everything ourselves and when people come to us and want the room, for example, now, when it's about buying everything, then my experience is enough, and a planner who says "we would still have something here" is not necessary. The atmosphere is good in our room. Most people also bring tables, plates and so on themselves, but of course if they wish so, we will do it for them. We also have a florist from the region, of course. Mostly it's already enough with a bit of Ivy and rose petals, that's all. Mostly it doesn't have to be a lot.

E: Interview with Festix

Name: Dario

CSP: Event Manager

Q: How many weddings do you organize on average per year?

R: Well, I would say around 15 weddings per year. It has been pretty persistent these past years. Uhm, You know, we also organize other events and also big events all year long so, and we have to set up big constructions for big events, so weddings are rather small events. But they're important for us. You know our room that we have is mostly for weddings in the summer. We can seat 200 people in that room.

Q: Where do your clients come from geographically?

R: Uhm, most of our clients come from Thurgau. Uhm, but we have many from St.Gallen, uhm, Schaffhausen, Zurich... I'd say maybe a radius of I'd say maybe 50 Kilometers. But really just from the German part of Switzerland and especially Eastern Switzerland.

Q: And what are the biggest changes in wedding trends that you have noticed in the last years?

R: Well, we have more and more, well, free ceremonies... open air ceremonies, you know, outside, in the forest, on a field, uhm, just outside in the summer. Or sometimes under a big tent that we can set up. People want to be outside more often than before. They don't want to get married in the church anymore, you know, they want something special that others don't have. But now everybody starts to marry "differently", well, outside or something. And now it's normal to be outside or somewhere. It's not different anymore.

Q: So do you see anymore traditional weddings at all or not?

R: Well, we do see some traditional weddings, well, with the church first and then the aperitif and the dinner or things like that. It's not so common anymore, uhm, but there are some couples who still get married at the church. Uhm, I'd say maybe 20 percent. But otherwise more symbolic with an entertainer and not, uhm, religious like the church with a priest or something. I'd say that mostly the couples now go sign the register in the morning or in the afternoon or something and then they do the big party on the same day. You know, you used to normally sign the register on one day and then do the ceremony at the church on another day. Now it's not like that anymore. People want to get things over with faster, well, I could also imagine that it's because they don't do church weddings anymore so it takes less time or something. Uhm, it's hard to say sometimes.

Q: And have you noticed a difference in the willingness to pay of the couples?

R: Well, I think couples spend more money than a couple of years ago. You know, a couple of years ago couples didn't invite 100 guests or something to have dinner, only maybe 20 or something. But now weddings have become real entertainment shows and couples invite much more people. And also because it has become a standard, you know. Only few couples want to keep their wedding small, well, I think because it's not acceptable or something, you know, to invite only few guests. People feel obliged to invite everybody, work colleagues, sports colleagues, God knows what. And the dinner is the most expensive part of the wedding, well, with 150 to 200 CHF per person for the meal it gets expensive, uhm, with 100 guests that makes... up to 20'000 CHF just for food. Well, most of our guests don't spend so much on food but couples are willing to spend more than some years ago I'd say. You know, and then with all the decorations and entertainment and... yes, and they always want the photo corner, you know, the place where the guests can push the button themselves and get dressed up and

take photos... that's very popular now, everybody has it. It can be expensive for a couple to have a photo corner during the whole dinner and after party. Uhm, the florists charge a lot for weddings, more than for other events, well, couples are willing to spend money for decoration and flowers, but also for entertainment and photographers. Uhm, I think what happens next to the dinner has become more important, uhm, and so they spend a lot on these things or something. I just thought of another trend that I have noticed, well, it's that couples now want things like decoration simple, well, they like that old vintage style and don't want everything to be extravagant anymore or something. Also the dress of the bride is often simple and not so pompous and things like that. That's another trend I've noticed.

Q: And what do you think are the most important factors in the decision to hire a wedding planner?

R: Well, we aren't specifically wedding planners, we organize everything around our location and around the catering and the dinner. You know, we have a room with enough place for 200 people, so we organize weddings there. I've never really had contact with any wedding planners. Uhm, but I guess probably the couples... when both work full time they don't want to spend their free time planning their wedding, so they take a wedding planner. Also if they think the task is too big and if they aren't good at organizing, things like that. Maybe Couples with higher income are more likely to take a wedding planner, but we really don't know how the income of our clients is, so it's always hard to tell if the income has an influence, uhm, but couples mostly have friends and family and, yes, the witnesses who help organizing the wedding. But mostly probably because they're scared of a big task or because they don't have the time because they both work. You know, I have the feeling that people nowadays do so much every day that they don't have time for anything extra, like organizing a wedding. So I think they're surely happy to be able to hand over the big task. Uhm, but I would still say that they mostly like to organize things by themselves or to give tasks to friends or family.

Q: Which tasks does the couple like to delegate to the wedding planner and which tasks does it want to organize itself?

R: I think that they like to delegate things like the location, the dinner maybe, also things like sound systems or things like that. Well, in our experience we've noticed that what the couples like to do themselves is the dessert, you know, they often ask family or sometimes also guests to take desserts with them. Sometimes they also contact the pastry chef themselves and discuss with him how they want the cake and things. That's somehow something that they don't like to leave to someone else. And then I think that the couples like to choose the music, well, the DJ or something themselves. You know, then maybe you have a couple that prefers electronic music or another couple that prefers country music or something. So that's usually something they want to choose by themselves. And then

we notice that they like to do the decoration themselves. You know, we have our contacts for flowers and decoration and things but the couples want to do it themselves. They always find someone creative, a friend or a witness who is willing to invest time to decorate the place. They still need flowers but usually not so many. Yes, but I think it's the financial situation of the couple that influences what is delegated and what not. It's... I think that some couples set a budget that is well in measure with having a wedding planner and others set a too low budget, so they maybe only let the wedding planner choose the location and the rest they do themselves. Uhm, and I can imagine that some people maybe only take a wedding planner on the day of the wedding, you know, just to coordinate that day and to see that everything is working smoothly. So, you know, by us we usually organize weddings and we also ask the couple about the budget. So our clients normally have budgets between 7'000 CHF and 20'000 CHF or something like that. Well, if they have a budget of only 7'000 CHF it's not easy to make a big wedding with lots of things around it, like DJ and photo corner and things like that, you know.

Q: What do you think of the potential for a new wedding planner in Eastern Switzerland?

R: Well, I think that Swiss people like to do everything themselves. Uhm, they like to keep control over things and have a hard time handing over big tasks like organizing their wedding to someone else. I also never had anything to do with a wedding planner and for me that already proves that people don't book them very often. I really don't think a wedding planner can stand on his own two feet doing that job full time in Switzerland. It's just not interesting to the Swiss people. I don't know how it is in America, where that trend came from. Uhm, I don't know how wedding planners get people to book them, you know. People can come to us and we do the job of the wedding planner... well, for less money. People think that's a better option than paying extra for an extern person to do the job. Uhm, you know, I think that weddings organized by wedding planners are of higher quality, for sure. And I think that the competition for wedding planners is huge, you know, with all those online wedding planning kits and things like that. So I think only the best have a chance in that business, you know. It's... I don't want to sound discouraging or something but I think that the potential is quite low if I'm honest. Uhm, you really need to make a name and maybe become something like the wedding planner of the rich and famous or something. Then maybe you could get bookings a couple of times per year. It's... maybe in the big cities like Zurich. And, well, the other problem is that you don't have returning customers. People get married once and then you have to try to keep yourself known to new customers because you won't get returning customers. So you have to somehow make enough publicity or have people talking about you. It looks very challenging to me. You know, people normally come to us because we have a room and a location. That's how people find us. But a wedding planner doesn't have a location that can be found, it's just a person.

E: Interview with Debora Vogel

Name: Debora

CSP: Wedding planner

Q: How many weddings do you organize on average per year?

R: Well yes, I've got to say to this, that I don't really do this as main occupation. It's more of a hobby, for now still, because you can't just say "So I'm going to make this my job now". Because you have to build it up and you have to get into it first. And because I just finished the formation in 2011 and then I had to build up my business, I don't have regular jobs yet. Unfortunately I was able to organize only one big wedding up to now in 2014 and, uhm, since then, uhm, well I also planned the wedding of a friend but that was more because they had no money and needed my help, so that was kind of the reason why. But not because I was hired as real planner. I didn't really get anything for it either. But I don't really have regular work yet. I can't say I have one, two, three per year or something. Yes, I'm just not that far yet. That's also why I have a 100% job as bakery sales assistant and I do that... try to get it running on the side a bit. But I think it's a bit of a snowball principle you know. So when you did your first five to ten weddings, it gets spread and people talk about it. They all spread it by word of mouth and say "oh that was great and you should do that too" and so on, you know. And then it gets rolling. And if you don't have that, those first few, well that's the hardest part, getting those first few who will then spread the word. And if you don't have that it's just the hardest part getting it going. For that the business is quite hard. Especially in Switzerland.

Q: Yes, we'll get to that question later again. Can you first tell me what you have observed concerning wedding trends in the past years?

R: Well, what is surely coming more, are the free ceremonies. Uhm, there are much more than there are church ceremonies. That's a bit the trend that's coming more and more. Outdoors or somewhere in a forest cabin or in a barn, things like that... or on a mountain or somewhere. That's becoming more in fashion than just getting married in a church. In the past it was just common practice in the town church or just normal and now it's really a bit the typical thing. And a lot of vintage right now, a lot of lace and things. And many young couples only have a civil wedding. They don't do a big party afterwards or get married in a church, but they only have the civil ceremony. Those are more or less the main things.

Q: What are the Factors that influence a couple to hire a wedding planner?

R: So mostly it really is the lack of time. Typically when both have full time jobs. So that's mostly the reason, why they get the idea. That they would like to hand over something or that they don't have the time to do everything themselves. Uhm, often also because they just don't feel like planning it or because they know that it's a lot of work and that they aren't very good at organizing. Or they just think that... well the couple who hired me, she doesn't like to do phone calls, well, she actually hates to do phone calls, and also organizing things like that. So there would have been a lot that he would have had to do, and he's a pilot. And because of that it got clear right away, yes, it's going to be hard to plan it alone, you know. And that's why they told themselves... well they decided to hire me and did some research and then they thought, yes, let's do that. Exactly, so those are the most reasons actually.

Q: What about the salary of the couple?

R: Well, I have to say to that... that wedding planners are actually for free at the end. Many don't know that. Many people have the feeling that it's very expensive to have a wedding planner and that you can't afford it. But that's a myth. Because actually every wedding planner gets the budget of the couple and the wedding, especially if she has to plan everything, I'd say. And then everything should also fit into it, including the wedding planner. And actually we just look that everything fits into it and we also get a lot of discounts. So we have partners and for example, I always try to present my partners first and if it fits, if the couple chooses one of these partners, then the couple always has, let's say something like a 10% discount on every service provider. And you don't have that without wedding planner. And because of that the wedding planner is for free. Yes and actually if you think of it that way you even make a plus at the end, because you can get things cheaper and because you get tips and things from the wedding planner that you wouldn't have had otherwise, that are cheaper in the end.

Q: Ok. When I did a bit of research I always came across the amount of 150 CHF per hour.

R: Yes exactly. Well, I don't have it written that way on my site, with hourly rates or anything. By me it's more... I just put an indication so the people can imagine it more or less. You know it's a bit... let's say we earn about 10% of the price of the wedding, what it costs. That is obviously the salary that we get. I mean we do get something, but it's also what we get out in percentage on discounts with the service providers. And because of that we're for free. And I always try to tell that to everybody, also when I go to wedding fairs or places like that. To really tell the couples that I don't cost as much as it always sounds like, even if there is maybe an hourly rate of 100 CHF or something. But at the end I cost almost nothing after all because I compensate with discounts from the other service providers. And that's why it's kind of a myth that we're so expensive. And you know, if everyone always says "oh

no I can't afford this", there are barriers right away and then you can't even get to the people as wedding planner. So one would actually have to explain this somehow to all of Switzerland, or something. We're not expensive! You can really afford it, even if you really have almost no money because... or also, I Say, even just the searching for a location or something, it's really difficult and even only to be able to take that off the hands of the couples can be a big help. Or also a photographer, I mean, there are so many photographers and some of them have no education and you just don't know, are they good? Or will we have good photos afterwards? And some still have albums included in the price, some don't, and then to choose all of that, should I really take that one or not? And you can't really compare, because one has this in his package and so on. It's much harder than for me who knows and who has my partners and I know, these ones are really good and also the quality-price ratio. Then it actually makes, yes, more sense if I organize it, even if it's just, for example, the photographer or something and then there's already one important thing that's done. We can also only do parts of the wedding.

Q: And which tasks does the couple like to delegate to the wedding planner?

R: So, It just already caught my attention, I don't like hearing the word "delegate" because, well, it's actually like this, my company is called Seite an Seite (Side by Side) and yes, I would also like everything to be done side by side, and I'm not an employee or something. Delegating always means kind of, that you don't have to think of anything yourself anymore. And I don't do anything without the couple knowing it. So they always have to give their consent and say "We want it this and this way". I wouldn't just do something that they don't know about. Except if they want surprises. Or, well, if they say I'm allowed to, that they want something they don't know about, then I look at it with the witnesses a bit, how and what, and then I can very well organize something. But yes, especially what the wedding planner does the most is getting offers in, because that's also the most tiring, I mean from the service providers, from the florist, from the photographer, because, well, I usually choose three of each provider, three florists, three photographers and so on. Mostly it's first my partners, with whom I work. Then I look which ones could fit, what style they have, I mean the couple, and then I show them the providers and then they can say yes. They can also go look around the hompages of the providers and then when they feel like "yes, we like him" or "we'd like to go with this one or this one". And then mostly also the location. So I also go look at the location if I don't know it yet, and go have an idea of how it looks. Because it always depends on where the couple really wants it to take place you know. There are also places that I don't know so well and then I have to see it for myself, or if I already know the place I can say, oh, yes, this or that would fit and then I suggest it like that. Then I mostly go look at the location with the couple and then they can decide like that. There, those are

the main things that I basically do. Especially at the beginning. And what the couple does are mostly the invitations that they do themselves and choosing the clothing, because they'll usually take the witnesses or other family members with them. I mean, if they don't have anyone they'll sometimes take the wedding planner with them, you know, if they don't have very close witnesses or something. And, uhm, important, the final decision is always the couple's. The final decision on what is taken or what is chosen is always the couple's and... the food, this they would anyway also... well, I always propose the catering or similar to the couple, but the food tasting and so on, that they'll do themselves. Well, ok, last time I was invited but it wasn't planned that way. I normally never eat with the couple or anything but they wanted it that way and then, yes, if they want it then you don't say no. And I got along so well with them after that and then it's not a problem.

Q: What can you tell me about the potential for wedding planners in Eastern Switzerland?

R: I'm also from the Weinland, which is in the direction of Eastern Switzerland. Uhm, well, it's rather difficult, because they're very, rather in an old fashioned disposition you know. And people always say, well, we can do it ourselves. In the past people also did it themselves. And it's also the case that people just don't have so high expectations of a wedding. It's also often in the villages, that people are in sports clubs and they organize a lot of other clubs who help and things and then it's a bit different. Then you maybe even still go to your favorite bar after the wedding, yes, just in the village church and they don't do so much. Then there's maybe some games in-between organized by the sports clubs and that's pretty much it. And, I mean, you don't really need me for that right? That's true. But, I mean, there's always advantages and disadvantages and I say it always comes back to that prejudice that we're expensive. And when the people already have that misconception in them, then it doesn't matter where they're from, then they don't even get the idea of hiring a wedding planner you know. And I think that if there wasn't that prejudice, many more people would get the idea, or at least think about it, yes, I think so. And that way it's always much harder to overcome their inhibitions. I also notice that at wedding fairs. Many people say "yes, cool, we'll get in touch" in a way that you think, yes, it could be that they'll write or call, but you never hear anything. And that, I think, is often the case that they think, "well, it's expensive after all and let's just do it ourselves after all". And somehow, even though I always tell them that it's not expensive. Just somehow they they have that feeling anyway and want to do it themselves anyway. Or until... In Switzerland it's also often the case that, until people pick up the phone to call or until they write an email it takes quite a bit more time than if you just talk together directly and say "yes yes I like that or that's cool".

Q: Do you think it could be because the couple already looks for locations where everything is already included, like at the Kartause Ittingen?

R: There are some locations which have that, that a lot is included. But there are also, what should I say, maybe 40% where that's the case. The rest is not that way, and then you need everything anyway. And from that point of view people do still need us. And what I also hear, when you talk to married couples, they all say "we would have needed a wedding planner". You know, and that's bothers me then. Because if that was, that would still be something, if you could show the people that they need you. You could say that every time after the wedding they're more intelligent but then it's too late. But that's really too bad. You would really have to be able to show that it's worth it to get rid of the stress and stuff. Well, you know I'm a wedding planner myself but for my own wedding I'm really convinced that I also want a wedding planner. Well I mean, I do have a talent for organizing and I know so many people. I don't need one for the whole planning, because I'd say I can do that quite quickly. But for the day itself... I don't want that stress. I want to be there and go like this (throws hands into the air), because I know how I am. I'm the one who sees everything and wants to take care of everything and yes, I'm the one who usually does everything. But I want to enjoy it myself and you just can't do that if you organize everything yourself and there's no one else to look. And if you don't have any witnesses who can take care of things, it just doesn't work. And that's too bad. And I also tell the witnesses it's too bad because they aren't at the wedding then either. They aren't. And I got to know someone who told me, never again would he do that, he would never again go to a wedding and he never wants to get married after that, and, well, he was traumatized after having been a witness at a wedding. And, I mean, you don't want that to happen to someone. And that's why it's too bad to push the witnesses into something even though you could make life much easier for them. And I also like to say that I don't want to take anything away from the witnesses. It's usually like that, that they have their tasks. I always say, actually I always let everyone do what they like to do. And the things they don't like to do they can give me. And if they want to organize those games, and sometimes they still have to make a speech, which they might not like to do, but they have to. But I can take over the rest, with the whole execution and maybe if there's a change of location, so the people surely follow and things. Even just that is sometimes quite challenging when there are a lot of guests. Because if you have someone who doesn't... well, I saw that at the last wedding I went to, the witness was rather shy and couldn't stand in front of people and say something. So actually I only do those things that they don't want to do and they can do the rest themselves. That's also the point right? That everyone can enjoy who should enjoy it and I'm the one who runs around in the background without the other people noticing if something happens. Afterwards I tell them, depending on what it is, what happened. Then they say "oh ok we didn't know that, we didn't notice anything" and that's the way it's supposed to be.

Appendix II: Global Synthesis by Sphinx



Global synthesis

Variable analysée : 5. R



Aperçu lexical et sémantique



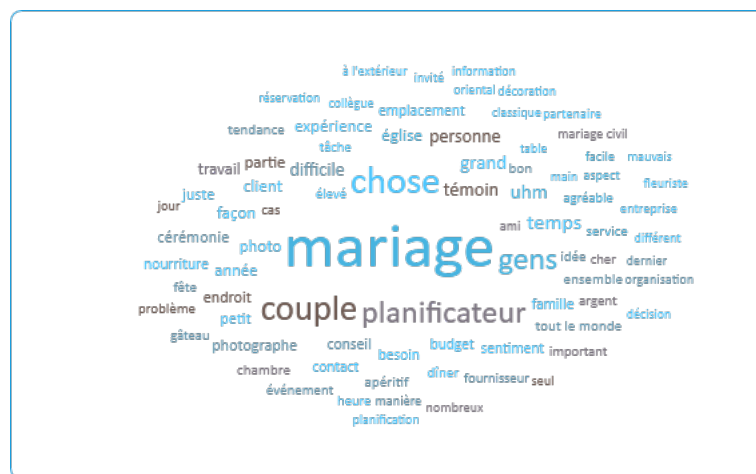
Documentation : 100%

Corpus : 4032 words

Median length: 57 words



Principaux champs sémantiques : Mariage - Narcissisme - Rituel - Pouvoir d'achat - Budget - ...



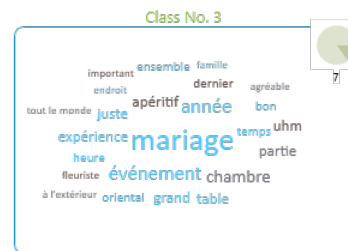
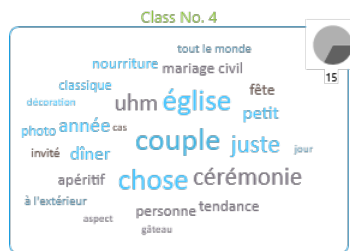
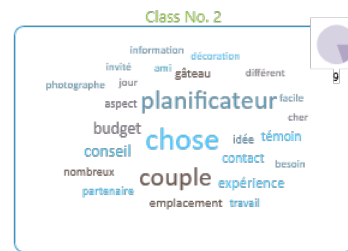
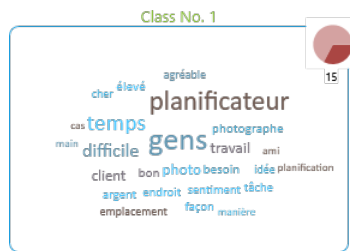
The semantic fields are documented by very detailed concepts. The cloud represents the main keywords (sizes proportional to the workforce).



Répartition thématique



7.5.4 Corpus couvert à 88.5%



Les classes contribuent à mettre en évidence les thématiques de l'étude. Les nuages représentent les principaux mots spécifiques de chaque classe (tailles proportionnelles aux effectifs).

- Class No. 1
- Je pense qu'il est difficile d'évaluer parce que je ne l'ai jamais eu des expériences directes avec les planificateurs de mariage, mais je l'impression qu'il est tout à fait ... bien, quand vous venez nouvellement entré dans l'entreprise que vous ne serez pas un temps facile de trouver vos clients avec la planification de mariage . (Alors, quel potentiel voyez-vous pour un planificateur de mariage en Suisse orientale?)
 - Je suis sûr qu'il ya des photographes moins chers autour et ... mais quand j'y repense, j'ai le sentiment que les couples gardent généralement les chaînes dans leurs propres mains à mes mariages. (Et que pensez-vous du revenu du couple?)
 - Si d'une certaine manière, il y avait plein élevé et les salaires étaient plus élevés, alors les gens seraient probablement le permettre. (Alors, quel potentiel voyez-vous pour un planificateur de mariage en Suisse orientale?)
 - Je pense qu'il ya des mariages, par exemple en Toscane, qui ont lieu quelque part dans un petit château, et les gens d'ici veux y marier, mais ne sais pas si bien, mais ils veulent un temps stable à un endroit très agréable et ainsi de suite . (Alors, quel potentiel voyez-vous pour un planificateur de mariage en Suisse orientale?)
 - Mais si vous parlez de l'emplacement exact, alors vous avez le problème que les gens trouvent d'autres façons d'obtenir l'emplacement eux-mêmes. (Alors, quel potentiel voyez-vous pour un planificateur de mariage en Suisse orientale?)
- Class No. 2
- Je pense que certains couples fixent un budget qui est bien dans la mesure d'avoir un planificateur de mariage et d'autres définir un budget trop faible, de sorte qu'ils peut-être seulement laisser le planificateur de mariage choisir l'emplacement et le reste, ils font eux-mêmes. (Quelles tâches ne le couple aime déléguer au planificateur de mariage et quelles tâches veut-il s'organiser?)
 - Oui et en fait, si vous pensez de cette façon même de faire un plus, à la fin, parce que vous pouvez obtenir des choses moins cher et parce que vous obtenez des conseils et des choses du planificateur de mariage que vous ne l'auriez pas eu autrement, qui sont moins chers dans le fin. (Qu'en est-il du salaire du couple?)
 - Il est sûrement aussi quelque chose que les couples plus âgés et plus riches comptent sur, que quelqu'un peut prendre en charge des choses comme l'administration, et ne pas laisser à des amis ou des témoins, des choses comme ça. (Quelles tâches ne le couple aime déléguer au planificateur de mariage?)
 - Donc, nous avons des partenaires et, par exemple, je cherche toujours à présenter mes partenaires d'abord et si elle correspond, si le couple choisit un de ces partenaires, alors le couple a toujours, disons quelque chose comme une réduction de 10% sur chaque fournisseur de services. (Qu'en est-il du salaire du couple?)
 - En ce sens aussi des expériences et que le planificateur peut prendre les choses hors de vos mains. (Quels sont les facteurs les plus importants pour un couple d'embaucher un planificateur de mariage?)
- Class No. 3
- Uhm, Vous savez, nous aussi organiser d'autres événements et aussi de grands événements toute l'année donc, et nous devons mettre en place de grandes constructions pour les grands événements, de sorte que les mariages sont plutôt petits événements. (Combien de mariages organisez-vous sur l'année en moyenne par?)
 - Il est également comptabilisé séparément, uhm, nous avons aussi une belle chambre de partie à la rivière Rhein, par le Rheinfall où nous louons également la salle pour les mariages et autres événements. (Et avez-vous remarqué une différence dans le nombre de mariages au cours des dernières années?)
 - Donc, en particulier la Suisse orientale et ici et là, je vais aller à Zurich et aussi ... eh bien, il y a quelques années, je voudrais aussi aller à Berne ou des endroits comme ça, mais alors le temps et l'effort est assez grand avec le voyage pour y aller. (Et où sont les mariages vous photographiez?)
 - Là, nous avons aussi ... là, vous pouvez ... nous avons déjà mis les tables en blanc, mettre des bougies et tout autour d'elle, nous mettons en place des tentes à l'extérieur, uhm, oui essentiellement l'ensemble du programme. (Vous avez une chambre. Vous faites également des mariages là.)
 - Aussi comment est la procédure de la cérémonie et nous prévoyons que l'apéritif, donc dans ce sens, nous organisons aussi, disons, une partie du mariage avec le conseil bien sûr aussi avec notre expérience, il est le meilleur comme ça. (Donc, fondamentalement, vous pouvez faire le travail d'un planificateur de mariage?)

Class No.
4

- Et aussi, il est comme un script qui appartient à chaque mariage, classique vous les photos du couple, puis vient la cérémonie, l'apéritif, puis il y a peut-être quelque chose à faire, des productions ou quelque chose, puis il y a un autre petit apéritif, puis le fête commence. (Que pouvez-vous me dire sur les styles et les tendances de mariage?)
- Par exemple il y a des tendances, aussi comme des petits gâteaux au lieu d'un gâteau de mariage, si souvent vous avez un buffet de desserts avec un stand de petit gâteau. (Quels sont les principaux changements dans les tendances de mariage dans les dernières années?)
- Avant, il était normal, uhm, pour que le mariage civil, uhm, au bureau de l'état civil, puis on ne célébrait avec un petit cercle, juste avec la famille et les témoins, et ensuite vous avez fait le mariage de l'église à une autre date, parfois même un an plus tard. (Donc, la tendance va plus vers les mariages symboliques que religieux?)
- Eh bien, nous avons de plus en plus, ainsi, cérémonies gratuitement ... cérémonies de plein air, vous savez, à l'extérieur, dans la forêt, sur un terrain, uhm, juste à l'extérieur en été. (Et quels sont les plus grands changements dans les tendances de mariage que vous avez remarqué dans les dernières années?)
- Par exemple, vous avez 20 personnes pour le mariage civil, puis il y a un grand apéritif avec 150 personnes et le soir, il est réduit à 60 personnes de plus, quelque chose comme ça. (Donc, la tendance va plus vers les mariages symboliques que religieux?)

Les verbatims sont sélectionnés selon leur capacité à bien illustrer les thèmes.

 Caractérisation des thèmes



	Frequencies	Longueur moyenne	Les 5 mots spécifiques	Specific concept	Specific sentiment	Specific context	Orientation spécifique	Relative richness index
Class No. 1	15	89	gens - planificateur - temps - difficile - photo - ...	Mariage		Class No. 1	Rather negative	1.24
Class No. 2	9	88	chose - couple - planificateur - budget - conseil	Narcissisme	Intérêt	Class No. 2	Ambiguous	1.23
Class No. 3	7	39	mariage - année - événement - chambre - apéritif - ...	Narcissisme		Class No. 3		0.66
Class No. 4	15	57	couple - chose - église - cérémonie - juste	Rituel	Divertissement	Class No. 4	Without opinion	0.86

The concepts correspond to the level of concepts 4.

La richesse d'un corpus est le nombre de mots différents d'un corpus. Si l'indice de richesse est supérieur à 1 alors les réponses de cette catégorie sont plus riches que la moyenne. A l'inverse (indice inférieur à 1), les réponses de cette catégorie sont moins riches que la moyenne.

Author's declaration

I hereby declare that I have carried out this final research project on my own without any help other than the references listed in the list of references and that I have only used the sources mentioned. I will not provide a copy of this paper to a third party without the permission of the department head and of my advisor, including the partner company with which I collaborated on this project, with the exception of those who provided me with information needed to write this paper and whose names follow: Carmen Himmel, Dario Sidler, Debora Vogel, Urs Anderegg and Simon Müller.