DARIA SARTI

Master of Events

Competency Profiling and the Design of the Event Manager's Role

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GESTIONE E ORGANIZZAZIONE AZIENDALE

La Collana accoglie Studi e Ricerche monografiche e collettanee aventi carattere scientifico con specifico riferimento all'approfondimento delle problematiche gestionali e organizzative delle aziende.

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Introduction

Undertaking an inquiry into the Event Manager role stems from a stark contradiction. On one hand, this professional may be regarded as a "tightrope walker of complexity", mastering a high-stakes environment with precision. On the other, the role remains shrouded in an unjustified social stigma that dismisses it as superficial. This analysis seeks to bridge that gap by examining the three fundamental drivers that define the profession. The first is structural heterogeneity: the scope, scale, and intended user experience vary so radically across event typologies that every organizational structure must be bespoke. In this "no-one-size-fits-all" environment, strategies and formalizations must be meticulously customized to the unique nature of each occurrence.

This complexity is further amplified by the pulsating nature of the industry. Unlike traditional manufacturing with its stable lifecycles, the event sector operates through highly elastic structures. The organization *pulsates* – expanding rapidly during planning and execution, only to dissolve immediately afterward. Such a unique lifecycle demands a manager capable of designing, building, governing, and dismantling complex systems in record time.

Ultimately, the entire discipline is governed by the "First Time-Right" imperative. Because management is subject to the principle of irreversibility and the output is a live performance, there is no room for beta testing or post-production corrections. This one-shot reality shifts the professional requirement from mere execution to pre-emptive resilience: the manager must possess the rare ability to envision not only the predictable but, crucially, the unforeseeable.

This leads us to a crucial point of focus. For years, prominent authors have identified specific behavioural traits as the hallmarks of superior performance. However, in the event industry, those very same traits represent mere threshold competencies. An Event Manager would have absolutely no hope of success without possessing the characteristics that, in traditional organisations, are considered the distinguishing marks of a top performer.

This reality aligns with the decades-long VUCA framework. However, while many analyse Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity as theoretical abstractions, the Event Manager navigates them as a raw, daily reality. Far from a superficial claim, this reflection seeks to elevate the role to a primary subject of managerial study: in an increasingly volatile global economy, the Event Manager's baseline might represent the new frontier of excellence. Consequently, to study the challenges of modern management, one needs to observe this professional in action – the focal point where the most extreme organisational demands converge. The scientific rationale for investigating the Event Manager, therefore, lies in the nature of the role itself: a true "laboratory of high complexity".

Despite – and perhaps because of – its status as a *quasi*-established global profession, the Event Manager still lacks the social, academic and institutional recognition afforded to similar roles, such as the Project Manager. It is worth noting that the root of this overshadowing may likely be traced back to a persistent social stigma that haunts this profession, the event industry, and, more broadly, the tourism and service sectors. The marginalisation is rooted in the prejudice, which seems to date back to Adam Smith, which undervalues services because they do not produce a tangible commodity. In the event industry, a "visibility bias" prevails; while the public is exposed to the manual and recreational aspects of an event, the sophisticated strategic coordination occurring behind the scenes remains largely invisible. This misalignment becomes glaringly evident when comparing the Event Manager to the Project Manager, where the latter's technical rigour and "agentic" domains are socially recognised, while the former's expertise is often overshadowed by the ephemeral nature of the output and its "communal" script.

This work presents an investigation into the professional architecture of the event manager, aimed at outlining a preliminary competency model for the role. In an environment of increasing organisational volatility, the research seeks to identify the attributes that define the modern event manager, utilising the traditional Competency Model paradigm (Boyatzis,1982; Spencer & Spencer, 1993) as a theoretical baseline.

To capture the nuanced reality of this profession, a qualitative inquiry is adopted. The premise is that complex professional behaviours are best observed within their natural environments, where lived experiences offer insights that quantitative data might overlook. This approach serves as a useful step toward understanding how competencies are enacted in practice and adapted in response to shifting industry demands.

Rather than being viewed through a purely operational lens, the Event Manager is examined here through a competency-based perspective that

highlights the complexity of their professional action. The role is described as a central nexus – a strategic connector tasked with harmonising diverse stakeholders, technical requirements, and creative visions. A key element of this profile is what is tentatively termed "integrative intelligence": the professional's capacity to maintain a seamless alignment between rigid constraints and fluid experiential goals.

This exploratory study highlights the "visibility bias" arising from the gap existing between the technical requirements of the role and its current social perception. Operating within a highly complex framework, the event manager faces a professional paradox: the traits classified by traditional organisations as "superior performance" often represent mere threshold competencies in this specific field.

By dismantling the "visibility biases" that obscure the strategic nature of this managerial position, this work seeks to foster a deeper understanding of its inherent complexity. Identifying the Event Manager as a figure requiring high degrees of adaptation is not an attempt at definitive categorisation, but a starting point to expand the scholarly landscape surrounding this field. Ultimately, this study posits that observing such a professional in action offers unique insights into modern management. By pulling back the curtain on the strategic relevance of the role, this work seeks to fuel the debate on its relevance, paving the way for the professionalisation and institutional recognition that this figure has long deserved.

Chapter I
Theoretical Foundations

1.1. The Event as a Phenomenon and Its Historical Evolution

Events have been integral to human history since ancient times. The concept of the "event product" has existed as long as mankind (Goldblatt, 2014). In ancient Greece, festivals dedicated to deities – from the rites for Isis to the celebrations during the Olympic games – transcended mere spiritual devotion. They were safe spaces where the sacred dimension merged with public life, athletic competitions, and cultural exchanges between people. Throughout history, religion has been at the core of many cultural expressions. However, alternative reasons for celebration have also emerged. Notably, events tied to natural cycles, such as agricultural festivals that mark the sowing and harvest periods. Additionally, celebrations connected to secular authority – such as military triumphs, royal coronations, and official visits by dignitaries – have been important.

While these commemorations often included sacred elements, they extended beyond religion to serve additional purposes, such as redistributing resources, commemorating the end of a difficult period, glorifying a leader, or solidifying an alliance.

Other types of celebrations honoured heroism and athletics, with events like the Olympic Games recognising human excellence. Although these games began in sacred contexts – the ancient Games were first and foremost a religious festival in honour of Zeus – the emphasis on athleticism and entertainment grew over time, drawing crowds eager to watch acts of physical endurance and courage. This evolution from sacred ritual to large-scale public spectacle reached its zenith with the Roman Empire, where the Greeks' focus on human excellence was transformed into a sophisticated engine for social and political ends. They held public games around 10 to 12 times a year, attracting large audiences through programmes carefully planned for specific social and

political ends. A defining example of this logistical and symbolic mastery is found in gladiatorial combats, the main attraction at Roman games, which originated around the fourth century B.C. as honorific rites to commemorate the passing of important figures, such as consuls. During these rites, also known as *munera gladiatoria*[1], the bereaved held memorial services in the form of combat performed by captives or slaves.

The first documented gladiator battle in Rome occurred in 264 B.C. as a private event and featured only three pairs of gladiators (Edmondson, 1996; Köhne, 2000; Wiedemann, 1995). About a century later, the number of gladiators participating in these events increased to 120, and two centuries later, Julius Caesar organised combats in commemoration of his deceased father, elevating the total to 320 pairs of gladiators. These combats shifted from private occasions to becoming major political events. By the time the Roman Empire was established in 27 B.C., these games had evolved into a widely popular form of public entertainment (Glover, 1984; Meijer, 2005).

Julius Caesar consciously employed the *munera* for political ends. By holding games after his daughter Julia's death, he broke the established tradition regarding the *munera*. Also, he used games to bring stability during a period of disorder in Rome, thereby increasing his prestige and winning the people's favour. He used gladiators not only for their entertainment value in spectacles but also as a means to intimidate his opponents (Potamianos, 2011).

During the Imperial period, Augustus and his successors used gladiator games as a propaganda tool to bolster their authority and power and maintain the empire's unity.

The most spectacular games in history were Trajan's Games in 107 A.D., held to celebrate the conquest of Dacia. In the event, lasting four months, 5000 pairs of gladiators were utilised.

The ancient Romans are widely acknowledged for their remarkable ability to create memorable experiences. This expertise extended beyond the performance itself to a highly rigid organisation designed to guarantee public safety and order. The security of these events was anchored by imperial edicts – such as those issued by Domitian – which established strict behavioural codes, enforced on-site by a specialised body of guards and attendants (acting as early "security personnel") to ensure the orderly conduct of the games.

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1. Etymologically, the term *munus* (plural *munera*) means "gift", "duty", or "service". The term, which indicates the obligation to offer something to the community, has complex semantics that combines the concepts of gift, office, and social obligation, and denotes a benefit offered to the community arising from a moral or civil duty. Its origins are often traced to Etruscan customs, where duels between combatants took place during funerals to honour the deceased, an offering of blood for their journey to the afterlife.

Furthermore, the efficiency of these spectacles relied on advanced crowd flow management. Roman engineers designed amphitheatres to accommodate massive audiences while optimising their movement through architectural innovation. A prime example is the system of *vomitoria*: strategically placed passageways that allowed thousands of spectators to enter and exit rapidly. This not only prevented dangerous bottlenecks but also created a unique theatrical effect, as the crowd could appear or disappear almost instantaneously. In the focus box 1, further details on the organisation of Gladiatorial Games are explored.

Focus box 1 – Event Management in Ancient Rome: The Case of Munera Gladiatoria[2]

Funding and Social Purpose

The *Munera Gladiatoria*, the gladiatorial games, in Ancient Rome, were funded by city treasuries and local dignitaries. Since the economic elites also controlled the government, the distinction between public and private funds was often blurred. The primary goal was to demonstrate the wealth and largesse of sponsors to consolidate their prestige and patronage. Furthermore, through participation, the sense of order and belonging was strengthened, making the spectator feel part of a civilised community, superior to the barbarians or criminals who died in the arena.

The editor of the event

The organisation was entrusted to the figure of the editor (called *munerarius*[3]), who served as the event's actual sponsor and manager. The role was held by high-ranking magistrates or high dignitaries, and, with the advent of the Empire, by the emperors themselves (such as Vespasian, Titus, or Trajan). In the provinces (e.g., Ephesus), the role was assumed by the wealthiest members of the local elite, particularly the High Priest (*archiereus*) of the imperial cult or the asiarch (*asiarca*), the representative of the local elite. These notables, by virtue of their status, were obliged to finance the spectacles.

Venues and Infrastructures

Originally, games took place in forums or market plazas. In Greece, they used circuses and stadia readapted[4]. The Romans built stone amphitheatres specifically for these shows. The Colosseum (Flavian Dynasty Amphitheatre), completed in 80 A.D., could accommodate between 50,000 and 80,000 spectators. Over 200 amphitheatres were built throughout the Empire (Syria, Libya, Portugal, and Britain), though nearly half were in Italy.

2. This focus box was developed through the synthesis of diverse bibliographic sources: for the Roman historical framework, key references include Edmondson (1996), Köhne & Ewigleben (2000), Wiedemann (1995), Glover (1984), Meijer (2005), and Potamianos (2011); the sociological approach to event management in Ancient Rome was analysed through Minowa & Witkowski (2012) and Rawson (1987); the evolution of trade fairs and modern exhibitions was based on Allix (1922), Mazzeo (2008), and Quinn (2009); while the theoretical framework of event management was provided by Goldblatt (2014) and Bowdin *et al.* (2024).

3. *Munerarius* derives from the Latin *munus*.

4. For example, the Great Theatre of Ephesus was modified to host the games: the orchestra was enlarged, and protective walls or fences were added to separate spectators from the beasts and fighters.

Attendance and Crowd Numbers
The scale of these events might be massive, reflecting the importance of the spectacles in Roman life. Arena crowds typically numbered in the thousands and, quite frequently, reached the tens of thousands. As the most famous venue, the Colosseum could accommodate between 50,000 and 80,000 spectators.

Promotion
Promotion was a crucial aspect managed by the editor, who hired professional scribes. As reported, *"The editor or show manager advertised the event [...] by hiring scribes to paint announcements, graffiti-like, on city walls"* (Minowa & Witkowski, 2012, p. 512) These announcements (called *edicta munerum*) indicated the details needed to attract the public, such as the date and the number of pairs of gladiators participating in the show. Furthermore, the same announcements also advertised additional services, such as *sparsiones* (sprays of scented water) and prizes, and, in some cases, the presence of *vela erunt* (awnings for shade) or other amenities to entice the public.

Events were also promoted through word-of-mouth and patronage channels, where tickets were distributed as favours to strengthen social bonds. The games were commemorated with monuments along the main roads (such as the Marble Street at Ephesus) that portrayed the victorious gladiators and identified them by name.

Ticket Patronage and Seating System
The editor used ticket distribution as a tool of patronage. Most tickets were gifted to *clients* – lower-ranking individuals who provided political support and votes in exchange. This gift solidified a tangible bond of gratitude between the protector and the protected. By granting the community the right to attend the spectacle, the elite symbolically shared their wealth and reinforced class distinctions. The more tickets an editor distributed, the greater his perceived power and influence.

Additionally, the seating arrangement served as a visual representation of social power. Under Augustus's Lex Iulia Theatralis, a system was established to enhance the sense of belonging, allowing every citizen to see their exact place within the Imperial hierarchy. In accordance with this mandate, seating was strictly assigned by rank. That is, senators were seated in the rows closest to the arena, followed by knights (*equites*) in the next section. Plebeians and women were placed in the *maenianum summum in ligneis*, which was the highest and most distant wooden gallery. Also, some seats were reserved for foreign delegations from important provinces of the empire.

The Spectacle Experience
The event was not just a fight, but a complete entertainment experience. The crowd was refreshed with sprays of scented water known as *sparsiones*. Food and beverages were distributed during the games. Lotteries (*sparsio missilium*) were organised. Small wooden balls containing prize vouchers were tossed to the crowd; the prizes ranged from food and cash to the title of an apartment.

Programme Structure
The games followed a standardised schedule that occupied the entire day:
- Morning (*venationes*): This time was dedicated to wild animal hunts, where beasts fought each other or humans.
- Midday: This period was reserved for public executions of criminals, often carried out with creative and grotesque methods to reaffirm the order of civilisation against those who violated the laws.
- Afternoon (*munera*): This was the climax of the day, with gladiatorial duels.

During the entire day, to amaze, rare objects, exotic animals, or complex mechanical sets were exhibited, transforming the arena into a fantastic landscape.

The Organisational Structure of Roman Spectacles

A complex professional organisation is essential for managing these events. We can categorise these professionals into two main groups: the Managerial and Supply Apparatus, which is responsible for organising the event and its content, and the Operational and Security Staff, who handle crowd control and maintain order.

The managerial apparatus (pre-event and Supply Logistics) includes those who organised, financed, and provided the content of the games:

- The Editor: The primary sponsor and producer who financed the event.
- The *Lanista* (External Contractor): A crucial figure in the supply chain. The *Editor* rarely owned the gladiators; instead, they were leased from a *Lanista*, the manager of a gladiatorial school. The *Lanista* acted as a Gladiator's Manager, responsible for the recruitment and rigorous training of the combatants.
- The *Scriptores* (Promotional Staff): These were professional painters responsible for the "marketing" phase. They travelled the city to paint advertisements on walls, announcing the *munera* (games), the number of gladiatorial pairs, and the date of the event.

The Operational and Security Staff operated "front-of-house" to ensure the event followed strict social and legal protocols:

- High-ranking officials oversaw Seating and Logistics. Figures such as the *Laberius Maximus* served as imperial procurators specifically tasked with managing complex seating arrangements.
- Ushers (*Leitus* and *Oceanus*): Imperial freedmen whose role was to maintain social decorum by ejecting spectators who were improperly dressed or attempting to sit in reserved sections.
- A*pparitores*, which were sort of administrative assistants, included *Viatores* (messengers), *Scribae* (scribes), and *Praecones* (heralds), who helped the presiding magistrates. Although they had reserved seating, they actively participated in the logistical administration of the event.
- Soldiers were responsible for maintaining security and public order. From the reign of Augustus onward, armed guards became a common presence. Soldiers, often from the Praetorian Guard, were stationed within the *cunei* (seating blocks) of the *cavea* to monitor the crowd and prevent unrest.

Sources: Author's synthesis on the sources detailed in the note at the beginning of the box.

Following the fall of Rome, the legacy of heroic competition and public display was not lost but reinterpreted through the lens of a new social order.

Knightly tournaments represent the medieval evolution of the concept of athletic competition and heroism, as seen in the Olympics. The tournament was the ultimate celebration of the noble values, i.e., honour, courage, loyalty, and courtesy. Additionally, other types of events comprised social and folk celebrations, particularly during the Middle Ages, which featured festivals that emerged – in a bottom-up process – from the local community alongside official religious fairs. These local traditions were often established to commemorate the founding of a city or significant historical events.

The transition from sacred celebration to commercial event was a natural, almost inevitable process, driven by a very simple logic: where there is a protected crowd, there is an opportunity for exchange.

As an example, trade fairs date back to ancient times. In Classical Greece, they were held alongside religious festivals, such as those dedicated to Isis or during the Olympic Games, where merchants enjoyed specific protections. During the Roman Empire, commerce was not centralised enough to support large fairs, although some did exist along caravan routes on the eastern frontiers.

The origin of modern fairs, defined as organised events for commercial exchange, and their gradual evolution from medieval markets (Allix, 1922) date back to the thirteenth century. With the economic revival of Western Europe in the 10th and 11th centuries, trade fairs became essential institutions.

The evolution of European commerce was anchored by legendary trade hubs like the Saint Denis Fair – a vital centre for wine, textiles, and metals between the 7th and 9th centuries – and later the Champagne Fairs. The latter emerged as the preeminent commercial link between Italy and Flanders by the 12th and 13th centuries, fostering a flourishing trade environment through merchant protection, low taxation, and the implementation of the *jus mercatorum* – an efficient legal framework for swiftly resolving commercial disputes.

While the Middle Ages established the commercial foundations of the event, it was the Industrial Revolution that scaled these exchanges into global phenomena. In the modern era, the first industrial exposition was the Great Exhibition, organised in London in 1851, paving the way for other international exhibitions in the second half of the nineteenth century (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2024; Mazzeo, 2008; Quinn, 2009).

World Expos transcend commercial gain; instead, their primary purpose, according to the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE), is to promote education and progress[5]. This mission takes into account human and social aspirations while emphasising advancements in science, technology, economics, and society. Over the past century, these events have evolved; they are no longer just about selling goods but focus on celebrating progress, technology, and national identity. This shift has led to the concept of the "event as an experience".

In the years immediately following the Second World War, various public events, including sports competitions, music festivals, food fairs, and cultural gatherings, flourished and developed worldwide (Bowdin *et al.*, 2006; Getz, 2008). In those years, the technological advancements, such as the introduction of the jet plane and television, along with the economic boom

5. Since its founding in 1928, the BIE has been responsible for regulating and overseeing these significant events, with the goal of enhancing human knowledge.

experienced in Western societies during the 1950s and 1960s, contributed to increases in nonessential goods expenditure, as well as expanded leisure time for recreational activities for the emerging middle class (Backman, 2018).

During this period, the events industry experienced significant growth. Convention tourism, known as MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions), emerged alongside the consolidation of modern mass tourism and the rise of professional organisations such as PCOs (Professional Congress Organisers) and various industry associations. Professionals from around the world began gathering to share scientific discoveries, thereby providing significant impetus to the MICE sector.

In the 1960s, with the advent of major music festivals like Woodstock, events became a platform for social expression and counterculture. Instead of being organised solely by institutions such as the State or the Church, events began to emerge from grassroots movements.

In the 1980s and 1990s, globalisation and modern marketing fuelled a significant rise in corporate events and product launches. A landmark example is Steve Jobs's iconic keynote on January 9, at the 2007 Macworld Expo in San Francisco. By unveiling the first iPhone to the world, Jobs effectively transformed a conventional product launch into a global media event, seamlessly blending spectacle, storytelling, and commerce.

Since then, planned events have been developed worldwide, enabling individuals from diverse backgrounds to forge and strengthen meaningful networks and relationships. According to the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA, 2024), international events have experienced significant growth over the years, with Italy among the top destinations for the number of organised international events, behind only the United States.

ICCA (2024) figures further reveal that more than half of all international meetings in 2024 were hosted in Europe (56%), followed by the Asia-Pacific region (18%) and North America (10%). These figures corroborate the enduring appeal of Europe and its urban centres as privileged venues for high-level events.

The considerations outlined above illustrate the history of events as a journey of progressive layering, evolving from a need for the sacred to a desire for emotional connection. As shown in Table 1, until around the 5th century A.D., events were primarily collective rites aimed at fostering social cohesion and establishing a divine connection. During this time, participants were often believers focused on survival and grateful for natural cycles. From the 5th century A.D. to the late 18th century, events transformed into platforms that celebrated power and heroism. During the Commercial Phase (early 19th to mid-20th century), events became shaped by the Industrial Revolution,

with World Expos serving as economic drivers and showcasing technological advancements. From 1960 onwards, events evolved into platforms for emotional communication, focusing on creating memorable experiences and fostering brand loyalty, making participants protagonists.

Tab. 1 – Phases of events evolution: from origins to the present

Phase	Historical Period	Type of Events	Main Objective	Role of the Participant
RITUAL (Transcendence)	From the Roman Era to the 5th century A.D.	Agricultural rites, religious festivals (Isis, Zeus)	Social cohesion and divine protection	Believer / Community member
SPECTACLE (Prestige)	5th century A.D. – Late 18th century	Gladiators, Olympic Games, Knightly Tournaments	Glorification of power and heroism	Spectator
COMMERCIAL (Exchange)	Early 19th century – Mid-20th century	Great Fairs, World Expos	Profit, progress, and exchange of goods	Economic operator / Visitor
EXPERIENTIAL (Value)	1960 to present	Music festivals, Product launches	Emotion, brand loyalty, and engagement	Protagonist / Fan

Source: Author's own elaboration.

The current decade has catalysed – and will continue to drive – a profound debate on the irreversible digital metamorphosis within the events industry. Despite the acknowledged benefits that digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) bring to the sector – such as logistical optimisation, enhanced accessibility, and data-driven personalisation – there remains a critical threshold beyond which the event risks its denaturalisation. A critical tension exists between technological hyper-mediation and the ontological nature of the event as a profoundly social phenomenon.

The industry is therefore confronted with a pressing concern regarding the potential ontological erosion of event formats, which poses a significant threat to their fundamental identity as social and collective experiences.

1.2. From "Studies on Events" to "Event Studies": a Shift in Academic Identity

The transition of event management from a niche professional activity to a recognised academic field has occurred only within the last four decades. This evolution marks a shift from a fragmented approach, where events were merely objects of analysis for other disciplines, to a formalised and autonomous field known as Event Studies.

To understand this maturation, it is possible to categorise the development of the discipline into five distinct chronological and perspective-driven phases. These stages reflect the movement from observing events as social rituals to managing them as strategic, experience-based assets (see Table 2).

The first half of the 20th century (Phase 1) saw events primarily analysed through the lenses of Anthropology and Sociology. During this period, scholars like Victor Turner examined events as rites of passage, exploring the concept of *communitas* – the intense bonds and sense of togetherness among participants (Olaveson, 2001). This sociological perspective, rooted in Émile Durkheim's theory of "collective effervescence", views events as pivotal moments where individual identities merge into a shared consciousness (Misztal, 2003). Furthermore, events served as vital mechanisms for commemoration, sustaining what Maurice Halbwachs defined as collective memory, and acting as a "community elixir" to generate social capital (Derrett, 2009).

The expansion of the events sector in the 1970s and 1980s (Phase 2) triggered a shift toward Economics, Geography, and Urban Planning. With the rise of international mega-events, governments began viewing these spectacles as strategic instruments for place marketing and economic development (Mair *et al.*, 2013). However, this "instrumentalist" phase – focused on measuring Return on Investment (ROI) and tourism revenue – showed significant limitations. As extensively documented by Barajas, Coates, and Sanchez-Fernandez (2016), as well as Baade & Matheson (2004), Késenne (1999), and Taks *et al.* (2011), retrospective studies from this era often overestimated positive economic impacts while neglecting the indirect societal consequences and long-term costs for host communities[6].

6. It became clear that simply analysing events *ex post* – in terms of economic impact and contribution to territorial development – was inadequate.

Tab. 2 – The Chronological and Disciplinary Evolution of Event Studies

Phase	Period of time	Perspective	Core Disciplines	Research Focus
Phase 1	Until mid-20th Century	Social & Ritual Phenomena	Anthropology, Sociology	Events are considered as collective celebrations and rites of passage. The analysis focus on communitas and social cohesion.
Phase 2	1970s – 1980s	Economic & Physical Impact	Economics, Geography, Urban Planning	Focus on Mega-events (Expos, Olympics); evaluation of economic ROI, urban regeneration, and place marketing.
Phase 3	1990s – 2000s	Formalization & Management	Management, Strategy, Marketing	Formalisation of the discipline; focus on strategic planning, logistics, and Event Tourism.
Phase 4	2010s – Present	Consolidation & Experience	Psychology, Sustainability, Social Sciences	Focus on the participant's experience (protagonism), emotional engagement, well-being, and environmental impact.
Phase 5	2025 – Present/ Future	Digital Metamorphosis & AI	Computer Data Science, Ethics, Neuroscience	AI-driven personalisation, "Phygital" integration, and the ontological preservation of the social phenomenon.

Source: Author's own elaboration.

The 1990s and 2000s marked the Formalisation and Management phase (Phase 3), where events moved from being mere objects of observation to becoming strategic products. In this period, scholars in Management and Strategy formalised the logistics and governance frameworks necessary to handle the increasing complexity of the sector (Bowdin *et al.*, 2024). A pivotal moment in this consolidation was the publication of Donald Getz's (2007) seminal work, *Event Studies: Theory, Research, and Policy for Planned Events*, which argued for the autonomy of Event Studies as a legitimate academic discipline. This era also saw the emergence of specialised literature, such as the Event Management journal (founded in 1993), and the rise of Event Tourism as a strategic driver for destination branding (Getz & Page, 2016; Backman, 2018), highlighting the increasing scholarly interest in this field. Table 3